

The Public Disputations of

James Arminius, D.D.

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Dedication

TO THOSE MOST HONOURABLE AND PRUDENT GENTLEMEN, THE BURGOMASTER, ALDERMEN, AND SHERIFFS, WHO ARE THE VERY WORTHY MAGISTRATES OF THE FAMOUS CITY OF LEYDEN, AND OUR MOST REVERED LORDS AND PATRONS.

Most Prudent and honourable Gentlemen,

It is now eight years since our reverend father, who lately died in the Lord, was, by your authority and command, and by that of the most noble the Curators, summoned to this illustrious University, from the very flourishing Church of Amsterdam, to which he had devoted his pastoral labours for fifteen years, and was called to fill the vacant situation of Doctor FRANCIS JUNIUS, of pious memory, who was then recently deceased. We, his nine orphan children, the three youngest of whom have been born in this city, removed here at the same time with our mother, who is at present plunged in the deepest affliction. From that period our ever-to-be honoured father had no higher object than that of bestowing the whole of his time, industry and endeavours, in promoting the interests of your University, and in strictly discharging his functions with as much fidelity as accorded with his abilities and his duty. We call upon your honours as competent witnesses to this, our testimony, respecting his fidelity and diligence, because he exercised these virtues under your immediate inspection, for the space of six years; and the truth of our declaration can be no secret to those persons who, while he was in the act of performing his duty to the University, were themselves either not far from the scene of action, or openly beheld and admired his daily and unwearied labours in public and private. With regard to his uncommon industry and accurate skill in communicating instruction, which gifts had been bestowed on him by Almighty God, in his ineffable liberality, independently of any merits either on his part or on ours, you always approved of these qualities by your honourable suffrages, and, on all occasions when you considered it either necessary or expedient, you extolled his genius. You also exhibited to him the most indubitable and lucid expressions not only of your very laudable opinion of his talents, but likewise of your consequent intimate affections for him, during the whole period in which he devoted his labours to your honourable service. So that he scarcely ever felt a desire for any thing which he did not obtain.

But the best testimony to this character of our father is that given to him, by those persons who either assiduously attended his daily lectures in immense numbers, and several of whom are now performing most important services to the Churches; or by those who resorted, often from places at a great distance, to hear his disputations, and all of whom admired and abundantly eulogized his acute and penetrating genius, but especially his incredible acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, on which alone he was almost constantly meditating, and to the study of which he had devoted the choicest years of his life. These persons were also continually and pertinaciously importunate that the Theses which had been proposed for disputation under him, and which had been written out and placed

Dedication

in order by himself, should be published without the least delay, and brought forth to the light of men, for the benefit of the public, and especially of those who were far removed from Leyden. To their pressing solicitations, after much reluctance on the part of our father, he was at length induced to yield; and he put to press and published those Theses which were extant in his class [*collegio*] of Public Disputations, and which, after being written out by himself in so many words, had been appointed, and soon afterwards disputed and discussed under him [as Moderator]. That collection is now republished, with the sole addition of one Thesis *on Repentance*.

But, that we may make the studies and labours of our most excellent father still better known to you than they are, most honourable and prudent gentlemen, and to foreigners, as well to those whose residence is nearer to us, we now publish those Theses likewise which he proposed for disputation in his own house, at moments of leisure and on extraordinary occasions; for he had devoted himself entirely to the promotion of the welfare of the students. They were proposed as subjects in the last class of his Private Disputations, and were also written out and composed by himself, at the very earnest intreaty of those youthful scholars. Indeed, we publish these Theses in preference to any others; for having already served the purposes of his private disputations, they may now afford abundant testimony to the fidelity and diligence of our father in instructing and adorning the candidates for holy orders. Beside the matter or subject on which he treated with so much faithfulness and accuracy, our excellent father, who was a severe judge of method, thought that he would exhibit the order which ought to be observed in compiling a correct system of Theology. Such a plan he had often and long revolved in his mind; and for this purpose had perused, with very great care, almost all the Synopses or large Treatises of Divinity that had been published. He was in some measure induced to give a representation of this scheme in the following Theses proposed for private disputation. Let the learned decide upon the skill with which he has sketched this outline, which it was his wish to display as an attempt at a Synopsis, for the sake of exercise. O, that it had been the will of Almighty God, to have enabled him to finish, as he had desired, this body of Theological Theses which he was forced to leave incomplete. For it is believed, that upwards of twenty Theses are still wanting to crown the undertaking. By an untimely death, which is a source of the deepest affliction to us, as well as to all good men, his design was frustrated; though the consummation of it would, beyond any thing else in this life, have been an object of the fondest gratification to us, his sorrowing offspring.

But since it has been the pleasure of our gracious God, against whom it does not become us forwardly to contend, to call our father from this miserable valley of tears to his own celestial mansion; we wish that he had obtained [among survivors] some equitable and candid judges of his labourious exertions and innocency; and that it had been possible for him, even by death, to escape from the rancorous teeth of calumny, which, in conformity to the precept and the example of Jesus Christ our only saviour, he endured, as long as his life was spared, without any attempt to render railing for railing, yet with such consummate patience, as almost excited the indignation of his friends against him. We wish also that a certain person had not expressed doubts respecting the eternal salvation of our father, whom we with many others openly beheld, (as we here do testify), in a manner the most placid, surrendering up his soul to God, like one that was falling asleep, amidst unceasing and most ardent prayers, and confessing his own wretchedness and weakness, but at the same time extolling that only saving grace which shines forth upon those who

believe in Jesus Christ, the Author of our salvation. We repeat our wishes, that there had not been a person who uttered serious doubts about the eternal salvation of our father. Far be it from any of us to condemn him whom God has absolved, and for whom Jesus Christ testifies, that he came into the world, and suffered death.

Alas! were we not already sufficiently unhappy in having lost one of our parents, while we are all of an age comparatively tender, the eldest of us not being yet quite seventeen years old! But may our God forbid, that they who deliver their souls into his merciful hands in the name of Jesus Christ alone, should not be made partakers of eternal salvation, or should be disappointed of their hopes of a life of blessedness! May he rather grant unto all of us, that, faithfully and constantly treading in the footsteps of our beloved father, and being active in the pursuit of truth and piety, with integrity and sincerity of mind, we may approve our lives and all our studies to God and to all good men, as highly as our revered parent, we humbly hope, approved himself and all his concerns to your mightinesses, as long as he lived. Of the great esteem in which you held him, you have afforded abundant proofs, in those innumerable and never sufficiently to-be-recounted benefits which he received from you while he lived. But stronger evidence of this you gave immediately after his decease, in the benefits which you have bestowed on our dearest mother, and on each of us their children, and which you most liberally continue to this day. O, that the time may at length arrive in which we may be enabled to requite you for these, your numberless acts of kindness to us. May God assist us thus to repay you.

But, in the mean time, that some token of a grateful mind towards your mightinesses may be extant on our part, at the earliest opportunity we bring forth from the library of our deceased parent, under the auspices of your honourable names, this rich and costly casket; and we will afterwards draw out of the same treasury, each in its due order and time, not a few other things of the same, or of a different kind which he has left in our possession, provided those which we now offer shall meet with a suitable reception from the students of Theology. But we are deeply conscious, that this offering of ours is contemptible, when placed in competition with your kindness towards us. Of all persons we should be the most ungrateful, if we did not make this acknowledgment; and still more so, if we did not confess that this is a present from our deceased parent, rather than from us. Should it hereafter be seen, that our revered father has bequeathed to us, as his heirs, his industry, piety and virtue, (which may God of his infinite mercy grant), as he has already made us the inheritors of this production and of the other fruits of his studies; we will use our utmost endeavours never to be found deficient in our duty, but to propose to ourselves throughout the whole of our future lives, by all the means in our power, to gain the approbation of your mightinesses, and to prove ourselves always grateful to you.

May Almighty God long preserve you in safety, and render you still propitious to us. May he in the most bountiful manner crown your government with every blessing from above!

So pray Your Mightinesses' most devoted servants, the seven sons of JAMES ARMINIUS, a native of Oudewater, in our own names, and in the names of our two sisters,

Dedication

HERMAN
PETER
JOHN
LAURENCE ARMINIUS
JAMES
WILLIAM
DANIEL

1 Disputation I

ON THE AUTHORITY AND CERTAINTY OF THE SACRED SCRIPTURES

Respondent: BERNARD VESUKIUS

I. The authority of Scripture is nothing else but the [*dignitas*] worthiness according to which it merits

1. [*fidem*] CREDENCE, as being true in words and true in significations, whether it simply declares anything; or also promises and threatens; and
2. as a superior, it merits OBEDIENCE through the credence given to it, when it either commands or prohibits anything.

Concerning this authority two questions arise,

1. Whence does it belong to Scripture?
2. Whence is it evident, or can be rendered evident to men, that this authority appertains to Scripture?

These two questions shall be discussed in their proper order (1 Tim. i. 15; 2 Pet. i. 19; John v. 39; Heb. vi. 18; Rom. i. 5; 2 Cor. x. 5, 6; xiii. 3; xii. 12; Gal. i. 1, 12, 13, etc.).

II. The authority of any word or writing whatsoever depends upon its author, as the word ‘authority’ indicates; and it is just as great as the veracity and the power, that is, the *αθεντια* of the author. But God is of infallible *veracity*, and is neither capable of deceiving nor of being deceived; and of irrefragable power, that is, supreme over the creatures. If, therefore, He is the Author of Scripture, its authority is totally dependent on Him alone.

1. *Totally*, because He is the all sufficient Author, all-true and all-powerful.
2. *On Him alone*, because He has no associate either in the truth of what he says, or in the power of his right.

For all veracity and power in the creature proceed from him; and into his veracity and power are resolved all faith and obedience, as into the First Cause and the Ultimate [*terminum*] Boundary (Gal. iii. 8, 9; 1 John v. 9; Rom. iii. 4; Tit. i. 2; Psalm i. 1–23; Gal. i. 1, 7, 8; John v. 34, 36; Rom. xi. 34–36; xiii. 1).

III. This is proved by many arguments dispersed throughout the Scripture.

1. From the inscriptions of most of the prophetic books and of the apostolical epistles, which run thus, ‘The word of the Lord that came to Hosea, to Joel, to Amos,’ etc. ‘Paul, Peter, James, etc., a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ’ (Hosea, Joel, Amos; Rom. i. 1; James i. 1; 1 Pet. i. 1).
2. From the introductions to many of the prophecies: ‘Thus saith the Lord,’ ‘That which I have received of the Lord, I have also delivered unto you’ (Exod. v. 1; 1 Cor. xi. 23).
3. From the petitions, on the part of the ambassadors of God and of Christ, for Divine assistance, and from the promise of it which is given by God and Christ, such aid being necessary and sufficient to obtain authority for what was to be spoken (Exod. iv. 1; Acts iv. 29, 30; Mark xvi. 17, 20).
4. From the method used by God himself, who, when about to deliver his law, introduced it thus: ‘I am the Lord thy God!’ And who, when in the act of establishing the authority of his Son, said, ‘This is my beloved Son, hear ye Him’ (Exod. xx. 1; Matt. xvii. 5).

This is acknowledged by the general consent of mankind. Minos, Numa, Lycurgus and Solon, were fully aware of it; for, to give some validity to their laws, they referred them to Gods or Goddesses, as the real authors.

IV. When this authority is once known, it binds the consciences of all those to whom the discourse or the writing is addressed or directed, to accept of it in a becoming manner. But whoever they be that receive it as if delivered by God, that approve of it, publish, preach, interpret and expound it, that also distinguish and discriminate it from words or writings which are supposititious and adulterated; these persons add not a tittle of authority to the sayings or writings, because their entire authority, whether contemplated separately or conjointly, is only that of mortal men; and things Divine neither need confirmation, nor indeed can receive it, from those which are human. But this whole employment of approving, preaching, explaining and discriminating, even when it is discharged by the Church Universal, is only an attestation by which she declares, that she holds and acknowledges these words or writings, and these alone, as Divine (John xv. 22, 24; viii. 24; Gal. i. 8, 9; Ephes. ii. 20; Rev. xxi. 14; John i. 6, 7; v. 33–36; 1 Thess. ii. 13).

V. Therefore, not only false, but likewise implying a contradiction, foolish and blasphemous, are such expressions as the following, employed by Popish writers: ‘The Church is of greater antiquity than the Scriptures; and they are not authentic except by the authority of the Church’ (ECCII *Enchir. de Ecclesiastes*). ‘All the authority which is now given to the Scriptures, is necessarily dependent on that of the Church’ (PIGIUS *de Hierar. Eccles. lib. 2, cap. 2*). ‘The Scriptures would possess no more validity than the Fables of Aesop, or any other kind of writing whatever, unless we believed the testimony of the Church’ (HOSIUS *de Author. Script. lib. 3*). But that ‘the Church is of greater antiquity than the Scriptures,’ is an argument which labours under a falsity in the antecedent and under [*inconsequentia*] a defective inference. For the Scriptures, both with regard to their significations and their expressions, are more ancient than the Church;

and this *former* Church is bound to receive the latter sayings and writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc., of Paul, Peter, etc., as soon as their Divine verity has been demonstrated by sufficient arguments according to the judgment of God (Matt. xvi. 18; 1 Cor. iii. 9, 10).

VI. But by the very arguments by which the Scriptures are Divine, they are also [proved to be] Canonical, from the method and end of their composition, as containing the rule of our faith, charity, hope, and of the whole of our living. For they are given for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction, for correction, and for consolation; that is, that they may be the rule of truth and falsehood to our understanding, of good and evil to our affections, either to do and to omit, or to have and to want (Deut. xxvii. 26; Psalm cxix. 105, 106; Rom. x. 8, 17; Matt. xxii. 37–40; 2 Tim. iii. 16; Rom. xv. 4). For as they are Divine because given by God, not because they are ‘received from men;’ so they are canonical, and are so called *in an active sense*, because they prescribe a Canon or rule, and not *passively*, because they are reckoned for a Canon, or because they are taken into the Canon. So far indeed is the Church from rendering them authentic or canonical, that no assemblage or congregation of men can come under the name of a Church, unless they account the Scriptures authentic and canonical with regard to the sum or substance of the Law and Gospel (Gal. vi. 16; 1 Tim. vi. 3, 4; Rom. xvi. 17; x. 8–10, 14–17).

VII. The SECOND Question is, [§ I], How can a persuasion be wrought in men, that these Scriptures are Divine? For the application of this question some things must be premised, which may free the discussion from equivocations, and may render it more easy.

1. A distinction must be drawn between Scripture, (which, as a sign, consists of a word and of the writing of that word), and the sense or meaning of Scripture; because it is not equally important which of the two is necessary to be known and believed, since it is Scripture on account of its [*sensus*] meanings, and because there is a difference in the method of proof by which Divinity [*astruitur*] is ascribed to the writing itself and to its significations.
2. A distinction must likewise be drawn between the primary cause of Scripture, and the instrumental causes; lest it be thought, that the same necessity exists for believing some book of Scripture *to have been written by this or that particular amanuensis, as there is for believing it to have proceeded from God.*
3. The *ratio* of those meanings is dissimilar, since some of them are simply necessary to salvation, as containing the foundation and sum of religion; while others are connected with the former in no other way, than by a certain relation of explanation, proof, and amplification (John viii. 24; v. 39, 46, 36; 1 Cor. xii. 3; 2 Corinthians ii. 4, 5; iii. 7–9; Matt. x. 20; 2 Cor. iii. 11, 12; Phil. iii. 15, 16; Col. ii. 16, 19).
4. **VIII.** The persuasion of faith must be distinguished from the certainty of vision, lest a man, instead of seeking here for faith which is sufficiently powerful to prevail against temptations, should require certainty which is obnoxious to no temptation.
5. A difference must be made between *implicit faith* by which this Scripture without any understanding of its significations is believed to be Divine, and *explicit faith* which consists of some knowledge of the meanings, particularly of those which are necessary. And this *historical knowledge*, which has only *αφαιρειαν* *mentis*, mental

security, [or human certainty, Luke i. 4], comes to be distinguished from *saving knowledge*, which also contains πληροφοριαν full assurance and πεποιθησιν confidence, on which the conscience reposes. This distinction must be made, that a correct judgment may be formed of those arguments which are necessary and sufficient for producing each of these kinds of faith.

6. A difference must also be made between those arguments which are worthy of God, and those which human vanity may require. And such arguments must not here be demanded as cannot fail to persuade every one; since many persons denied all credence to Christ himself, though he bore testimony to his own doctrine by so many signs and wonders, virtues and distributions of the Holy Ghost.
7. The external light, derived from arguments which are employed to effect suasion, must be distinguished from the internal light of the Holy Spirit [*testificantis*] bearing his own testimony; lest that which properly belongs to the latter, as the seal and the earnest or pledge of our faith, should be ascribed to the strength of arguments and to the veracity [*foris testificantium*] of external testimonies (1 Cor. xiii. 9, 12; Gen. xv. 6, 8 with Rom. iv. 19–21; Judges vi. 36–39; Heb. xi. 32, 33; John iii. 2, 10; James ii. 19; John v. 32–36; Matt. xiii. 2; Heb. vi. 11; x. 22; Ephes. iii. 12; Matt. ii. 38, 39; xvi. 1; Luke xvi. 30, 31; Matt. xxvii. 42; John xii. 37; Luke xxiv. 27, 44, 45; 2 Cor. i. 22; Ephes. i. 13, 14; John iv. 42).
8. **IX.** A distinction must be drawn between
 - a) those who heard God or Christ speaking to them Himself, or addressing them through angels, prophets, or apostles, and who first received the sacred books; and
 - b) those who, as their successors, have the Scriptures through their [*traditione*] delivery (Judges ii. 7, 10; Heb. ii. 3; John xx. 29).

For the former of these classes, miracles and the actual fulfillment of predictions, which occurred under their own observations, were capable of imparting credibility to the words and writing. But to the latter class, the narration, both of the doctrine, and of the arguments employed for its confirmation, is proposed in the Scriptures, and must be strengthened by its own arguments (Isa. xlv. 7, 8; 1 Cor. xiv. 22).

9. A distinction may indeed be made between the truth of Scripture and its Divinity, that progress may be gradually made through a belief of the former to a belief in the latter. But these two can never be disparted; because, if the Scriptures be true, they are of necessity Divine (John iv. 39–42; 1 Pet. i. 21). (10).
10. Lastly. We must here reflect, that the secret things of God, and the doctrine of Christ in reference to *its being from God*, are revealed to little children, to the humble, to those who fear God, and to those who are desirous to do the will of the Father (Matt. xi. 25; James iv. 6; Psalm xxv. 14; John vii. 17; 1 Cor. i. 20, 27); and that, on the contrary, to the wise men of the world, to the proud, to those who reject the counsel of God against themselves and judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life, to foolish and perverse men, and to those who resist the Holy Ghost, the mystery of God and the Gospel of Christ are hidden and continue unrevealed; nay, to such persons they are a stumbling-block and foolishness, while they are in

themselves the power and the wisdom of God (Luke vii. 30; Acts xiii. 46; vii. 51; 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4; 1 Cor. i. 23, 24).

X. These remarks being premised, let us see how we are or can be persuaded into a belief that the Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament are Divine, at least with regard to their essentials, that is, the sum or substance of the Law and Gospel, without faith in which, salvation can have no existence. Three things principally serve to produce this persuasion.

1. The external testimony of men.
2. The arguments contained in the Scriptures themselves.
3. And the internal witness of God. The first of these, by procuring, after the manner of men, esteem and reverence to the Scriptures, prepares [or makes a way for] faith which is resolved into the two latter that are truly Divine, and, through them, is fully completed.

XI.

1. In adverting to human testimony, we shall omit all enemies, also the Mahometans who have embraced the dregs of a religion which is compounded of a corruption of Judaism, Christianity and Paganism. But the testimony of those who acknowledge the Scriptures is twofold. That of the Jews, who testify concerning the doctrine and the books of the Old Testament; and that of Christians who bear witness to those of the whole body of Scripture.

a) Two circumstances add strength to the testimony of the JEWS.

- i. The constancy of their profession in the very depths of misery, when, by the mere denial of it, they might be made partakers of liberty and of worldly possessions.
- ii. Their hatred of the Christian religion, which transcribes its own origin, increase, and establishment from a good part of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and with so much confidence as to be prepared to stand and fall by their evidence and judgment alone (Acts xxvi. 22; 9, 2 Pet. i. 19, 20; Acts xvii. 11).

b) The testimony of CHRISTIANS, distinguished by the same mark of constancy (Rev. vi. 9; xii. 11), we will consider in three particulars:

- i. That of the Church Universal, which, from her own foundation to the present age, having professed the Christian as a Divine religion, testifies that her religion is contained in these books, and that they have proceeded from God.
- ii. That of each of the primitive Churches, which, being founded by the apostles, first received not only the whole of the Old Testament, but likewise the Epistles which were addressed either to them, to their pastors, or at least to men who were well known, and who delivered them by the same title to their successors and to other Churches (Col. iv. 16).

iii. That of the Representative Church, as it is called, consisting of pastors and teachers, who, possessing skill in languages and in Divine things, pronounce their judgment after having instituted an examination, and confirm it [by arguments] to the flocks that are severally committed to their care (Ephes. iv. 27). On reviewing these divines, we place the Roman Pontiff below the lowest parochial priest in the Romish Church who may be more learned than his holiness.

2. **XII.** The arguments contained in the Scripture are four, and those of the utmost importance. The [*genus*] quality of its doctrines, the majesty of its style, the agreement of its parts, and the efficacy of its doctrine. Each of these, separately considered, possesses much influence; but, when viewed conjointly, they are capable of inducing every one to give credit to them, if he is not blinded by a spirit of obstinacy, and by an opinion preconceived through inveterate habits. THE QUALITY OF THE DOCTRINE is proved to be Divine.

- a) By the precepts delivered in these books, which exhibit three marks of Divinity.
 - i. The high excellence of the actions prescribed, in self-denial, and in the regulation of the whole life according to godliness (Matt. xvi. 24, 25; Rom. viii. 12, 13).
 - ii. The wonderful uncommonness of some actions, which amount to folly in the estimation of the natural man; and yet they are prescribed with a fearless confidence. Such as, ‘Unless thou believest on Jesus, who is crucified and dead, thou shalt be condemned; if thou wilt believe on him, thou shalt be saved’ (1 Cor. i. 18, 24; ii. 2, 14; John viii. 24; Rom. x. 9).
 - iii. The manner in which they are required to be performed, that they be done from conscience and charity; if otherwise, they will be adjudged as hypocritical (Deut. vi. 5; 1 Cor. xiii. 1; James iv. 12; Rom. viii. 5; 1 Pet. ii. 19).

In the first of these three is perceived a sanctity, in the second an omnipotence, and in the third an omniscience, each of which is purely Divine.

- b) By the promises and threatenings, which afford two tokens of Divine [*valoris*] worth or validity.
 - i. The manifest evidence, that they could have been delivered by no one except by God.
 - ii. Their excellent accommodation, which is such that these promises and threatenings cannot possibly prove influential upon the conscience of any man, except upon his who considers the precepts, to which they are subjoined, to be Divine.
- c) The admirable attempering of the justice of God by which he loves righteousness and hates iniquity, and of his equity by which he administers all things, with his mercy in Christ our propitiation. In this, the glory of God shines forth with transcendent luster (Rom. v. 15). Three particulars in it are worthy of notice.

- i. That, except through the intervention of a reconciler and mediator, God would not receive into favour the sinner, through love for whom as his own creature he is touched with mercy.
 - ii. That his own dearly beloved Son, begotten by Himself and discharging an office of perfect righteousness, God would not admit as a deprecator and intercessor, except when sprinkled with his own blood (2 Cor. v. 19; Ephes. ii. 12, 16; Heb. viii. 5, 6; ix. 7, 11, 12).
 - iii. That he constituted Christ as a saviour only to those who repent and believe, having excluded the impenitent from all hope of pardon and salvation (Heb. iii. 8, 19; v. 8, 9; Luke xxiv. 26; Rom. viii. 29).
- d) A most signal and decisive proof, which serves to demonstrate the necessity and sufficiency of this doctrine, exists in this fact, that Jesus himself did not enter into his glory except through obedience and sufferings, that this was done for believers alone who were to be conformed to him (Heb. x. 21, 22; iv. 14–16; John xvii. 2, 8), and that, on being received into Heaven, He was constituted Governor over the house of God, the King of his people, and the dispenser of life eternal.

XIII. THE MAJESTY OF THEIR STYLE is proved.

- a) By the attributes which the Author of the Scriptures claims for himself; the transcendent elevation of his nature, in his omniscience and omnipotence (Isa. xlv. 7, 8; xli. 12, 25, 26; Psalm i. 1); the excellence of his operations, which they claim for Him as the Creator and Governor of all things; the preeminence of power, which they claim for Him as the King of kings and Lord of lords.
- b) By the absence of all ‘respect of persons’ which is not under the influence of favour and hatred, of hope and fear, and by which God declares himself to be the same towards all men, whatever station they may occupy, uttering his commands and prohibitions, his promises and threatenings, to monarchs (Deut. xviii. 15, 16; 1 Sam. xii. 25), as well as to the meanest among the people, to whole nations and to single individuals, and even to the rulers of darkness, the princes of this world, Satan and his angels, and thus to the whole universe of his creatures.
- c) By the method which he employs in making a law and in giving it his sanction. It has no other introduction than, ‘I Jehovah am thy God;’ no other conclusion than, ‘I Jehovah have spoken.’ ‘Be strong, for I am with thee; fear not, for I will deliver thee.’ Either He who speaks, truly claims these attributes for himself, and so his discourse is Divine (Exod. xx. 2; Josh. i. 9; Isa. xliii. 5; Jer. i. 8; Deut. iv. 5), or (let no blasphemy adhere to the expression), it is of all foolish speeches the most foolish. Between these two extremes no medium exists. But in the whole of the Scriptures not a single tittle occurs, which will not remove from them by an invincible argument the charge of folly.

XIV. THE AGREEMENT BETWEEN EACH AND EVERY PART OF THE SCRIPTURES proves, with sufficient evidence, their Divinity, because such an agreement of its several parts can be ascribed to nothing less than the Divine Spirit. It will be useful for the confirmation of this matter to consider

1 On the Authority and Certainty of the Sacred Scriptures

- a) The immense space of time which was occupied in the inditing of it, from the age of Moses, down to that of St John, to whom was vouchsafed the last authentic revelation (Mal. iv. 4; Jer. xxviii. 8; John v. 46).
- b) The multitude of writers or amanuenses, and of books.
- c) The great distance of the places in which the books were severally written, that tendered it impossible for the authors to confer together.
- d) Lastly and principally, the institution of a comparison between the doctrine of Moses and that of the latter Prophets, as well as between that of the Old and that of the New Testament.

The predictions of Moses alone concerning the Messiah, the calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews, when compared with the interpretations and with the addition of particular circumstances which are found in the Prophets and the Psalms, will prove that the perfect agreement which exists between the various writers is Divine (Gen. xlix. 10; Deut. xxxii. 21; Dan. ix. 25, 26; Mal. i. 10, 11; Psalm 2, 22, 110, 132; Matt. 1, 2, 24, 27; Luke i. 55, 70; xxiv. 27, 44). To the Divinity of the agreement between the writings of the Old Testament and those of the New, abundant testimony will be afforded even solely by that sudden, unexpected and miraculously consentaneous accommodation and befitting aptitude of all the predictions respecting the Messiah, the gathering of the Gentiles to Him, the unbelief and rejection of the Jews, and lastly concerning the abrogation which was to be made of the ceremonial law, first by its being fulfilled, and afterwards by its forcible removal. Whether these predictions were foretold in words, or foreshown by types of things, persons, facts and events; their accommodation to the person, the advent, the state, the offices, and the times of Jesus of Nazareth, was consentaneous even to a miracle (Psalm cxviii. 22, 23; Matt. xxi. 42; Isa. lxxv. 1; Acts xi. 18; Psalm xl. 7, 8; Dan. ix. 25, 26). If the Old Testament alone, or only the New, were now extant, some doubts might be indulged concerning the Divinity of each. But their agreement together excludes all doubt respecting their Divinity, when both of them are thus completely in accordance, since it is impossible for such a perfect agreement to have been the fabrication of an angelic or of a human mind.

XV. Lastly, the Divinity of Scripture is powerfully demonstrated by THE EFFICACY OF ITS DOCTRINE, which we place in two particulars. In the credit or belief which it has obtained in the world, and in the destruction of remaining religions and of the entire kingdom of Satan. Of this destruction two most signal tokens were afforded, in the silencing of the Heathen Oracles, and in the removal of Idol (1 Tim. iii. 15; Zech. xiii. 2; Zeph. ii. 11; Acts xvi. 16, 17). This efficacy is recommended,

- a) By the peculiar genius of the doctrine, which, independently of the Divine power which accompanies and assists it, is calculated to repel every one from giving his assent to it, on account of the apparent absurdity in it, and the concupiscence of human passions which is abhorrent to it. For this is the manner in which it speaks: 'Unless thou dost believe in Jesus the Crucified, and art prepared to pour out thy life for him, thou shalt lose thy soul' (Isa. liii. 1; 2 Cor. i. 2; 2 Tim. iii. 12).

- b) By the persons through whom the doctrine was administered, and who, in the estimation of men, were few in number, mean in condition, and full of infirmities; while in God's sight, they were possessed of invincible patience and mildness, which were so conspicuous in Him who was the Prince of all, that He asked some of his familiar disciples who were offended at his doctrine, 'Will ye also go away?' (Luke vi. 13; Matt. iv. 18, 19; 2 Cor. xi. 4, xii. 12; 2 Tim. iv. 2; John vi. 67).
 - c) By the multitude, the wisdom, the authority, and the power of the enemies who placed themselves in opposition to this doctrine. Also by their love for the religion of their own country, and their consequent hatred of this novel doctrine, and by the result of both these, in their infuriated and outrageous eagerness to extirpate the Christians and their doctrine. It was opposed by the Roman empire itself nearly three hundred years, during which the rest of the world lent their assistance. This continued opposition was excited by the Jews, nay by Satan himself, who had fixed his throne in that empire (1 Cor. ii. 8; Acts iv. 27; ix. 2; Matt. x. 18–22; John xvi. 2; Ephes. vi. 12; Rev. ii. 10, 13).
 - d) By the infinite multitude of men of every description, nation, age, sex and condition, who have believed this doctrine, and confirmed their belief by enduring intolerable torments even unto death. This cannot be ascribed, except through an ambitious insanity, either to ambition or to fury in such a multitude of persons of various descriptions (Rev. vi. 9–11).
 - e) By the short time in which, like lightning, it pervaded a great part of the habitable world; so that Paul alone filled all the places between Jerusalem and Illyricum with the Gospel of Christ (Col. i. 6; Rom. xv. 19).
3. **XVI.** These suasions are of themselves alone sufficient to produce an historical faith, but not that which is saving. To them, therefore, must be added the internal suasion of God by his Holy Spirit, which has its scope of operations,
- a) In the illumination of the mind, that we may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God; that we may know the things which are freely given to us of God, and that Jesus Christ is the wisdom and the power of God (1 Cor. iii. 7; Ephes. i. 17, 18; Rom. xii. 9; 1 Cor. ii. 12; i. 24; xii. 3).
 - b) In inscribing the laws of God upon our hearts, which consists of the infusion of a desire and of strength for their performance (Heb. viii. 10).
 - c) In sealing the promises of God on our hearts; under which term, that by which we are sealed to the day of redemption is called a seal, and an earnest (2 Cor. i. 22; Ephes. i. 13, 14).

In this manner he who inspired the sacred Scriptures into holy men of God, who constituted in the Church, Bishops, Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors and Teachers, who put the word of reconciliation into their mouths, is the Author of that faith by which this doctrine is apprehended unto righteousness and eternal salvation (Acts xx. 28; Ephes. iv. 11; 2 Cor. v. 19; Rom. viii. 16). Since his testimony is distinct from that of a man's own spirit, and since it is said to be concerning those things which are necessary to salvation, and not concerning words, letters,

or writing, the Papists act most perversely in confounding these testimonies, and in requiring through the witness of the Spirit [of God] the distinction between an apocryphal verse, and one that is canonical, though the former may in reality agree with the canonical Scriptures.

XVII. But, that we may comprise in few words the force of these three proofs, we declare,

1. concerning the force of human testimony which ascribes our Scriptures to God, that the author of no composition which ever was published or is now extant can be proved with such lucid evidence as the author of these Scriptures; and that the importance of all other compositions sinks far beneath the dignity of this, not only with regard to the multitude, the wisdom and the integrity of the witnesses, but likewise with regard to the uninterrupted evenness, the constancy and the duration of the testimony. The reason this is, that the religion contained in these Scriptures has been preached to immense numbers and varieties of people, and for a very long period; which circumstance, in itself, contains no small argument of Divinity. For it is most equitable, that religion, which alone is truly Divine, and which, without any respect of nations, it is God's will that men should receive, ought also to be preached generally to all mankind (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Mark xvi. 15; Rom. x. 12–18).
2. **XVIII.** We assert, that the arguments which, contained in the Scriptures, prove the Divinity of the religion prescribed in them, are so full and perfect, that no arguments can be derived for the defense of any religion which are not comprehended in these, and in a more excellent degree (2 Cor. iv. 2–6). They are indeed of such high value that the truth of the Christian religion is established by them as strongly, as it is possible by any other arguments to prove that there is any true religion at all, or that a true one is possible. So that to a man who is desirous of proving, that there is any religion which is true, or that such a religion is possible, no way is more compendious and easy than to do so by these arguments, in preference to any other which can be deduced from [*communes*] general notions. But the most wonderful of all is, that the very thing in the Christian religion which seems to be one of the greatest absurdity, affords the most certain proof of its Divinity, it being allowed to be a very great truth — that this religion has been introduced into the consciences of men by a mild suasion, and not by the power of the sword (1 Cor. i. 24–29; 2 Cor. v. 11; Luke ix. 54, 55). Of a similar tendency is the argument formerly used by St Augustine: 'If the Christian religion was established by the miracles which are related in the Scriptures, it is true; but if it was not, the greatest of all miracles is, that it has been able to obtain credit without miracles.' For the internal suasion of Him who alone can work miracles, ought to stand in the place of miracles outwardly performed, and to be equally potent (Rev. ii. 17). And thus the very narration, contained in these books, of the miracles which were performed in the early ages in proof of the doctrine, is now, through a most beautiful vicissitude of circumstances, proved to be true by the Divinity of the doctrine when subjected to examination.
3. **XIX.** Although the inward witness of the Holy Spirit is known to him alone to whom it is communicated, yet, since there is a mutual relation between the *veracity* of the Testifier, and the truth of the thing which is proved, an examination may be instituted respecting the testimony itself. This is so far from being injurious

or displeasing to the Holy Ghost, that by this method His veracity is rendered in all possible directions more eminently conspicuous, as being the Author not only of the internal testimony and the external word, but likewise of the significations concerning which he bears witness to both; on this account also, he has commanded us to 'try the spirits whether they be of God,' and has added a specimen of such a 'trying' (1 John iv. 1, 2). It will therefore be as easy to confute the man who falsely boasts of having the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit, as to be able to destroy that religion to which he professes himself to be devoted. From this it is apparent, that the inward witness of the Spirit is calculated to impart assurance to him to whom it is communicated, but not to convince any other person. Wherefore those who reckon this among the causes why they account the Scriptures Divine, are foolishly said by the Papists to beg the question, since they never employ it themselves in convincing others.

2 Disputation II

ON THE SUFFICIENCY AND PERFECTION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES IN OPPOSITION TO
TRADITIONS

Respondent: ABRAHAM VLIET

I. When we ascribe Perfection to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, we do not mean by that word, the perfection described by the Apostle in 1 Corinthians xiii. 10; for the latter is peculiar to the life to come, in which 'God will be all in all' (1 Cor. xv. 28). Neither do we understand by it a certain absolute quality which is equally dispersed through the whole body of Scripture and each of its parts, and which cannot be withdrawn from the Scriptures by any man who confesses that they have proceeded from God, their most perfect Author (Psalm xix. 7–9; Rom. vii. 12). Nor do we mean such a perfection as may embrace all things generally and severally, of what description soever they are, which have at any time been inspired into 'holy men,' and published by them to the Church (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17). But by this expression we understand *a relative Perfection*, which, for the sake of a particular purpose, agrees with the Scriptures as with an instrument, and according to which they perfectly comprehend all things that have been, are now, or ever will be necessary for the salvation of the Church.

II. We are compelled, both by the truth of the thing itself, of which we shall hereafter treat, and by a kind of necessity, to establish this perfection of Scripture: because, without this, we shall be forced, for the sake of obtaining entire salvation, to have recourse to other revelations of God, already made, or afterwards to be communicated; but our attempt will prove abortive, unless the Divinity of these additional revelations be established by indubitable arguments. Those [new] revelations which are said to have been already made, have never yet been demonstrated in this manner; and it will be impossible to produce any such demonstrative evidence in support of those which, it is asserted, will afterwards occur.

III. But, that we may be able to establish this perfection of Scripture in a solid manner, and as if from the very foundation, we will take a brief view of the perfection of Divine revelations in general. For, by this means, we shall not only remove the error of those who entertain a different opinion, but shall also expose and shut up the source from which it is derived. We now use the expression, 'Divine revelation,' for the act of reveling, not for what is revealed; and we say, Divine revelation is internal, which, with the Scriptures themselves, we distinguish by the general term, 'inspiration;' and that it is external by

means of the enunciation or the inditing of the words spoken or revealed. Perfection, therefore, is withdrawn from the Scriptures, either in these revelations, or in those which preceded them, in the subjoined order and method.

IV.

1. The perfect inspiration given to the prophets and apostles, who are the administrators of the Scriptures, is denied; and the necessity and frequent occurrence of new revelations after those holy men, are openly asserted.
2. Even when this perfection is conceded, the possibility is denied of making a perfect enunciation of the inspired signification or sense by means of the outward word. [The reason assigned is,] that the *ratio* of those Divine meanings which are necessary to be known for the perfect consummation of our salvation, is diverse. For while some of them serve for the instruction of the ignorant and of babes in Christ, and for preparing their minds; others are useful for perfecting adults, and for imbuing and filling their minds with the plenary wisdom of the Spirit; and while the former class of Divine meanings [for the ignorant, etc.] may be made manifest and taught by the external word, the latter class can be offered to the minds [of adults], and impressed upon them, only by the internal [*alloquio*] address of the Spirit.
3. When the perfect inspiration and enunciation of all the divine meanings have been granted, it is denied that the Scriptures perfectly contain whatever has been inspired and declared that is necessary to salvation; because, [as it is alleged], it was not the intention of the Spirit who inspired them, or of his amanuensis, to consign all those [necessary] things in writing to posterity.

V. Since these three negatives hold the following order and relation among themselves, when the first two, or when either of them is established, the third may likewise be granted, and when the third is destroyed, its predecessors may be removed, having effected the destruction of the third, we might seem to have given complete satisfaction, if we had not thought proper, according to our promise, to remove the causes of the error, and thus to cut off from the adversaries all occasion for complaining, that we had treated the controversy not according to its nature, but for the convenience of our own design and for the sake of Victoria. Wherefore to these three negatives we oppose affirmatively the following three most veritable enunciations:

1. All things which have been, are now, or till the consummation of all things, will be necessary to be known for the salvation of the Church, have been perfectly inspired and revealed to the prophets and apostles.
2. All things thus necessary have been administered and declared by the prophets and apostles, according to this inspiration, by the outward word, to the people who have been committed to them.
3. All things thus necessary are fully and perfectly comprehended in their books.

VI. From this deduction it is apparent, that the acts of revelation are distinguished from the significations revealed, and yet that the matters or subjects and the significations agree

with the different acts of revelation. This *distinction* meets the objection [*Spiritualium*] of the Mystics, who insist that the internal illumination of the Holy Spirit is always necessary. This we concede with respect to the act of revelation, but not with respect to the subjects and new significations. The *agreement* between the subjects and meanings, and the acts of revelation, refutes the Papists, who affirm, that the Church was before the Scripture, because the inditing of the word which had been previously pronounced, was posterior to the Church.' This, however, is not a necessary consequence, if the same meanings be comprehended in the written word and in that which was pronounced.

VII.

1. Commencing therefore with the proof of the first of our three affirmative propositions (§ V), and, for the sake of brevity, laying aside the perfection of the revelation made under the Old Testament, we will proceed to shew, that all things necessary in the manner which we have described have been inspired into the apostles, and that no new inspiration has since their times been communicated, and that it will not be in the future. We prove this in the following manner:
 - a) By express passages of Scripture;
 - b) By arguments deduced from them.

The first passage is, 'The Holy Ghost shall teach you all things, whatsoever I have said unto you' (John xiv. 26). From the former part of this passage we obtain the whole of our proposition: for he who 'teaches all things' omits nothing that ought to be taught. The same proof is derived from the latter part of it, if it be evident that Christ told 'all things' to his disciples, which is demonstrated by these his own words: 'All things which I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you' (John xv. 15). But he 'who is in the bosom of the Father,' has heard of all things which ought to be revealed. 'For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me' (John xvii. 8).

VIII. The second passage is, 'The spirit of truth will guide you into all truth' (John xvi. 13). The efficacy of this teaching will shine forth with more splendid evidence, if we suffer ourselves to be instructed by Christ in that truth through which, according to his prayer, not only the apostles, but likewise the whole Church to the end of the world, will be sanctified (John xvii. 17–20).

IX. The third is, 'But God will reveal it unto us by his Spirit' (1 Cor. ii. 10), that is, the wisdom which is there specified. But that no one may suppose this wisdom to be partial and serving the Church only for a certain time, let him examine the attributes which are there assigned to it. It is the wisdom which God pre-determined from all eternity, and foreordained 'unto the glory' of the Church Universal, for this is meant by the word 'our' in the phraseology of the apostles (v. 7). It is the wisdom which contains 'the things that God hath prepared for ALL them who love him,' and not for them only who lived in the apostolic age (v. 9). The wisdom which contains 'the deep things of God' (v. 10), all those 'things that are freely given to us of God,' as his Church (v. 12), and that are called, in another passage (Ephes. iii. 8), 'The unsearchable riches of Christ.' It is that wisdom which is called 'the mind of the

Lord, and the knowledge of which is said to be the knowledge of the mind of Christ' (1 Cor. ii. 16). It is the wisdom of which 'those alone who are *perfect* and *spiritual*' are said to be capable (v. 6, 14, 15), that it might not seem to be serviceable only for the preparatory instruction of the more ignorant sort, and of babes in Christ' [See § IV]. The passages already cited may suffice.

X. From among many others, let the following be received as the reason: The FIRST is taken from the joint consideration of the glorification of Christ, and the promise of the Holy Spirit, who was bestowed after the glorification of Christ, and who was poured forth by Him (John vii. 38, 39). The most copious effusion of the Holy Spirit was deferred to the time when Christ should be glorified. After his glorification, it was necessary, that it should not be any longer delayed; for Christ, 'being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received the promised Holy Spirit' (Acts ii. 33), and that 'not by measure' (John iii. 34, 35), 'he shed him forth' in such copious abundance, as it was possible for him to be poured out, and to be received by mankind. So that the event which had been predicted by the prophet Joel (ii. 28), is said then to have come to pass (Acts ii. 16, 17). This Spirit is the Spirit of the Father and of Christ alone; and he will plead the cause of no one except that of Christ, through the entire duration of the present life, as his Advocate against the world (John xvi. 7, 8). 'he will not speak of himself' but from Christ; and he will 'shew us those things which are Christ's, and which He will receive from him. He will therefore glorify Christ' (13-15). From these premises it follows, that no new inspiration, after that to the apostles, will be necessary to salvation; and that what is said about the distinct periods of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, with regard to a revelation, is a pure invention of the human brain. By this argument, all new inspirations are refuted, with such soundness and so agreeably to the nature of the thing itself, that the doctrine which maintains the contrary cannot possibly defend itself without inventing another Christ and another Spirit; (which is a notable trait in the conduct of the great masters among the Mystics); or it must at least substitute for Christ His vicar on earth, who, invested with plenary power, may administer the affairs of the church, as is the practice of the Papists.

XI. The SECOND reason is taken from the office of the Apostles, for the discharge of which, because they were immediately called by Christ himself, they were undoubtedly furnished with sufficient gifts, and therefore with sufficient knowledge. But they were constituted 'able ministers of the 'New Testament' (2 Cor. iii. 6); to which as a *Testament*, nothing can be added (Gal. iii. 15); and, as *New*, it will neither 'wax old' nor be abrogated (Heb. viii. 13); after the apostles, therefore, no new inspiration will be given. They were also made ministers of the Spirit; they were therefore instructed by inspiration in those meanings which agree with the most perfect Christians, and not with those only who are placed under the law and 'the oldness of the letter.' To them was also committed 'the ministration of righteousness;' but this was the last of all, on account of being that which is immediately connected with life eternal, and which is likewise administered by righteousness. The apostles are also called 'reapers,' with regard to the prophets who were the sowers' (John iv. 38); but this last service was to be performed in the field of the Lord. After the apostles, therefore, no new ministration has been given; and, on this account, no new inspiration.

XII. The *Third* reason is drawn from the circumstance of the period at which this inspiration was communicated to the apostles, and which may be considered in two respects.

- a) It was in the time of the Messiah, which is called the last,' being truly the last time with regard to a revelation. 'And it shall come to pass in the last days, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh' (Acts ii. 17). 'When the Messiah is come, he will tell us all things' (John iv. 25). 'God hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son' (Heb. i. 2). To the same effect Christ is said to have been made, 'manifest in these last times' (1 Pet. i. 20).
- b) That was 'the time appointed of the Father,' in which 'the heir' should be no longer 'as a child, under a tutor' (Gal. iv. 1-5); but, having arrived at full age, he might pass his life under the grace and guidance of the Holy Spirit; by whom, as 'the Spirit of liberty,' being illuminated, he might 'with open face behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and be transformed into the same image from glory to glory' (2 Cor. iii. 17, 18).

After the apostles, therefore, no new inspiration, no greater perfection has been granted.

XIII. The **FOURTH** reason will exhibit to us the glory and duration of the doctrine inspired and committed to the apostles. For it greatly excels in glory, as being 'the gospel of the glory of Christ' (2 Cor. iv. 4), who is the image of God, 'the brightness of the glory, and the express character of the person, of the Father' (Heb. i. 3). and 'in whom it pleased the Father that all fullness should dwell' (Col. i. 19); indeed 'all the fullness of the Godhead bodily' (ii. 9). The law was not at all glorious, 'by reason of this glory which excelled it' (2 Cor. iii. 10). From these premises it will follow, by parity of reason, that, if the more excellent doctrine shall continue forever, no future doctrine 'will have any glory by reason of this which excelleth in glory.' Its duration also excludes all other: for it remains without being abolished (2 Cor. iii. 11), and will be preached in all the world till the end shall come' (Matt. xxiv. 14); and Christ promises to those who administer this doctrine, that he 'will be with them always, even unto the end of the world' (xxviii. 20).

2. **XIV.** We will distinctly prove the second proposition [§ V], thus separated into two members.

- **FIRST.** Those things which serve for perfection, as well as those which serve for preparation, can be and really have been declared by Christ and the apostles.
- **SECOND.** The apostles perfectly taught all things which are and will be necessary for the Church.

XV. Let the subjoined arguments stand in proof of the First member of the proposition.

- a) 'The Son who is in the bosom of the Father,' that is, who is admitted to the intimate knowledge of his secrets, 'hath declared,' by the outward word, 'what He hath seen and heard' with the Father (John i. 18; iii. 32). But it is impious to suppose, that these things relate only to preparation. Nay, 'the things which the apostles saw and heard they have declared,' that the Church 'might have

communion with the Father and the Son.’ But perfection is placed in this communion (1 John i. 3).

- b) The wisdom which the apostles received through revelation of the Spirit, who ‘searcheth the deep things of God,’ has been declared by them ‘in words which the same Holy Spirit teacheth’ (1 Cor. ii. 18). But this wisdom belongs to perfect and spiritual men (1 Cor. ii. 6–15), as we have already seen [§ IX].
- c) **XVI.** The word, through faith in which righteousness and eternal life are obtained, is not only preparative but likewise perfective. Of this kind is ‘the word of faith which the apostles preached;’ and for this reason the gospel is called ‘the ministration of righteousness,’ ‘the word of salvation,’ and ‘the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth’ (Rom. x. 8–10; 1 Cor. i. 21; 2 Cor. iii. 9; Acts xiii. 26; Rom. i. 16).
- d) The ministration of the Spirit and of the New Testament is opposed to that of Moses, which acted the part of a school master, yet ‘made nothing perfect’ (Heb. vii. 19), and to ‘the letter’ of death and of the Old Testament. This ministration of the Spirit does not serve for preparation, but contains perfection; and this is the ministration which the apostles executed, and from which they are called ministers of the New Testament and of the Spirit (2 Cor. vi. 7), and are said to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus (Col. i. 8).
- e) That word which is called ‘the incorruptible seed, of which we are born again, and which endureth forever’ (1 Pet. i. 23–25), is not merely preparatory. And such is the word which through the gospel the apostles have declared.

XVII. Let the following arguments establish the SECOND member.

- a) The whole counsel of God, which is to be ‘declared unto men’ (Luke vii. 30), contains all things necessary to salvation. But Paul declared to the Ephesians ‘all the counsel of God’ (Acts xx. 27). Therefore all things necessary to salvation were declared, etc.
- b) The Corinthians are saved by the gospel which Paul preached, provided they retain it as they received it (1 Cor. xv. 1, 2). Therefore, all things necessary to salvation were preached to the Corinthians.
- c) ‘Salvation at the first began to be spoken by Christ,’ and, after having been perfectly preached by him, ‘it was confirmed unto us by the apostles that heard him’ (Heb. ii. 3). Therefore the doctrine of the apostles perfectly contained all things which the necessary confirmation of the Church demanded.

XVIII. And lest any one should utter this cavil, ‘The Apostles, we allow, taught all the things which were necessary at that time, but not all those which are sufficient for the edification of the body of Christ to the end of the world,’ let the following arguments likewise be added:

- d) Whoever he be that ‘preaches any other gospel’ than that which the apostles preached, and which the apostolic churches received, ‘he is accursed’ (Gal. i. 7–9). Therefore it is not lawful to add anything to the gospel preached by the apostles, to the end of the world. Indeed, he who makes an addition, ‘has perverted the gospel of Christ.’

- e) In Christ Jesus, or ‘in the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ, are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge’ (Col. ii. 2, 3). But Jesus Christ and this mystery were completely preached by the apostles (i. 25–28). ‘Jesus Christ has been made unto us of God, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption’ (1 Cor. i. 30, 31); from which the apostle concludes, that true glorying consists in the knowledge of Christ alone (Jer. ix. 24). Therefore the doctrine taught by the apostles contains whatever will, at any time to the end of the world, be necessary, useful and glorious to the church.
- f) The Church Universal is ‘built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets’ (Ephes. ii. 20, 21); and the apostles are called ‘the foundations of the celestial Jerusalem’ (Rev. xxi. 14), which is the mother of us all’ (Gal. iv. 26). Therefore, the apostles have declared all things which will be necessary for the whole church to the final consummation.
- g) ‘There is one body of Christ, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all; one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one bread, one God and Father of all, and Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day, and forever’ (Ephes. iv. 4–6; i. 23; 1 Cor. x. 17; Heb. xiii. 8). But the apostles perfectly preached this God, this Lord, this Spirit, this faith, hope, baptism and bread, and by their doctrine animate and vivify this whole body to the end of the world (Col. i. 24, 25). Therefore the church ought ‘not to be carried about with divers and strange doctrines’ (Heb. xiii. 9).
3. **XIX.** The last proposition remains to be discussed. It commends to us the perfection of the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures; and for establishing it we produce the following arguments.
- a) This perfection is taught in the express testimonies of Scripture, which prohibit any addition to be made to those things which the Lord has commanded; and the same scriptures teach, in a manner the most convincing, that these testimonies must be understood concerning the written word (Deut. iv. 2; 12, 28; xxx. 10–14; xxviii. 58; Josh. i. 7, 8). The apostle therefore requires, that ‘no one be wise above what is written’ (1 Cor. iv. 6); and he who tells the Ephesians, ‘I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God’ (Acts xx. 27), confesses, that ‘he said none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come’ (Acts xxvi. 22).
- b) **XX.** This perfection is also established by the very object and matter of the saving doctrine. This is done by various methods.
- i. The entire matter of the saving doctrine consists of ‘the truth which is after godliness’ (Tit. i. 1). But the Scripture perfectly delivers this truth, for it is concerning God and Christ, and the manner in which He is to be known, acknowledged and worshipped (1 Chron. xxviii. 9; John xvii. 3; v. 23).
 - ii. The Scripture perfectly delivers the doctrine of faith, hope, and charity. But in those acts is contained whatsoever God requires of us (1 John v. 13; 1 Timothy iii. 16; Rom. xv. 4; 1 Thess. i. 3; Tit. ii. 12, 13).

- iii. They are called ‘the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament,’ because in them both these parts are completely comprehended. But nothing can be added to a Testament: nay, the testament of a prudent testator fully contains his last will, according to which he wishes the distribution of his property to be made, and his heirs to regulate their conduct (2 Cor. iii. 6; Gal. iii. 15; Jer. xxxi. 31–34; xxxii. 38–40; Gal. iv. 1, 2). But the whole of the saving doctrine consists of a description of the beneficence of God towards us, and of our duty towards God.
- iv. The division of all this saving doctrine into the LAW and the GOSPEL, as into parts which draw forth the amplitude of the whole, proves the same thing, since both of them are perfectly contained in the Scriptures (Luke xvi. 16; Josh i. 8; Luke i. 1–4; Rom. i. 2–6; Acts xxvi. 22, 23).
- c) **XXI.** The same perfection is proved from the end and efficacy of the whole of the saving doctrine. If the Scriptures propose this entire end and perfectly accomplish it, there is no reason why we should call a doctrine, in what manner soever it may be proposed, more perfect than the Scriptures. But they entirely intend this end and efficaciously produce it (Rom. x. 4–10). ‘This is his commandment, that we should believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one other’ (1 John iii. 23). ‘These things are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ,’ etc. (John xx. 31). ‘These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God’ (1 John v. 9–13). ‘On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets’ (Matt. xxii. 37–40). ‘Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life’ (John v. 39). The Scriptures prevent men from going down into the place of the damned (Luke xvi. 27–30); and they prevent this sad consequence without the addition of any other doctrine whatsoever. For they render a man ‘wise unto salvation through faith, and perfectly furnished unto all good works’ (2 Tim. iii. 15–17).
- d) **XXII.** This is also confirmed by the mode of speaking usually employed by holy men of God, and by the Scriptures themselves; according to which they indiscriminately use the term ‘Prophets’ for *the writings of the prophets*, ‘the word of prophecy’ for *the prophetic Scriptures*, and, on the contrary, ‘the Scriptures’ for *the prophets and for God himself*; by which is signified that the word of God and of the prophets is completely one with the Scriptures; and that this word in its amplitude does not exceed the Scriptures with regard to those things which are necessary. Thus it is said, ‘King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets?’ (Acts xxvi. 27), that is, the writings of the prophets (Luke xvi. 29). ‘We have a more sure word of prophecy,’ that is, the word which is comprehended in the writings of the prophets: for it is soon afterwards called ‘prophecy of Scripture’ (2 Pet. i. 19, 20). ‘Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures what they say concerning Himself’ (Luke xxiv. 27). And, on the contrary, ‘The Scripture saith unto Pharaoh’ (Rom. ix. 17), that is, God said it by Moses (Exod. ix. 16). ‘The Scripture hath concluded all under sin’ (Gal. iii. 22). ‘For God hath concluded them all in unbelief’ (Rom. xi. 32). ‘The Scripture, foreseeing that God, etc., preached before the Gospel unto Abraham’ (Gal. iii. 8; Gen. xii. 2, 3).

e) **XXIII.** In the last place we add the following: No subject can be mentioned, by the sole knowledge or the [*cultu*] worship of which the church ought to bedeck herself with increased honour and dignity, and which subject is not comprehended in the Holy Scriptures. Neither can any attribute be produced agreeing with any subject of this kind, which it is necessary for the church to know about that subject, or for her to perform to it, and which the Scriptures do not attribute to that subject (John v. 39; Rom. i. 3; Luke xxiv. 27). Whence it follows, that the Scripture contains all things necessary to be known for the salvation of the Church, and for the glory of God. The Papists indeed speak and write many things about Mary, the rest of the saints, and about the Roman Pontiff; but we affirm, that these are not objects either of any knowledge or worship which the church ought to bestow on them. And those things which the Papists attribute to them, are such as, according to the sure judgment of the scriptures, cannot be attributed to them without sacrilege and a perversion of the gospel of Christ.

XXIV. We conclude, then, that all things which have been, are now, or to the final consummation will be necessary for the salvation of the church, have been of old perfectly inspired, declared and written; and that no other revelation or tradition, than those which have been inspired, declared and contained in the scriptures, is necessary to the salvation of the church (2 Tim. iii. 16; Matt. iv. 3, 4; xxii. 29; Acts xviii. 28). Indeed we assert, that whatsoever relates to the doctrine of truth is so perfectly comprehended in the scriptures, that all those things which are brought either directly or indirectly against this truth are capable of being refuted, in a manner the clearest and most satisfactory, from the Scriptures themselves alone. This asseveration we take with such solemnity and yet assurance of mind, that as soon as anything has been proved not to be contained in the scriptures, from this very circumstance we infer that thing not to be necessary to salvation; and whenever it is evident, that any sentiment cannot be refuted by the Scriptures, we judge from this that it is not heretical. When, therefore, the Papists sedulously attempt to destroy the whole perfection of Scripture by [*exempla*] specimens of articles, which they call *necessary*, but which are not proved from Scripture, and by those which they consider *heretical* but which are not confuted from Scripture the sole result of their endeavours is, that we cannot conclude with any certainty the former to be necessary and the latter heretical.

XXV. In the mean time we do not deny, that the apostles delivered to the churches some things which related to the external discipline, order and rites to be observed in them, and which have not been written, or at least are not comprehended in those of their books which we call 'Canonical' (1 Cor. xi. 34). But those things do not concern the substance of saving doctrine; and are neither necessary to salvation, perpetual, immutable, nor universal, but accommodated to the existing state and circumstances of the church.

XXVI. We likewise confess, that individual churches, or great numbers, or even all of them, if they can agree together in unity, may frame certain ritual Canons relative to their mutual order and decorum (1 Cor. xiv. 40), and to the discharge of those functions

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which minister to edification; provided those rites be neither contrary to the written word, superstitious, nor difficult of observance in consequence of being numerous and burdensome (Col. ii. 8; Acts xv. 10, 28). This proviso is needful to prevent those rites from being considered as a part of Divine worship, or from becoming prejudicial to the liberty of the church, whose equitable 'power' in abrogating, changing, or amplifying them, is always subservient to 'edification and not to destruction' (1 Cor. xiv. 5, 26; 2 Cor. xiii. 10). In this sense we admit the distinction of Traditions into Written and Unwritten, Apostolical and Ecclesiastical; and we call those men 'violators of order' (2 Thess. iii. 6; 1 Cor. xiv. 32, 33), who oppose ecclesiastical canons that are constituted in this manner, or exclaim against them by their own private authority.

3 Disputation III

ON THE SUFFICIENCY AND PERFECTION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES IN OPPOSITION TO
HUMAN TRADITIONS

Respondent: DE COIGNEE

Because the Papists contend for unwritten traditions, against the entire perfection of Scripture, as if it were for every thing sacred and dear to them. that they may be able to obtrude, [on mankind], many dogmas, which, even by their own confession, are not comprised in the Scriptures, and to assume to themselves an irrefragible authority in the church; it seems, that we shall not spend our time unprofitably, if, in a few Theses, we discuss in the fear of God what ought to be maintained on the subject of Divine traditions and on the opinion of the Papists.

I. The word ‘Tradition,’ according to its derivation, signifies *the act of delivering*; but having been enlarged through usage to denote *the object* about which the act is occupied, it also signifies *the doctrine itself that is delivered*. We ascribe this epithet, in either or both of its senses, to a *Divine* acceptation, on account of its cause which is God, to distinguish it from that which is *human* (1 Cor. ii. 12, 13). And we say, ‘That is *excellently Divine* which is such at the same time in its act and in its object.’ We define it, Divine doctrine, manifested by a Divine act, *with less excellence*, by men; because, however *Divine* it is in its object, still it is *human* in the act of tradition (2 Pet. i. 21). The apostle Paul had regard to this when he said, ‘As a wise master-builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon’ (1 Cor. iii. 10). And St Peter, when he said, ‘if any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God’ (1 Pet. iv. 11).

II. Divine tradition, both with respect to its object and to its act, is variously distributed. In regard to its Object.

1. According to the actions which it requires to be performed to itself by men, we distinguish it into that which is of Faith (1 John v. 13), and to which we add Hope, and into that which relates to morals. In the first, it is offered as an object to be believed, in the other as one to be performed (Luke xxiv. 27; Mark i. 15; Matt. xxi. 22, 23; ix. 13).
2. From the adjuncts of the act required, we call one act *necessary* to righteousness and salvation, while another is *supplementary* to that which is necessary (Heb. ix. 10).

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3. From the duration of time, we call one *perpetual and immutable*, another *temporary and subject to change* according to the appointment of its author (John iv. 21–23).
4. According to its extent, we call one *universal*, which binds all believers either those of all ages of the world, or those who exist at the same time; and another *particular*, which has reference to certain persons whether they be many or few, such as that which respects the legal ceremonies and the Levitical priesthood (Rom. ii. 26, 27).

III. Tradition is distinguished, in regard to the *Act*.

1. From its subject, into *Internal* and *External*. An *Internal* one is that which is made to the mind by the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Spirit (Isa. lix. 1; with Ephes. i. 17–21). To this we likewise refer that which is made to the internal senses, by sensible [*species*] images formed in [*imaginatione*] the inward receptacle of images (1 Cor. ii. 10). An *External* tradition is that which is made by means of signs presented to the external senses; among these the principal place is occupied by the Word, [*tradendi*] in the delivery of which, two methods are employed, an enunciation made by oral speech and writing (Rom. x. 17; 1 Cor. i. 28; 2 Thess. ii. 13–14; Gen. iii. 9–19; xii. 1–3; Ezek. ii. 5; v. 1–3).
2. From its causes, into *immediate* and *mediate*. An *immediate* one is that which proceeds from God, without the intervention of man. Let permission also be granted, to us, for the sake of greater convenience of doctrine, to reckon under *immediate* tradition that which is made by angels, lest we be compelled to introduce many mediate traditions subordinate to each other. A *mediate* act of tradition is that which is performed by God, as the chief author, through the hands of a man peculiarly sanctified for its execution.
3. According to its dignity and authority, it may be distributed into *primary* and *secondary*; so that the *primary* may be one, transacted indeed by man, but by a man so instructed and governed by the inspiration and direction of the Holy Spirit (2 Sam. xxiii. 2, 3), that ‘it may not be he himself that speaks, but the Spirit of the Father that is in him’ (Matt. x. 20); that he may not himself be the crier, but the voice of God crying;’ not himself the Scribe, but the amanuensis of the Holy Spirit (2 Tim. iii. 16; 2 Pet. i. 21). The *secondary* is that which is indeed according to [*institutionem*] the appointment of God, but by the will of man who administers the act of tradition at his own option (1 Pet. iv. 11).

IV. Internal tradition is always and absolutely necessary to the salvation of men. For in no way, except by a revelation and an inward sealing of the Holy Spirit (2 Cor. i. 20–22), can any man perceive, and by an assured faith apprehend the mind of God, however it may be manifested and confirmed by external signs (1 Cor. ii. 10–16). External tradition is necessary through the pleasure of the Divine will, whether we consider that will *universally*; for without it he can abundantly instruct the mind of man (1 Cor. iii. 7–10; 2 Cor. iv. 6). Or whether we consider it *according to special modes*; for it is sometimes delivered by the pronounciation of lively sounds, and at other times by writing, and at times by both methods, according to his own good pleasure, and which of them soever he has seen proper to employ (1 Cor. v. 9; Exod. xxiv. 7; 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14; Luke xvi. 27–31).

It is, from this very circumstance, necessary to men; and from it the inconclusiveness of this argument is apparent, 'Because God formerly instructed his own church without the Scriptures by the words which he spoke himself, therefore, the Scriptures are now unnecessary.'

V. Though all the doctrines delivered by God, either from his own lips or in writing, possess Divine authority; yet we may distinguish between them, and may, according to certain respects, claim a greater authority for one than for another.

1. The efficient cause makes the principal difference. For whatever doctrine it wills more, [than any other], it makes that doctrine be of greater authority. Thus it is said, 'I will have mercy, and not sacrifice' (Matt. ix. 13).
2. The condition [*qualitas*] of him who administers the doctrine, obtains for it a greater or a less degree of authority. 'For if the word spoken by angels, was steadfast,' etc, how much more is the doctrine which is announced to us by the Son? (Heb. ii. 2–5).
3. The object of the doctrine produces the same effect. For, according to it, some precepts are called 'the weightier matters of the law' (Matt. xxiii. 23), while others are called 'the least commandments' (Matt. v. 19); and thus the precepts of the second table yield to those of the first (Luke xiv. 26). In this view the Apostle said, 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation,' in which expression let the emphatic word be observed, 'that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief' (1 Tim. i. 15).
4. The nearer and more leading tendency which any doctrine has to the end proposed by the whole, the greater prevalence and authority does it possess. 'If the ministration of death and of condemnation is glorious, how much more doth the ministration of life and righteousness exceed in glory!' (2 Cor. iii. 9).
5. The very mode of delivery adds weight to the authority. For, lest that should escape which had before been delivered only in words, the author himself commits it to writing, and thus, when by a double act, it is entrusted to the memory of others, he points it out in a manner far more excellent, than if he had been content to recommend it solely by pronouncing it in words (2 Pet. iii. 1, 2). And here let the hypothesis be observed, in which it is presupposed that the matter had been delivered partly by speaking and by writing, and partly by speaking alone. The more frequent and solicitous recommendation of the written doctrine serves to strengthen this argument (Deut. xvii. 19; 1 Tim. iv. 13; 2 Pet. i. 19).

VI. Having given this exposition of the subject, let us proceed with the controversy which we have with the Papists, and pass upon it a few brief animadversions. It seems to be comprehended in these three questions.

1. Is every doctrine already delivered, which has been, is now, or ever will be necessary to the salvation of the church? Does any thing of this kind yet remain to be delivered? And if it has been really delivered, when was that done?
2. In what are those doctrines contained which it is necessary for the church to believe and practice in order to be saved? Are they in the Scriptures alone; or partly in the Scriptures, and partly in unwritten traditions from their first author?

3. How can it be made evident with certainty to the consciences of believers, that any particular doctrine is Divine?

VII. With regard to the FIRST question, our opinion is, that all the doctrines necessary for the salvation of the Church Universal, have been already delivered, above fifteen hundred years ago; and that no tradition has been made of any new doctrine that is necessary for the salvation of believers, since the days of the apostles. We establish our opinion by the following arguments:

1. Because in Christ, and in his Gospel, 'are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge' (Col. ii. 3). But the apostles have perfectly announced Christ and his Gospel (Acts xx. 26, 27); so that an anathema is pronounced on him who preaches any other gospel than that which the apostles have preached and the churches have received (Gal. i. 8, 9). But that man preaches another gospel, who adds any thing to it as being necessary to the salvation of believers.
2. Because the whole 'church has been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets' (Ephes. ii. 20; Rev. xxi. 14). This is not true, if there be a doctrine necessary to the salvation of any church, which has not been revealed through the prophets and apostles.
3. Because the whole Catholic Church is one body, consisting of particular churches that possess the same nature and principles as the whole; and this Church is animated by one spirit, and led into all truth, and being called into one hope of the same inheritance, it has 'one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all' (Ephes. iv. 4, 6), and sealed into 'the communion of the same body and blood of the Lord,' by a participation of one cup and bread (1 Cor. x. 16, 17).
4. Because 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever.' Whence the apostle infers, that it is wrong for the Church to be 'carried about with divers and strange doctrines' (Heb. xiii. 8-9).

VIII. Though some of the Popish divines profess to assent to this truth, yet indications sufficiently manifest of their dissent from it are extant in their writings, especially in those of the Canonists. In the first place, the epithets of *Universal Bishop*, *Supreme Pastor*, *Prime Head*, *Bridegroom*, *the Perfecter and Illuminator of the Catholic Church his Bride*, which are ascribed to the Roman Pontiff, do not admit of this limitation of tradition. Then, the authority of governing, commanding and forbidding, of establishing and abrogating laws, of judging and condemning, and of loosing and binding, an immense and infinite authority, which is not merely attributed to him, but is actually assumed and exercised by him, excludes the same kind of circumscription.¹ To which may be added the Decree, by which it is decided to be necessary for salvation, that every human creature be placed in subjection to the Roman Pontiff; and that, by which authentic authority is ascribed to the ancient Latin translation of the Scriptures.² But, not to multiply instances, we hold it for a general argument of this dissension, that they dare not enter into an exact enumeration of unwritten traditions, and fix the number of them; they avoid this, that

¹Extrav. de Major et Obed. c. unam

²Synod. Trid. sess. 4

they may reserve to themselves the power of producing tradition in any controversy. Some of them, therefore, assert, that other doctrines are necessary according to the different states of the Church.

IX. But we most willingly confess, that the tradition which we call *Secondary* will continue in the Church to the end of the world; for by it the doctrines which have, through the prophets and apostles, been committed to her, are by her, further dispensed to her children. For this reason, the Church is called ‘the pillar and ground of the truth’ (1 Tim. iii. 15), but only *secondarily* after the apostles, who, on account of the *primary* tradition, are distinguished by the title of ‘pillars’ (Gal. ii. 9), and ‘foundations’ (Rev. xxi. 14), before those epithets were bestowed on the church.

X. With regard to the SECOND question, [§ VI], we say that the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testament perfectly contain all doctrines which are necessary to the salvation of believers and the glory of God. This is manifest,

1. *From express testimonies of Scripture*, [see Disputation II, Thesis XIX], forbidding any addition to be made to those things which have been commanded, and commanding that ‘no man be wise above what is written’ (1 Cor. iv. 6), though in the former of these, it is evident from the text that Moses is speaking about those precepts which were comprised in writing.
2. *From the very substance of the doctrines*; and this in various ways. The scriptures contain in a complete form the doctrine of the Law and of the Gospel; they also perfectly embrace the doctrine of faith, hope and charity. They deliver the full knowledge of God and of Christ, in which is placed life eternal. They are called, and truly so, ‘the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament;’ but to a testament nothing ought to be added.
3. *From the end at which they aim and which they attain*. ‘These things are written, that ye may believe; and that, believing, ye may have life’ (John xx. 31). ‘Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life’ (v. 39).
4. *From their efficacy*; because, without [the aid of] any other doctrine, they sufficiently hinder any man from going into the place of torment (Luke xvi. 28, 29); and they render ‘the man of God wise unto salvation through faith, and thoroughly furnished unto all good works’ (2 Tim. iii. 15–17).
5. *From the manner of speech* usually employed in the Scriptures, by which ‘the prophets’ are understood to mean the writings of the prophets, ‘the prophets’ and ‘the word of prophecy’ signify the prophecies of Scripture (2 Pet. i. 19–21). What God said and did is ascribed to the Scriptures: thus, For the Scriptures saith unto Pharaoh’ (Rom. ix. 17); ‘the Scripture, foreseeing, etc., preached before the gospel unto Abraham’ (Gal. iii. 8); ‘the Scripture hath concluded all under sin’ (iii. 22).

XI. The Papists assert, on the contrary, that all things necessary to salvation are not contained in the Scriptures; but partly in the Scriptures, and partly in unwritten traditions. This their opinion they endeavour to establish, not only by the Scriptures themselves, but by the testimonies of Popes, Councils, and Fathers, nay, by certain examples

which they produce of necessary doctrines which are not comprehended within the limits of Scripture. As we shall examine the strength of each of these arguments separately in the discussion which we have now commenced, we may remark by way of anticipation, that the passages of Scripture which they usually quote for this purpose, are either forcibly wrested from their correct signification, or do not determine the proposition; that the testimonies of Popes, Councils, and Fathers, being those of mere men, do not operate to our prejudice; that the instances which they adduce are either confirmed from the Scriptures, or are not necessary to salvation. This separation we consider of such necessity, that when it is once granted that they are necessary to salvation, it follows that they can and that they must be confirmed by the Scriptures; and when it is granted that they cannot be confirmed by the Scriptures, it follows that they are not necessary to salvation. So immovable and certain is this truth to our minds, that all doctrines necessary to salvation are contained in the Scriptures.

XII. To the THIRD question, [§ VI], we reply: As one [*traditio*] DELIVERY of Divine doctrine is *primary*, and another *secondary*; so likewise one ATTESTATION [witnessing] respecting the divinity of the doctrine is *primary*, while another is *secondary* (John v. 36, 37; 1 John v. 7).

- The PRIMARY attestation is that of God himself, to whom it appertains properly, originally, and *per se* to bear witness to his own doctrine. But he employs a two-fold mode of bearing witness: One *external*, which is presented to the senses of those to whom the doctrine is proposed (John iii. 2; Heb. ii. 4; 1 Cor. i. 6–8), and is a preparative for creating faith in the doctrine, even when this doctrine is not understood. Another *internal*, which impresses on the mind a true understanding of the doctrine, and an undoubted approval of it, which is the necessary, proper and immediate cause of that faith which God requires to be given to his word, and which alone is saving.
- The SECONDARY attestation is that of the Church. For having been herself certified, by means of the primary attestation, (which is that of God), of the divinity of this doctrine, she both [*obsignat*] gives her hand and seal as a witness that God is true (John iii. 33), and she bears her testimony to the doctrine received from the God of truth. This testimony is pleasing to God, due to the doctrine, honourable to the church, and useful to men (1 John v. 9; John v. 34–36). But it is to be observed, that this testimony of the church is human and not Divine, and is less than the preceding, which is potent only in preparing the hearts, by a sort of reverence that it obtains for the doctrine, that the hearts so prepared may with sincerity, by the internal witnessing of God, yield their assent to it (John xv. 26, 27).

Under that part of the PRIMARY testimony which is *external*, we comprise the testimony of prophets, apostles, evangelists, pastors, and teachers, who are ‘workers together with God,’ provided they have been *immediately* called [by God himself]. But we refer it to the SECONDARY testimony, if they have been called *mediately* by the church. The Papists, who ascribe less to the internal attestation, and more to that which is secondary, than what we have explained, are deservedly rejected by us.

XIII. Having explained these matters, we grant, that the apostles delivered to the churches some things relating to order, decency, and the rights to be observed in them, which they did not commit to writing (1 Cor. xi. 34); but those things do not concern the substance either of the Law or the Gospel, are not necessary to salvation, are neither immutable, perpetual, nor universal, but are accommodated to the existing condition of the church, and the circumstances in which she is placed. We further grant, that either single churches, or many by mutual consent, or that all churches provided they could so agree, may frame certain ritual canons for their good order and decency, and for such direction in those duties which must of necessity be performed in them, as may contribute to their present edification (1 Cor. xiv. 40). But these conditions must be observed respecting them:

1. That these rites be not repugnant to the Written Word (Col. ii. 18–23).
2. That they neither have superstition intermixed with them, nor encourage it.
3. That they neither be accounted as divine worship, nor cast a snare upon consciences.
4. That they be neither more numerous, nor more burdensome in practice, than may render them easy of observance (Acts xv. 10, 28).
5. That the church do not deprive herself of the liberty of changing, adding, or taking away, as she shall consider her present edification to require.

Such rites as these being usefully established in a church, it is unlawful for any one, of his own private authority, to gainsay or attack them, unless he be ambitious of having his name emblazoned in the list of disorderly persons, and among the disturbers of the peace of church (1 Cor. xiv. 32, 33; 2 Thess. iii. 6).

4 Disputation IV

ON THE NATURE OF GOD

Respondent: JAMES ARMINIUS, when he stood for his degree of D.D.

I. The very nature of things and the Scriptures of God, as well as the general consent of all wise men and nations, testify that a nature is correctly ascribed to God (Gal. iv. 8; 2 Pet. i. 4; Aristot. *De Repub.* lib. 7, cap. 1; Cicero *De Nat. Deor.*).

II. This nature cannot be known *a priori*: for it is the first of all things, and was alone, for infinite ages, before all things. It is adequately known only by God, and God by it; because God is the same as it is. It is in some slight measure known by us, but in a degree infinitely below what it is [in] itself; because we are from it by an external emanation (Isa. xliv. 6; Rev. i. 8; 1 Cor. ii. 11; 1 Tim. vi. 16; 1 Cor. xiii. 9).

III. But this nature is known by us, either *immediately* through the unclouded vision of it as it is. This is called ‘face to face’ (1 Cor. xiii. 12), and is peculiar to the blessed in heaven (1 John iii. 2). Or *mediately* through analogical images and signs, which are not only the external acts of God and his works through them (Psalm xix. 1–8; Rom. i. 20), but likewise his word (Rom. x. 14–17), which, in that part in which it proposes Christ, ‘who is the Image of the Invisible God’ (Col. i. 15), as ‘the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person’ (Heb. i. 3), gives such a further increase to our knowledge, that ‘we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory’ (2 Cor. iii. 18). This is called ‘through a glass in an enigma,’ or ‘darkly,’ and applies exclusively to travelers and pilgrims who ‘are absent from the Lord’ (2 Cor. v. 6; Exod. xxxiii. 20).

IV. But there are two modes of this second perception from the works and the word of God. The FIRST is that of *Affirmation*, (which is also styled by Thomas Aquinas, ‘the mode of Causality and by the habitude of the principle’), according to which the simple perfections which are in the creatures, as being the productions of God, are attributed analogically to God according to some similitude (Psalm xciv. 9, 10; Matt. vii. 11; Isa. xlix. 15). The SECOND is that of *Negation* or *Removal*, according to which the [*secundum quid*] relative perfections and all the imperfections which appertain to the creatures, as having been produced out of nothing, are removed from God (Isa. iv. 8, 9; 1 Cor. i. 25). To the mode of *Affirmation*, (because it is through the habitude of the cause and principle, to the excellence of which no effect ever rises), that of Pre-eminence must be added,

according to which the perfections that are predicated of the creatures are understood [to be] infinitely more perfect in God (Isa. xl. 15, 17, 22, 25). Though this mode be affirmative and positive in itself, (for as the nature of God necessarily [*est*] exists, so it is necessarily known), in [*positione*] positivity and not in negation; yet it cannot be enunciated or expressed by us, except through a *Negation* of those modes according to which the creatures are partakers of their own perfections, or the perfections in creatures are circumscribed. Those modes, being added to the perfections of the creatures, produce this effect, that those which, considered without them, were simple perfections, are [*secundum quid*] relative perfections, and by that very circumstance are to be removed from God. Hence it appears, that the mode of Pre-eminence does not differ in species from the mode of Affirmation and Negation.

V. Besides, in the entire nature of things and in the Scriptures themselves, only two [*substantialia*] substances are found, in which is contained every perfection of things. They are *Essence* and *Life*, the former of them constituting the perfection of all existing creatures; the latter, that of only some them, and those the most perfect (Gen. 1; Psalm civ. 29, cxlviii; Acts xvii. 28). Beyond these two the human mind cannot possibly comprehend any substance, indeed, it cannot raise its conceptions to any other: for it is itself circumscribed within the limits of created nature, of which it forms *a part*; it is therefore incapable of passing beyond the circle which encloses *the whole* (Rev. i. 8; iv. 8; Dan. vi. 46). Wherefore in the nature of God himself, only these two [*momenta*] causes of motion, *Essence* and *Life*, can become objects of our consideration.

LET THE FOLLOWING BE OUR PROBLEMS:

- Have a corporeal *Essence*, and a vegetative and sensitive *Life*, any analogy to the *Essence* and *Life* of God, though such analogy be less than a spiritual *Essence* and an intellectual *Life*?
- If they have this analogy, how are body and [*sensus*] senses removed simply from God?
- If they have not this analogy, how has God been able to produce this kind of *Essence* and *Life*?

VI. But in God both these are to be considered in the mode of Pre-eminence, that is, in excellence far surpassing the *Essence* and *Life* of all the creatures (Psalm cii. 27; 1 Tim. vi. 16).

THE ESSENCE OF GOD

VII. The *Essence* of God is that by which God exists; or it is the first [*momentum*] cause of motion of the Divine Nature by which God is understood [*esse*] to exist.

VIII. Because every Essence, which is either in the superior or in the inferior nature of things, is distributed into *spiritual* and *corporeal* (Col. i. 16); of which, the former notes simply perfection, the latter a defection or defect from this perfection. On this account we separate corporeal Essence from God according to the mode of removal, and at the same time all those things which belong to a corporeal Essence *as such*, whether it be simple or compound — such as magnitude, figure, place, or parts, whether *sensible* or *imaginable*. Whence also He cannot be perceived by the corporeal senses, either by those which are external or by the internal, since he is invisible, intactable, and [*inimaginabilis*] incapable of being represented (Deut. iv. 14; 1 Kings viii. 1 Luke xxiv. 39; John iv. 24; 1 Tim. i. 17). But we ascribe to Him a spiritual Essence, and that in the mode of preeminence, as ‘the Father of Spirits’ (Heb. xii. 9).

THEREFORE,

1. We reject the dogma of the Anthro-morphites, [those who maintained that ‘the uncorruptable God’ had a form or body ‘like to corruptible man,’] and the intolerable custom of the Papists, which they constantly practice, in fashioning a [supposed] likeness of God’s Essence (Deut. iv. 15, 16; Rom. i. 23; Isa. xl. 18; Acts xvii. 29).
2. When bodily members are attributed in the Scriptures to God, that is done on account of the simplicity of those effects, which the creatures themselves usually produce only by the aid and operation of those members.

IX. As we ought to enunciate negatively the mode by which the Essence of God pre-eminently both is and is spiritual, above the excellence of all Essences, even of those which are spiritual; so this may be done first and immediately in a single phrase, ‘he is, *απαρχος και ανακτιος*, without beginning and without cause either external or internal’ (Isa. xliii. 10; xlv. 8; xxiv.; xlv. 9; Rev. i. 8; Rom. xi. 35, 36; 1 Cor. viii. 4–6; Rom. ix. 5). For since there cannot be any advancement *in infinitum*, (for if there could, there would be no Essence, no Knowledge), there must be one Essence, above and before which no other can exist: but such an Essence must that of God be; for, to whatsoever this Essence may be attributed, it will by that very act of ascription be God himself.

X. Because the Essence of God is devoid of all cause, from this circumstance [*existunt*] arise, in the first place, Simplicity and Infinity [*entitatis*] of Being in the Essence of God.

XI. SIMPLICITY is a preeminent mode of the Essence of God, by which he is void of all composition, and of component parts whether they belong to the senses or to the understanding. *He is without composition*, because without external cause; and *He is without component parts*, because without internal cause (Rom. xi. 35, 36; Heb. ii. 10; Isa. xl. 12, 22). The Essence of God, therefore, neither consists of material, integral and quantitive parts, of matter and form, of kind and difference, of subject and accident, nor of form and the thing formed, (for it is to itself a form, existing by itself and its own individuality), neither [*ex suppositio*] hypothetically and through nature, through capability and actuality, nor through essence and being. Hence God is his own Essence and his own Being, and is the same in that which is, and that by which it is. He is all eye, ear, hand and foot, because he entirely sees, hears, works, and is in every place (Psalm cxxxix. 8–12).

THEREFORE,

Whatever is absolutely predicated about God, it is understood essentially and not accidentally; and those things, (whether many or diverse), which are predicated concerning God, are, in God, not many but one (James i. 17). It is only in our mode of considering them, which is a compound mode, that they are distinguished as being many and diverse; though this may, not inappropriately, be said, because they are likewise distinguished by a formal reason.

XII. INFINITY of Being is a preeminent mode of the Essence of God, by which it is devoid of all limitation and boundary (Psalm cxlv. 3; Isa. xliii. 10), whether from something above it or below it, from something before it or after it. It is not bounded by anything *above it*, because it has received its being from no one. Nor by anything *below it*, because the form, which is itself, is not limited to the capacity of any matter whatsoever that may be its recipient. Neither by any thing *before it*, because it is from nothing efficient: nor *after it*, because it does not exist for the sake of another end. But, His Essence is terminated *inwardly* by its own property, according to which it is what it is and nothing else. Yet by this no limits are prescribed to its Infinity; for by the very circumstance, that it is its own being, subsisting through itself, neither received from another nor in another, it is distinguished, from all others, and others are removed from it (Isa. xlv. 9; Rom. xi. 36; Prov. xvi. 4).

THEREFORE,

Whatsoever is predicated absolutely about God, is predicated concerning Him immediately, primarily, and without [respect to] cause.

XIII. From the Simplicity and Infinity of the Divine sense, arise Infinity with regard to *time*, which is called 'ETERNITY;' and with regard to *place*, which is called 'IMMENSITY;' IMPASSABILITY, IMMUTABILITY, and INCORRUPTIBILITY.

XIV. ETERNITY is a pre-eminent mode of the Essence of God, by which it is devoid of time with regard to the term or limits of beginning and end, because it is of infinite being; it is also devoid of time with regard to the succession of former and latter, of past and future, because it is of simple being, which is never in [*potentia*] capability, but always in act (Gen. xxi. 33; Psalm xc. 9; Isa. xlv. 6; 2 Tim. i. 9). According to this mode, therefore, the Being of God is always the universal, the whole, [*plenum*] the plenitude of his essence, [*indistanter*] closely, fixedly, and at every instant present with it, resembling a moment which is also devoid of intelligible parts, and never [*in fluxum progreditor*] flows onward progressively, but always continues within itself. It will be lawful, therefore, for us, with Boetius, to define Eternity in the following manner, after changing, by his good leave, the word *Life* into that of *Essence*: 'It is an interminable, entire and at the same time, a perfect possession of Essence. But it seems that I may by some sort of right require this change to be made, because Essence comes to be considered in the first [*momentum*] moving cause of the Divine Nature, before LIFE; and because Eternity does not belong to Essence through Life, but to Life through Essence.'

THEREFORE,

Whatsoever things are predicated absolutely concerning God, they belong to Him from all eternity and all together. It is certain that those things which do not from all eternity belong to Him, are predicated about Him not absolutely, but in reference to the creatures, such as, 'He is the Creator, the Lord, the Judge of all men.'

XV. IMMENSITY is a pre-eminent mode of the Essence of God, by which it is void of place according to space and limits: being co-extended *space*, because it belongs to simple entity, not having part and part, therefore not having part beyond part. Being also its own encircling *limits*, or beyond which it has no existence, because it is of infinite entity: and, before all things, God alone was both the world, and place, and all things to himself; but He was alone, because there was nothing [*extrinsecus*] outwardly beyond, except himself (1 Kings viii. 27; Job xi. 8, 9).

XVI. After creatures, and places in which creatures are contained, have been granted to have an existence, from this Immensity follows the OMNIPRESENCE or Ubiquity of the Essence of God, according to which it is entirely wheresoever any creature or any place is, and this in exact similarity to a [mathematical] point, which is totally present to the entire circumference, and to each of its parts, and yet without circumscription. If there be any difference, it arises, from the Will, the Ability and the Act of God (Psalm cxxxix. 8–12; Isa. lxvi. 1; Jer. xxiii. 24; Acts xvii. 27, 28).

XVII. IMPASSABILITY is a pre-eminent mode of the Essence of God, according to which it is devoid of all [*passionis*] suffering or feeling; not only because nothing can act against this Essence, for it is of infinite Being and devoid of an external cause; but likewise because it cannot receive the act of anything, for it is of simple Entity.

THEREFORE,

Christ has not suffered according to the Essence of his Deity.

XVIII. IMMUTABILITY is a pre-eminent mode of the Essence of God, by which it is void of all change; of being transferred from place to place, because it is itself its own end and good, and because it is immense; of generation and corruption; of alteration; of increase and decrease; for the same reason as that by which it is incapable of suffering (Psalm cii. 27; Mal. iii. 6; James i. 17). Whence likewise, in the Scriptures, INCORRUPTIBILITY is attributed to God. Nay, even motion cannot happen to Him through operation; for it appertains to God, and to Him alone, to be [*quietum*] at rest in operation (Rom. i. 23; Isa. xl. 28).

XIX. These modes of the Essence of God belong so peculiarly to Him, as to render them incapable of being communicated to any other thing; and of whatever kind these modes may be, they are, *according to themselves*, as proper to God as His Essence itself, without which they cannot be communicated, unless we wish to destroy it after despoiling it of its

peculiar modes of being; and *according to analogy*, they are more peculiar to Him than his Essence, because they are pre-eminent, for nothing can be analogous to them.

THEREFORE,

Christ, according to his humanity, is not in every place.

XX. Since Unity and Good are the general affections of Being, the same are also to be attributed to God, but with the mode of pre-eminence, according to the measure of the Simplicity and Infinity of his Essence (Gen. i. 31; Matt. xix. 17).

XXI. The UNITY of the Essence of God is that according to which it is in every possible way so at one in itself, as to be altogether indivisible with regard to number, species, genus, parts, modes, etc. (Deut. iv. 35; 1 Cor. viii)

XXII. It appertains also to the Essence of God, to be divided from every other thing: and to be incapable of entering into the composition of any other thing: while some persons ascribe this property to the *Simplicity* and others to the *Unity* of God's Essence, several attribute it to both. But on reading the Scriptures, we find that Holiness is frequently ascribed to God, which usually designates a separation or setting apart; on this account, perhaps, that very thing by which God is thus divided from others, may, without any impropriety, be called by the name of Holiness (Josh. xxiv. 19; Isa. vi. 3; Gen. ii. 3; Exod. xiii. 2; 1 Pet. ii. 2–9; 1 Thess. v. 23).

THEREFORE,

God is neither the soul of the world, nor the form of the universe; He is neither an inherent form, nor a bodily one.

XXIII. The GOODNESS of the Essence of God is that according to which it is, essentially in itself, the Supreme and very Good; from a participation in which all other things have an existence and are good; and to which all other things are to be referred as to their supreme end: for this reason it is called communicable (Matt. xix. 17; Jas. i. 17; 1 Cor. x. 31).

XXIV. These modes and affections are so primarily attributed to the Essence of God, that they ought to be deduced through all the rest of those things which come under our consideration in the latter *momentum* of the Divine Nature. If this deduction be made, especially through those things which appertain to the operation of God, then the most abundant utility will redound to us from them and from our knowledge of them. This benefit, however, they will not perform for us, if they be made subjects of consideration only in this *momentum* in the Divine Nature (Mal. iii. 6; Num. xxiii. 19; Lament. iii. 22; Hosea xi. 9).

XXV. The LIFE OF GOD, which comes to be considered under the second [*momentum*] cause of motion in the Divine Nature, is an act flowing from the Essence of God, by which his Essence is signified to be [*actuosa*] in action within itself (Psalm xlii. 2; Heb. iii. 12; Num. xiv. 21).

XXVI. We call it ‘an Act flowing from his Essence;’ because, as our understanding forms a conception of Essence and Life in the nature of God under distinct forms, and of the Essence as having precedence of the Life; we must beware lest the Life be conceived as an Act [*accedens*] approaching to the Essence similar to Unity, which, when added to Unity, makes it binary or two-fold. But it must be conceived as an Act flowing from the Essence, which [*promovet*] advances itself to its own perfection, in the same manner as a [mathematical] point by its flowing moves itself forward in length [§ XIV]. It is our wish, that these things be understood only [*modo*] by the confined capacity of our consideration, who are compelled to use the words of our darkness, in order in any degree to adumbrate or represent that light to which no mortal can approach.

XXVII. We say ‘that the Divine Essence is in action by means of the life;’ because the acts of God, the internal as well as the external, those [*ad intra*] which are directed inwards and [*ad extra*] those directed outwards, must all be ascribed to His life as to their proximate and immediate principle (Heb. iv. 12). For [*qua vivit*] it is in reference to his Life, that God the Father produces out of his own Essence his WORD and his SPIRIT; and in reference to his life, God understands, wills, is able to do, and does, all those things which He understands, wills, is able to do, and actually does. Hence, since Blessedness consists in action, it is with propriety ascribed to Life (1 Tim. i. 11; Rom. vi. 23). This also seems to be the cause why it was the will of God, that his oath should be expressed in these words, ‘THE LORD LIVETH’ (Jer. iv. 2).

XXVIII. The Life of God is his Essence itself, and his very Being; because the Divine Essence is in every respect simple, as well as infinite, and therefore, eternal and immutable. On this account, to it, and indeed to it alone, is attributed Immortality, which, therefore, cannot be communicated to any creature (1 Tim. i. 17; vi. 16). It is immense, without increase and decrease; it is one and undivided, holy and set apart from all things; it is good, and therefore communicable, and actually communicative of itself, both by creation and preservation, and by habitation commenced in this life, to be consummated in the life to come (Gen. ii. 7; Acts xvii. 28; Rom. viii. 10, 11; 1 Cor. xv. 28).

XXIX. But the Life of God is active in three faculties, in the Understanding, the Will, and the [*potentia*] Power or Capability properly so called.

- In the UNDERSTANDING, inwardly considering its object of what kind soever, whether it be one [with it] or united to it [*intellectione*] in the act of understanding.
- In the WILL, inwardly willing its first, chief, and proper object; and extrinsically willing the rest.

- In the POWER, or Capability operating only extrinsically, which may be the cause of its being called by the particular name [*potentiae*] of capability, as being that which is capable of operating on all its objects, before it actually operates.

1. ON THE UNDERSTANDING OF GOD

XXX. The Understanding of God is a faculty of his Life, which is the first in nature as well as in order, and by which He distinctly understands all things and every thing which now have, will have, have had, can have, or might hypothetically have, any kind of being; by which He likewise distinctly understands the order which all and each of them hold among themselves, the connections and the various relations which they have or can have; not excluding even that entity which [*ex rationis*] belongs to reason, and which exists, or can exist, only in the mind, imagination, and enunciation (Rom. xi. 33).

XXXI. God, therefore, understands himself. He knows all things possible, whether they be in the capability of God or of the creature; in active or passive capability; in the capability of operation, imagination, or enunciation. He knows all things that could have an existence, on laying down any hypothesis. He knows [*alia a se*] other things than himself, those which are necessary and contingent, good and bad, universal and particular, future, present and past, excellent and vile. He knows things substantial and accidental of every kind; the actions and passions, the modes and circumstances of all things; external words and deeds, internal thoughts, deliberations, counsels, and determinations, and the entities of reason, whether complex or simple. All these things, being jointly attributed to the understanding of God, seem to conduce to the conclusion, that God may deservedly be said to know things infinite (Acts xv. 18; Heb. iv. 13; Matt. xi. 27; Psalm cxlvii. 4; Isa. li. 32, 33; liv. 7; Matt. x. 30; Psalm cxxxv.; 1 John iii. 20; 1 Sam. xvi. 7; 1 Kings viii. 39; Psalm xciv. 11; Isa. xl. 28; Psalm cxlvii. 5; cxxxix; xciv. 9, 10; x. 13, 14).

XXXII. All the things which God knows, he knows neither by intelligible [*species*] images, nor by similitude, (for it is not necessary for Him to use abstraction and application for the purpose of understanding); but He knows them by his own essence, and by this alone, with the exception of evil things which he knows indirectly by the opposite good things; as, through means of the habitude, privation is discovered.

THEREFORE,

1. God knows himself *entirely* and *adequately*. For He is all Being, Light and Eye. He also knows other things *entirely*; but *excellently*, as they are in Himself and in his Understanding; *adequately*, as they are in their proper natures (1 Cor. ii. 11; Psalm xciv. 9, 10).
2. He knows himself primarily; and it is impossible for that which God understands first and by itself, to be any other thing than his own essence.
3. [*Intelligere Dei*] The act of Understanding in God is his own Being and Essence.

XXXIII. The mode by which God understands, is not that which is successive, and which is either through composition and division, or through [*discursum*] deductive argumentation; but it is simple, and through infinite intuition (Heb. iv. 13).

THEREFORE,

1. God knows all things from eternity; nothing [*de novo*] recently. For this new perfection would add something to His Essence by which He understands all things; or his Understanding would exceed His Essence, if he now understood what he did not formerly understand. But this cannot happen, since he understands all things through his Essence (Acts xv. 18; Ephes. i. 4).
2. He knows all things immeasurably, without the augmentation and decrease of the things known and of the knowledge itself (Psalm cxlvii. 5).
3. He knows all things immutably, his knowledge not being varied to the infinite changes of the things known (James i. 17)
4. By a single and [*individuo*] undivided act, not [*distractus*] being diverted towards many things but collected into himself, He knows all things. Yet he does not know them confusedly, or only universally and in general; but also in a distinct and most special manner He knows himself in himself, things in their causes, in themselves, in his own Essence, in themselves [*praesenter*] as being present, in their causes antecedently, and in himself most pre-eminently (Heb. iv. 13; 1 Kings viii. 39; Psalm cxxxix. 16, 17).
5. And therefore when sleep, drowsiness and oblivion are attributed to God, by these expressions is meant only a deferring of the punishment to be inflicted on his enemies, and a delay in affording solace and aid to his friends (Psalm xiii. 1, 2).

XXXIV. Although by one, and that a simple act, God understands all things, yet a certain order in the objects of his knowledge may be assigned to Him without impropriety, indeed, it ought to be for the sake of ourselves.

1. He knows himself.
2. He knows all things possible, which may be referred to three general classes.
 - a) Let the First be of those things to which the Capability of God can immediately extend itself, or which may exist by his mere and sole act.
 - b) Let the Second consist of those things which, by God's preservation, motion, aid, concurrence and permission, may have an existence from the creatures, whether these creatures will themselves exist or not, and whether they might be placed in this or in that order, or in infinite orders of things; let it even consist of those things which might have an existence from the creatures, if this or that hypothesis were admitted (1 Sam. xxiii. 11, 12; Matt. xi. 21).
 - c) Let the Third class be of those things which God can do from the acts of the creatures, in accordance either with himself or with his acts.
3. He knows all beings, whether they be considered as future, as past, or as present (Jer. xviii. 6; Isa. xliv. 7); and of these there is also a threefold order.

- The First order is of those beings which by his own mere act shall exist, do exist, or have existed (Acts xv. 18).
- The Second is of those which will exist, do exist, or have existed, by the intervention of the Creatures, either by themselves, or through them by God's preservation, motion, aid, concurrence and permission (Psalm cxxxix. 4).
- The Third order consists of those which God will himself do or make, does make, or hath made, from the acts of the creatures, in accordance either with himself or with his acts (Deut. 28).

This consideration is of infinite utility in various heads of theological doctrine.

XXXV. God understands all things in a holy manner, regarding things as they are, without any admixture (Psalm ix. 8; 1 Thess. ii. 4). On this account He is said to judge, not according to the person or appearance and the face, but according to truth (Rom. ii. 2).

XXXVI. The Understanding of God is certain, and never can be deceived, so that He certainly and infallibly sees even future contingencies, whether He sees them in their causes or in themselves (1 Sam. xxiii. 11, 12; Matt. xi. 21). But, this certainty rests upon the Infinity of the Essence of God, by which in a manner the most present He understands all things.

XXXVII. The Understanding of God [*causatur*] is derived from no external cause, not even from an object; though if there should not afterwards be an object, [*non sit de eo futura*] there would not likewise be the Understanding of God about it (Isa. xl. 13, 14; Rom. xi. 33, 34).

XXXVIII. Though the Understanding of God be certain and infallible, yet it does not impose any necessity on things, nay, it rather establishes in them a contingency. For since it is an Understanding not only of the thing itself, but likewise of its mode, it must know the thing and its mode such as they both are; and therefore if the mode of the thing be contingent, it will know it to be *contingent*; which cannot be done, if this mode of the thing be changed into a *necessary one*, even solely by reason of the Divine Understanding (Acts xxvii. 22–25, 31; xxiii. 11, in connection with verses 17, 18, etc., with xxv. 10, 12; and with xxvi. 32; Rom. xi. 33; Psalm cxlvii. 5).

XXXIX. Since God distinctly understands such a variety of things by one infinite intuition, OMNISCIENCE or All-Wisdom is by a most deserved right attributed to Him. Yet this omniscience is not to be considered in God according to the mode of the habitude, but according to that of a most pure act.

XL. But the single and most simple knowledge of God may be distinguished by some modes, according to various objects and the relations to those objects, into theoretical and practical knowledge, into that of vision and of simple intelligence.

XL I. *Theoretical knowledge* is that by which things are understood under the relation of being and of truth. Practical knowledge is that by which things are considered under the relation of good, and as objects of the will and of the power of God (Isa. xlviii. 8; xxxvii. 28, xvi. 5).

XL II. *The knowledge of Vision* is that by which God knows himself and all other beings, which are, will be, or have been. *The knowledge of simple Intelligence* is that by which He knows things possible. Some persons call the former 'definite' or 'determinate,' and the latter 'indefinite' or 'indeterminate' knowledge.

XL III. The Schoolmen say besides, that one kind of God's knowledge is natural and necessary, another free, and a third kind [*mediam*] middle.

1. *Natural or necessary Knowledge* is that by which God understands himself and all things possible.
2. *Free Knowledge* is that by which he knows, all other beings.
3. *Middle Knowledge* is that by which he knows that 'if THIS thing happens, THAT will take place.'

The first precedes every free act of the Divine Will; the second follows the free act of God's will; and the last precedes indeed the free act of the Divine Will, but hypothetically from this act it sees that some particular thing will occur. But, in strictness of speech, every kind of God's knowledge is *necessary*. For the *free* understanding of God does not arise [*ex eo*] from this circumstance, *that a free act of His will exhibits or offers an object to the understanding*; but when any object whatsoever [*posito*] is laid down, the Divine understanding knows it necessarily on account of the infinity of its own essence. In like manner, any object whatsoever being laid down hypothetically, God understands necessarily what will arise from that object.

XL IV. Free knowledge is also called 'foreknowledge,' as is likewise that of vision by which other beings are known; and since it follows a free act of the will, it is not the cause of things; it is, therefore, affirmed with truth concerning it, that things [*non sint*] do not exist because God knows them [*futuras*] as about to come into existence, but that He knows future things because they are future.

XL V. That kind of God's knowledge which is called 'practical,' 'of simple intelligence,' and 'natural or necessary,' is the cause of all things through the mode of prescribing and directing, to which is added the action of the Will and Power (Psalm civ. 24); although that 'middle' kind of knowledge must intervene in things which depend on the liberty of a created will.

XL VI. God's knowledge is so peculiarly his own, as to be impossible to be communicated to any thing created, not even to the soul of Christ; though we gladly confess, that Christ knows all those things which are required for the discharge of his office and for his perfect blessedness (1 Kings viii. 39; Matt. xxiv. 36).

2. ON THE WILL OF GOD

XLVII. By the expression ‘Will of God’ is signified properly ‘the faculty itself of willing,’ but *figuratively* sometimes ‘the act of willing,’ and at other times ‘the object willed’ (John vi. 39; Psalm cxv. 3).

XLVIII. Not only [*ratio*] a consideration of the Essence and of the Understanding of God, but also the Scriptures and the universal [*consensus*] agreement of mankind, testify that a Will is correctly attributed to God.

XLIX. This is the second faculty in the Life of God, [§ XXIX], which follows the Divine Understanding and is produced from it, and by which God [*fertur*] is borne towards a known good. Towards a *good*, because it is an adequate object of his Will. And towards a *known good*, because the Divine Understanding is previously borne towards it as a being, not only by knowing it as it is a being, but likewise by judging it to be good. Hence the act of the Understanding is to offer it as a good, to the Will which is of the same nature as the Understanding, or rather, which is its own offspring, that it may also discharge its office and act concerning this known good. But God does not will the evil which is called that of ‘culpability;’ because He does not more will any good connected with this evil than He wills the good to which the [*malitia*] malignity of sin is opposed, and which is the Divine good itself. All the precepts of God demonstrate this in the most convincing manner (Psalm v. 4, 5).

L. But Good is of two kinds — the Chief Good itself, and that which is different from it (Matt. xix. 17; Gen. i. 31). The order which subsists between them is this: the latter [*not sit*] does not exist with the Chief Good, but has its existence from it by the Understanding and the Will [*illius*] of God (Rom. xi. 36). Wherefore the Supreme Good is the primary, the choicest, and the direct object of the Divine Will; that is, its own infinite Essence, which was alone from all eternity, infinite ages prior to the existence of another good; and therefore it is the only good (Prov. viii. 22–24). On this account it may also be denominated, without impropriety, the peculiar and adequate object of the Divine Will. Since the Understanding and the Will of God were, each by its own act, borne towards this [Essence] they found such a plenitude of Being and Goodness in it, that [*ille*] the Understanding [*judicaverit*] gave its judgment for commencing the communication of it [*ad extra*] outwards: and the Will approved of this kind of communication, after that method; whence [*arose*] the existence of a good, of what kind soever it was, which was different from the Chief Good. It cannot, therefore, be called an object of the Divine Will, except *an indirect one*, which God wills on account of that Chief Good, or rather He wills it to be on account of the Chief Good (Prov. xvi. 4).

THEREFORE,

The Will of God is the very Essence of God, yet distinguished from it according to the formal reason.

- LI.** The act by which the Will of God [*tendit*] advances towards its objects, is
1. *most Simple*: for as the Understanding of God by a most simple act understands its own Essence, and, through it, all other things; so the Will of God, by a single and simple act, wills its own Goodness, and all things in its Goodness (Prov. xvi. 4). Therefore, the multitude of things willed is not repugnant to the simplicity of the Divine Will (Isa. xliii. 7; Ephes. i. 5–9).
 2. This act is *Infinite*: for it is moved to will, neither by an external cause, by any other efficient, nor by an end, which is [*extra*] out of itself; it is not moved even by any object which is not itself (Deut. vii. 7; Matt. xi. 26). Nay, the willing of the end is not the cause of willing those things which are for the end; though it wills those things which are for the end [*ordinari*] to be put in order to that end (Acts xvii. 25, 26; Psalm xvi. 9). It is no valid objection to this truth, that God would not will or do some things unless some act of the creature intervened (1 Sam. ii. 30).
 3. It is *Eternal*; because nothing can *de novo* either be or appear good to God.
 4. It is *Immutable*; because that which has once either been or seemed good to Him, both is and appears such to Him perpetually; and that by which God is known to will any thing, is nothing else but this, his immutable entity (Mal. iii. 6; Rom. xi. 1).
 5. This act is likewise *Holy*: because God advances towards his object only on account of its being good, not on account of any other thing which is added to it; and only because his Understanding accounts it good, not because [*affectus*] feeling inclines [him] towards it without right reason (2 Tim. ii. 19; Rom. ix. 11, 12; Psalm cxix. 137).

LII. As the simple and external act by which the Divine Understanding knows all its objects, has not excluded order from them; so likewise may we be allowed to assign a certain order, according to which the simple and [*unus*] sole act of the will of God is borne towards its objects:

1. God wills his own Essence and Goodness, that is, himself.
2. He wills all those things which, by the extreme judgment of his wisdom, He [*judicavit*] hath determined to be made out of infinite beings possible to himself (Prov. xvi. 4). And, *First*, He wills to make them. *Then*, when they are made, He is affected towards them by his Will, as they have some similitude to his nature (Gen. i. 31; John xiv. 23).
3. The Third object of the Divine Will are those things which God judges it to be [*aequam*] right that they should be done by creatures endowed with understanding and free-will: and his [*volitio*] act of willing concerning these things is signified by a precept, in which we likewise include the prohibition of that which He wills not to be done by the same creature (Exod. xx. 1, 2, etc.; Micah vi. 8). We allow it to remain a matter of discussion, whether counsels can have a place here, provided those things about which the consultations are held be not considered as [things] of supererogation.
4. The Fourth object of the Divine Will is the Divine permission, by which God permits a rational creature to do what He forbade, and to omit what he commanded; and

which consists of the suspension of an *efficacious* impediment, not of one that is *due and sufficient* (Acts xiv. 16, 17; Psalm lxxxi. 13; Isa. v. 4)

5. The Fifth object of the Divine Will are those things which, according to his own infinite Wisdom, God judges to be done from the acts of rational creatures (Isa. v. 5; 1 Sam. ii. 30; Gen. xxii. 16, 17).

LIII. But though nothing from without be the cause of God's volition, yet, since he wills that there should be order in things, (which order is placed principally in this, that [*aliae*] some things be the causes of others), just so far as God's volition is borne towards those objects, it is as if it were the cause of itself as it is borne towards others (Hosea ii. 21, 22). Thus the cause why He wills the condemnation of any one, this, because he wills the order of his Justice to be observed throughout the universe (John vi. 40; Deut. vii. 8). Neither do we therefore deny, but that an act of a creature, or the omission of an act, may be thus far the occasion or primary cause of a certain Divine volition, that, without any consideration of that act or its omission, God might set it aside by such a volition (1 Sam. ii. 30; Jer. xviii. 7, 8).

LIV. Through his own Will, and by means of his Power, God is the cause of all other things (Lam. iii. 37, 38); yet so that when he acts through second causes, either with them or in them, he does not take away their own peculiar mode of acting with which they have been divinely endued but he suffers them according to their own mode to produce their own effects, necessary things necessarily, contingent things contingently, free things freely: and this contingency and freedom of second causes does not prevent that from being certainly done, or coming to pass, which God in this manner works by them; and therefore, *the certain futurition* of an event does not include its necessity (Isa. x. 5, 6, 7; Gen. xlv. 5, 28; Acts xxvii. 29, 31).

LV. Though God by a single and undivided act wills all the things which he wills; yet his Will, or rather his Volition, may be distinguished from the objects, by a consideration of the mode and order according to which it is borne towards its objects.

LVI.

1. The Divine Will is borne towards its object, either according to the mode of Nature, or according to the mode of Liberty. According to the mode of *Nature*, it tends towards a primary and proper object, one that is suitable and adequate to its nature. According to the mode of *Liberty*, it tends towards all other things. Thus, God by a natural necessity wills himself; but He wills freely all other things (2 Tim. ii. 13; Rev. iv. 11); though the act which is posterior in order may be bound by a free act which is prior in order. This may be called 'hypothetical necessity,' having its origin partly from the free volition and act of God, partly from the immutability of his nature. 'For God is not unrighteous,' says the Apostle, 'to forget the work and labour of love' of the pious; because he hath promised them a remuneration, and the immutability of his nature does not suffer him to rescind his promises (Heb. vi. 10, 18).

2. **LVII.** To this must be subjoined another distinction, according to which God wills something *as an end*, and other things *as the means to that end*. His Will tends towards the end by a natural [*appetitu*] affection or desire; and towards the means by a free [*electionem*] choice (Prov. xvi. 4).
3. **LVIII.** The will of God is also distinguished into that by which he wills to do or to prevent something, and which is called ‘the Will of his good pleasure,’ or rather ‘of his pleasure’ (Psalm cxv. 3); and into that by which he wills something to be done, or to be omitted, by creatures endued with understanding, and which is called ‘the will [*signi*] which is signified.’ The latter is revealed; the former is partly revealed, and partly hidden (Mark iii. 35; 1 Thess. iv. 3; Deut. xxix. 29; 1 Cor. ii. 11, 12). The former is efficacious, for it uses power, either [*tanta*] so much as cannot be resisted, or [*tali*] such a kind as He certainly knows nothing will withstand (Psalm xxxiii. 9; Rom. ix. 19). The latter is called ‘inefficacious,’ and resistance is frequently made to it; yet so that, when the creature [*excedit ordinem*] transgresses the order of this revealed Will, the creature by it may be reduced to order, and that the Will of God may be done [*de*] on those by whom his Will has not been performed (2 Sam. xvii. 14; Isa. v. 4, 5; Matt. xxi. 39–41; Acts v. 4; 1 Cor. vii. 28). To this two-fold Will is opposed the Remission of the Will, which is called ‘Permission,’ and which is also two-fold. *The one*, which permits something to the power of a rational creature, by not circumscribing its act with a law; and this is opposed to ‘the revealed Will.’ *The other* is that by which God permits something [*potentiae*] to the capability and will of the creature, by not interposing an efficacious hindrance; and this is opposed to ‘the Will of God’s pleasure’ that is efficacious (Acts xiv. 16; Psalm lxxxii. 13).
4. **LIX.** The things which God wills to do he wills
 - a) either from himself, not on account of any cause placed out of himself, whether this be without the consideration of any act which proceeds from the creature, or solely on occasion of the act of the creature (Deut. vii. 7, 8; Rom. xi. 35; John iii. 16). Or
 - b) He does it on account of some other previous cause laid down on the part of the creature (Exod. xxxii. 32, 33; 1 Sam. xv. 17, 23).

In regard to this distinction, some work is said to be proper to God, and some foreign to Him and his ‘strange work’ (Lam. iii. 33; Isa. xxviii. 21). This is also signified by the church in the following words: ‘O God! whose property is, ever to have mercy and to forgive,’ etc.

5. **LX.** Some persons also distinguish the Will of God into that which is antecedent, and that which is consequent. This distinction has reference to one and the same volition or act of the rational creature, which if the act of the Divine Will precedes, it is called the ‘antecedent Will of God’ (1 Tim. ii. 4); but if it follows, it is called his ‘consequent Will’ (Acts i. 25; Matt. xxiii. 37, 38). But the antecedent will, it appears, ought to be called *velleity*, rather than *will*.
6. **LXI.** There is not much distance between this distinction, and another, according to which God is said to will some things ‘so far as they are good when absolutely considered according to their nature;’ but to will other things ‘so far as, after an inspection, of all the circumstances, they are understood to be desirable.’

7. **LXII.** God also wills some things in their antecedent causes; that is, [*quâ ratione*] He wills their causes as relatively, and [*sic ordinat*] places those causes in such order, that effects may follow from them; and, if they do follow, that they may of themselves be pleasing to him (Ezek. xxxiii. 11; Gen. iv. 7). He wills other things not only in their causes, but also in themselves (John vi. 40; Matt. xi. 25, 26). incident with this, is the distinction of the Divine Will into Conditional and Absolute.
8. **LXIII.** Lastly. God wills some things *per se* or [*per accidens*] accidentally. He wills *per se*, those things which are simply and relatively good (2 Pet. iii. 9); *accidentally*, those which are in some respect evil, but which have such good things united with them as He wills in preference to the respective good things which are opposed to those evil ones: thus, He wills the evils of punishment, because he would rather have the order of justice preserved in punishment, than suffer an offending creature to go unpunished (Jer. ix. 9; Psalm i. 21; Jer. xv. 6).

LET THE FOLLOWING BE PROBLEMS TO US

1. Is it possible for two affirmatively contrary volitions of God to tend towards one and the same uniform object?
2. Is it possible for one volition of God to tend towards contrary objects?

LXIV. In this *momentum* of the Divine Nature, come under consideration those attributes which are ascribed to him in the Scriptures, either properly or figuratively, according to a certain analogy of affections and moral virtues in us; such as are Love, Hatred, Goodness, Mercy, Desire, Anger, Justice,¹ etc.

LXV. Those things which have the analogy of affections may be commodiously referred to two principal kinds. So the First can embrace those which we may call primary or principal; the Second, those which are derived from the primary.

LXVI.

1. The first or principal are Love, (whose opposition is Hatred), and Goodness; and with these are connected Grace, Benignity and Mercy.

LXVII. LOVE is an affection of union in God, the objects of which are God himself and the good of Justice or Righteousness, the creature and its felicity (Prov. xvi. 4; Psalm. xi. 7; John iii. 16; Wisdom xi. 24–26). HATRED is an affection of separation in God, the object of which are the unrighteousness and misery of the creature (Psalm v. 5; Ezek. xxv. 11; Deut. xxv. 15, 16, etc.; Isa. i. 24). But since God primarily loves himself and the good of Justice, and at the same moment hates iniquity; and since He loves the creature and its happiness only secondarily, and at the same moment [*odio habet*] dislikes the misery of the creature (Psalm xi. 5; Deut. xxviii. 63); hence it comes to pass, that he hates a creature that pertinaciously perseveres in unrighteousness, and He loves its misery (Isa. lxvi. 4).

¹Thomas 1 Quaest. 20

LXVIII. GOODNESS in God is an affection of communicating his own good (Rev. iv. 11; Gen. i. 31). Its first object [*ad extra*] outwards is nothing; and thus necessarily the first, that, [*illo sublato*] on its removal, there can be no [*ad extra*] outward communication. The FIRST [*progressus*] advance of this goodness is towards the creature as it is a creature; the SECOND is towards the creature as it performs its duty, to communicate good to it beyond the remuneration promised. Both these procedures of the Divine Goodness may appropriately receive the appellation of ‘Benignity.’ The THIRD advance is towards a creature that has sinned, and that has by such transgression rendered itself liable to misery. This advance is called MERCY, that is, an affection for affording succour to a person in misery, sin itself presenting no obstacle to its exercise (Rom. v. 8; Ezek. xvi. 6). We attribute these advances to the Divine Goodness in such a manner, that in the mean time we concede to the love of God towards his creatures its portion in these advances.

LXIX. GRACE seems to stand as a proper adjunct to Goodness, and to LOVE towards the creatures. According to it, God is [*affectus*] disposed to communicate his own good, and to love the creatures, not of merit or of debt, nor that it may add anything to God himself (Psalm xvi. 2); but that it may be well with him on whom the good is bestowed, and who is beloved (Exod. xxxiv. 6; Rom. v. 8; 1 John iv. 7).

2. **LXX.** The affections which arise from the primary ones, [§ LXV], are special, as being those which are not occupied about Good and Evil in common, but specially about Good as it is present or absent. We distinguish these affections according to the confined capacity of our consideration, as they have some analogy either in Concupiscibility or in Irascibility.

LXXI. In the CONCUPISCIBLE we consider, *First*, Desire and that which is opposed to it; and, *afterwards*, Joy and Grief. We describe

- DESIRE, in God, as an affection for obtaining the works of righteousness which have been prescribed to creatures endued with understanding, and for bestowing on them ‘the recompense of reward’ (Psalm lxxxi. 13–16; v. 3–5; Isa. xlviii. 18, 19). To this is opposed that affection according to which God abhors the works of unrighteousness, and the omission of a remuneration (Jer. v. 7, 9).
- JOY is an affection arising from the presence of a thing that is suitable: such as the fruition of himself, the obedience of the creature, the communication of his own goodness, and the destruction of his rebels and enemies (Isa. lxii. 5; Psalm lxxxi. 13; Prov. i. 24–26).
- GRIEF, which is its opposite, has its origin in the disobedience and the misery of the creature, and in the occasion given by his people for blaspheming the name of God among the Gentiles.

Nearly allied to this is REPENTANCE, which, in God, is nothing more than a change of the thing willed or done, on account of the act of a rational creature (Gen. xv. 6; Jer. xviii. 8–10).

LXXII. In the IRASCIBLE we place Hope, and its opposite, Despair, Confidence and Anger, and we do not exclude even Fear, which, by an Anthro-pathy, we read, as attributed to God (Deut. xxxii. 27). HOPE is an attentive expectation of a good work

due from the creature, and by the grace of God capable of being performed. It may easily be reconciled with the certain fore-knowledge of God (Isa. v. 4; Luke xiii. 6, 7). DESPAIR arises from the pertinacious wickedness of the creature, who is ‘alienated from the life of God,’ and hardened in evil, and who, after ‘he is past feeling,’ his conscience having been ‘seared with a hot iron,’ has ‘given himself over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness’ (Jer. xiii. 23; Ephes. iv. 18, 19). What in God we call CONFIDENCE or Courage, is that by which He with great [*Spiritu*] animation prosecutes a good that is beloved and desired, and puts away and repulses an evil that is hated. ANGER is an affection of depulsion in God, through the punishment of the creature who has transgressed his law; by which He brings upon the creature the evil of misery for his [*injustitia*] unrighteousness, and takes the vengeance which is due to Himself, as an indication of his love of righteousness and his hatred of sin. When this is vehement, it is called ‘Fury’ (Isa. lxiii. 3–5; Ezek. xiii. 13, 14; Isa. xxvii. 4; Jer. ix. 9; Deut. xxxii. 35; Jer. x. 24; xii. 13; Isa. lxiii. 6).

LXXIII. We attribute these affections to God, on account of some of his own which are analogous to them, without any passion, as He is simple and immutable; and without any inordinateness, disorder and repugnance to right reason; for He exercises himself in a holy manner about all things which are the objects of his will. But we subject the use and exercise of them to the infinite Wisdom of God, whose office it is [*praefigurere*] previously to affix to each its object, mode, end, and circumstances, and to determine to which of them, in preference to the rest, is to be conceded the province of acting (Exod. xxxii. 10–14; Deut. xxxii. 26, 27).

LXXIV. Those things in God which have an analogy to moral virtues, as moderators of these affections, are partly *general* to all the affections, as Righteousness; and partly concern some of them in a *special manner*, as Patience, and those which are moderators of Anger and of the punishments which proceed from Anger.

LXXV. RIGHTEOUSNESS or Justice in God, is an eternal and constant will to render to every one his own (Psalm xi. 7). To God himself that which is his, and to the creature what belongs to it. We consider this righteousness in its Words and in its Acts. In all its *Words* are found Veracity and Constancy; and in its Promises, Fidelity (2 Tim. ii. 13; Num. xxiii. 19; Rom. iii. 4; 1 Thess. v. 24). With regard to its *Acts*, it is two-fold, Disposing and Remunerative. The former is that according to which God disposes all the things in his actions through his own wisdom, according to the rule of equity which has either been prescribed or pointed out by his wisdom. The latter, [remunerative righteousness], is that by which God renders to his creatures that which belongs to it, according to his work through an agreement into which He has entered with it (Heb. vi. 10, 17, 18; Psalm cxlv. 17; 2 Thess. i. 6; Rev. ii. 23).

LXXVI. PATIENCE is that by which God patiently endures the absence of a good that is loved, desired, and hoped for, and the presence of an evil that is hated; and which spares sinners, not only that He may through them execute the [*judicia*] judicial acts of his Mercy and Justice, but that He may likewise lead them to repentance; or may punish

with the greater equity and more grievously, the contumacious (Isa. v. 4; Ezek. xviii. 23; Matt. xxi. 33–41; Luke xiii. 6–9; Rom. ii. 4, 5; 2 Pet. iii. 9).

LXXVII. Long-suffering, Gentleness, Readiness to pardon, and Clemency, are the moderators of Anger and Punishments.

- LONG-SUFFERING suspends Anger, lest it should hasten to drive away the evil as soon as ever such an act was required by the demerits of the creature (Exod. xxxiv. 6; Isa. xlvi. 8, 9; Psalm ciii. 9).
- We call that GENTLENESS, or LENITY, which attempers Anger, lest it should be of too great a magnitude; nay, lest its [*gravitas*] severity should correspond with the magnitude of the wickedness committed (Psalm ciii. 10).
- We call that READINESS TO PARDON, which moderates Anger, so that it may not continue forever, agreeably to the deserts of sinners (Psalm xxx. 5; Jer. iii. 5; Joel ii. 13).
- CLEMENCY is that by which God attempers the deserved punishments, that by their severity and continuance they may be far inferior to the demerits of sin, and may not exceed the strength of the creature (2 Sam. vii. 14; Psalm ciii. 13, 14).

3. ON THE POWER OR CAPABILITY OF GOD

LXXVIII. By the term ‘THE POWER OF GOD,’ is meant not *a passive power*, which cannot happen to God who is a pure act; nor *the act*, by which God is always acting in himself through necessity of nature; but it signifies *an active power*, by which He can operate extrinsically, and by which he does so operate when it seems good to himself.

LXXIX. We describe it thus: ‘It is a faculty of the Life of God, posterior in order to the Understanding and the Will, by which God can, from the liberty of his own Will, operate extrinsically all things whatsoever that He can freely will, and by which he does whatsoever He freely wills.’ Hence it appears, that Power [*esse velut*] resembles a principle which executes what the will commands under the direction of knowledge. But we wish Impeding or Obstruction to be comprehended under the operation (Psalm cxv. 3; Lament. iii. 37, 38; Psalm xxxiii. 9; Jer. xviii. 6).

THEREFORE,

From this we exclude the power or capability of generating and breathing forth, because it acts in a natural manner and [*ad intra*] intrinsically.

LXXX. The measure of the Divine Capability is the Free Will of God, and indeed this is an adequate measure (Psalm cxv. 3; Matt. xi. 25–27) For whatsoever God can will freely, He can likewise do it; and whatsoever it is possible for Him to do, He can freely will it; and whatever it is impossible for Him to will, He cannot do it; and that which He cannot do, He also cannot will. But He does, because He wills; and He does not do, because He does not will. Therefore, He does the things which He does, because He wills so to do.

He does them not, because He wills them not; not, on the contrary. Hence the objects of the Divine Capability may be most commodiously, and indeed ought to be, circumscribed through the object of the Free Will of God.

LXXXI. The following is the manner: Since the Free Will [of God] rests upon a Will [*habenti se*] conducting itself according to the mode of [his] nature, and both of them have an Understanding which precedes them, and which, in conjunction with the Will, has the very Essence of God for its foundation; and since God can freely will those things alone which are not contrary to his Essence and Natural Will, and which can be comprehended in his Understanding as entities and true things: it follows, that He can do these things alone; nay, that He can likewise do all things, since the Free Will of God, and therefore, his Power also, are bound by those alone. And since things of this kind are the only things which are simply and absolutely possible, all other things being impossible, God is deservedly said to be capable of doing all things that are possible (Luke i. 37; xviii. 27; Mark xiv. 36). For how can there be an entity, a truth, or a good, which is contrary to His Essence and Natural Will, and incomprehensible to his Understanding?

LXXXII. The things thus laid down [as described in the last clause of the preceding Thesis] are indeed confessed by all men; and they are generally described in the schools as things impossible, which imply a contradiction. But it is asked in species, ‘What are those things?’ We will here recount some of them. God cannot make another God; is incapable of being changed (James i. 17); he cannot sin (Psalm v. 5); cannot lie (Num xxiii. 19; 2 Tim. ii. 13); cannot cause a thing *at the same time* to be and not to be, to have been and not to have been, to be hereafter and not hereafter to be, to be this and not to be this, to be this and its contrary. He cannot cause an accident to be without its subject, a substance to be changed into a pre-existing substance, bread into the body of Christ, and He cannot cause a body to be in every place. When we make such assertions as these, we do not inflict an injury on the power of God; but we must beware that things unworthy of Him be not attributed to his Essence, his Understanding, and his Will.

LXXXIII. The Power of God is infinite; because it can do not only all things possible; (which are innumerable, so that they cannot be reckoned to be such a number, without a possibility of their being still more); but likewise because nothing can resist it. For all created things depend upon the Divine Power, as upon their efficient principle, as the phrase is, [*tum in esse, tum in conservari*] both in their being and in their preservation; whence OMNIPOTENCE is deservedly attributed to Him (Rev. i. 8; Ephes. iii. 20; Matt. iii. 9; xxvi. 53; Rom. ix. 19; Phil. iii. 21).

LXXXIV. Since the measure of God’s Power is his own Free Will, and since therefore God does anything because he wills to do it; it cannot be concluded from the Omnipotence of God that anything will come to pass, [or will afterwards be], unless it be evident [*de*] from the Divine Will (Dan. iii. 17, 18; Rom. iv. 20, 21; Matt. viii. 2). But if this be evident from the Will of God, what He hath willed to do is certain to be done, although, to the mind of the creature, it may not seem possible (Luke i. 19, 20, 34–37). And that the mind

must be ‘brought into captivity to the obedience of Faith,’ [*hic locum habet*] is a truth which here finds abundant scope for exercise.

LXXXV. The distinction of Capability into absolute, and ordinary or actual, has not reference to God’s Capability so much as to his Will, which uses his Capability to do some things when it wills to use it, and which does not use it when it does not will; though it would be possible for it to use the Capability if it would; and if it did use it, the Divine Will would, through it, do far more things than it does (Matt. iii. 9).

LXXXVI. The Omnipotence of God cannot be communicated to any creature (1 Tim. vi. 15; Jude 4).

ON THE PERFECTION OF GOD

LXXXVII. From the simple and infinite combination of all these things, when they are considered with the mode of pre-eminence, the Perfection of God has its existence. Not that by which He has every single thing in a manner the most perfect; for this is effected by Simplicity and Infinity: but it is that by which, in the most perfect manner, he has all things which denote any perfection. And it may fitly be described thus: ‘It is the interminable, the entire, and, at the same time, the perfect possession of Essence and Life’ (Matt. v. 48; Gen. xvii. 1; Exod. vi. 3; Psalm l. 10; Acts xvii. 25; James i. 17).

LXXXVIII. This Perfection of God infinitely exceeds the perfection of all the creatures, on a three-fold account. For it possesses all things in a mode the most perfect, and [*non aliunde*] does not derive them from another. But the perfection which the creatures possess, they derive from God, and it is faintly shadowed forth after its archetype. Some creatures have a larger portion [of this derived perfection] than others; and the more of it they possess, the nearer they are to God and have the greater likeness to Him (Rom. xi. 35, 36; 1 Cor. iv. 7; Acts xvii. 28, 29; 2 Cor. iii. 18; 2 Pet. i. 4; Matt. v. 48).

LXXXIX. From this Perfection, by means of some internal act of God, his BLESSEDNESS has its existence; and his GLORY exists, by means of some [*respectu*] relation of it [*ad extra*] extrinsically (1 Tim. i. 11; vi. 15; Exod. xxxiii. 18).

ON THE BLESSEDNESS OF GOD

XC. Blessedness is through an act of the Understanding: is it not also through an act of the will? Such is our opinion; and we delineate it thus. It is an act of the Life of God, by which he enjoys his own Perfection, that is fully known by his Understanding and supremely loved by his Will; [*cum acquisentiâ in eâdem*]; and by which He complacently reposes in this Perfection with satisfaction (Gen. xvii. 1; Psalm xvi. 11; 1 Cor. ii. 9, 10).

XCI. The Blessedness of God is so peculiar to himself, that it cannot be communicated to a creature (1 Cor. xv. 28). Yet, in relation to the object, he is the beautifying good of all creatures endued with understanding, and is the Effector of the act which tends to this object, and which reposes with satisfaction in it. In these consists the blessedness of the creature.

THE GLORY OF GOD

XCII. The Glory of God is from his Perfection, [*cum respectu ad extra*] regarded extrinsically, and may in some degree be described thus: It is the excellence of God above all things. God makes this Glory manifest by external acts in various ways (Rom. i. 23; ix. 4; Psalm viii. 1).

XCIII. But the modes of manifestation, which are declared to us in the scriptures, are chiefly two: The One, by an effulgence of light and of unusual splendour, or by its opposite, a dense darkness or obscurity (Matt. xvii. 2–5; Luke ii. 9; Exod. xvi. 10; 1 Kings viii. 11). The Other, by the production of works which agree with his Perfection and Excellence (Psalm xix. 1; John ii. 11).

But ceasing from any more prolix discussion of this subject, let us with ardent prayers suppliantly beseech the God of Glory, that, since He has formed us for his Glory, He would vouchsafe to make us yet more and more the instruments of illustrating his Glory among men, through Jesus Christ our Lord, the brightness of his Glory, and the express image of his Person. AMEN!

5 Disputation V

ON THE PERSON OF THE FATHER AND THE SON

Respondent: PETER DE LA FITE

I. We do not here receive the name of ‘Father,’ as it is sometimes taken in the Scriptures in regard to the adoption, according to which God hath adopted believers to himself as sons (Gal. iv. 6): Nor with respect to the creation of things, according to which even the Gentiles themselves knew God the Father, and gave Him that appellation (Acts xvii. 28): But by this name we signify God according to the relation which He has to his only-begotten and proper Son, who is our Lord Jesus Christ (Ephes. i. 3): And we thus describe Him: ‘He is the First Person in the Sacred Trinity, who from all eternity of himself begat his Word, which is his Son, by communicating to Him his own Divinity.’

II. We call Him ‘a Person,’ not in reference to the use of that word in personating, [appearing in a mask], which denotes the representation of another; but in reference to its being defined [*subsistens individuum*] an undivided and communicable subsistence, of a nature that is living, intelligent, willing, powerful, and active. Each of these properties is attributed, in the Holy Scriptures, to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- SUBSTITENCE: ‘Him which is, and which was, and which is to come’ (Rev. i. 4).
- LIFE: ‘As the living Father hath sent me,’ etc. (John vi. 53, 57).
- INTELLIGENCE: ‘O the depth of the riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God (Rom. xi. 33).
- WILL: ‘And this is the Father’s will,’ etc. (John vi. 39).
- POWER: ‘Thine, O Father, is the Power’ (Matt. vi. 13).
- ACTION: ‘My Father worketh hitherto’ (John v. 17).

We do not contend about words. Under the term ‘Person,’ we comprehend such things as we have now described; and since they agree with the Father, the title of ‘Person’ cannot be justly denied to him.

III. We call Him ‘a Person *in the Holy Trinity*,’ that is, a Divine Person, which with us possesses just as much force as if we were to call Him God. For though the Deity of the Father has been acknowledged by most of those persons who have called in question that of the Son; yet it is denied by those who have declared, that the God of the Old

Testament is different from that of the New, and who have affirmed that the Father of Jesus Christ is a different Being from the Creator of heaven and earth. To the former class we oppose the word of Christ: 'I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth,' etc. (Matt. xi. 25). To the latter we oppose another saying of the same Christ: 'It is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that He is your God' (John viii. 54). To both of these classes together we oppose that joint declaration of the whole church at Jerusalem: 'Thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said,' etc. And in a subsequent verse, 'For of a truth against thy holy Son Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, etc, were gathered together' (Acts iv. 24–27).

IV. We place Him 'first' in the Holy Trinity: for so hath Christ taught us, by commanding us to 'baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost' (Matt. xxviii. 19). 'The First' not in relation of *time* but of *order*; which order has its foundation in this: The Father is the fountain and origin of the whole Divinity, and the principle and the cause of the Son himself, which the word 'the' implies (John v. 26, 27). Pious Antiquity attempted to illustrate this [mystery] by the similitude of a fountain and its stream, of the sun and its beam, of the mind and its reason, of a root and its stalk, and by similar comparisons. On this account the Father is called 'unbegotten' and the Christian Fathers ascribe to Him supreme and pre-eminent authority. It is on this account also that the name of GOD is often attributed in the Scriptures peculiarly and by way of eminence to the Father.

V. We attribute to Him 'active generation,' which likewise comprised under the word 'Father;' but of its mode and ratio, we willingly confess ourselves to be ignorant. But yet, since all generation, properly so called, is made by the communication of the same nature which He possesses who begets, we say with correctness that 'the Father of himself begat the Son,' by communicating to him his Deity, which is his own nature. The principle, therefore, which begets, is the Father; but the principle by which generation is effected is his nature. Whence the Person is said to beget and to be begotten. But the nature is said neither to beget nor to be begotten, but to be communicated. This communication, when rightly understood, renders vain the objection of the Anti-Trinitarians, who accuse [*Catholicis*] the members of the Church Universal of holding a Quaternity (of Divine Persons in the Godhead).

VI. We say 'that from all eternity He begat,' because neither was he the God of Jesus Christ, before he was his father, nor was he simply God before he was his Father. For as we cannot imagine a mind that is devoid of reason, so we say that it is impious to form a conception in our minds of a God who is without his Word (John i. 1, 2). Besides, according to the sentiments of sacred Antiquity, and of the Church Universal, since this generation is an internal operation and it is likewise from all eternity. For all such operations are eternal, unless we wish to maintain that God is liable to change.

VII. We have hitherto treated of the FATHER. The Son is the second person in the Holy Trinity, the Word of the Father, begotten of the Father from all eternity, and [*egressus*]

proceeding from Him by the communication of the same Deity which the Father possesses without origination (Matt. xxviii. 19; John i. 1; Micah v. 2). We say, ‘that he is not the Son by creation.’ For what things soever they were that have been created, they were all created by him (John i. 3). And ‘that he was not made the Son by adoption:’ for we are all adopted in him (John i. 12; Ephes. i. 5, 6). But ‘that he proceeded from the Father by generation.’ He is the Son, not by creation out of nonentities, or from uncreated elements — not by adoption, as though he had previously been some other thing than the Son; (for this [*ille primum*] is his primitive name, and significant of his inmost nature); but He is by generation, and, as the Son, he is by nature a partaker of the whole Divinity of his Father.

VIII. We call the Son ‘a Person,’ with the same meaning attached to the word as that by which we have already (§ II) predicated the Father. For he is *an undivided and incommunicable subsistence*. John says (i. 1), ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God.’

- *Of a living nature:* ‘As I live by the Father’ (John vi. 57).
- *Intelligent:* ‘The Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, has declared him’ (John i. 18).
- *Willing:* ‘To whomsoever the Son will reveal him’ (Matt. xi. 27). ‘Even so the Son quickeneth whom he will’ (John v. 21).
- *Powerful:* ‘According to the efficacy whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto him’ (Phil. iii. 21).
- *Active:* ‘And I work’ (John v. 17).

IX. We call the Son ‘a Person in the Sacred Trinity,’ that is, a Divine Person and God. And, with orthodox Antiquity, we prove our affirmation by four distinct classes or arguments.

1. From the names by which he is called in the Scriptures.
2. From the Divine attributes which the Scriptures ascribe to him.
3. From the works which the Scriptures relate to have been produced by him.
4. From a collation of those passages of Scripture, which, having been uttered in the Old Testament concerning the Father, are in the New appropriated to the Son.

X.

1. The Divinity of the Person of the Son is evident, from the names which are attributed to him in the scriptures.
 - a) Because he is called God, and this not only *attributively*, as ‘the Word was God’ (John i. 1), ‘Who is over all, God blessed forever’ (Rom. ix. 5); but likewise *subjectively*: ‘God manifested in the flesh’ (1 Tim. iii. 16). ‘O God, thy God hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness’ (Heb. i. 9). Nay, he is likewise called ‘the great God’ (Tit. ii. 13).

- b) The word 'Son' stands in proof of the same truth, especially so far as this name belongs to him properly and solely, according to which he is called 'God's own Son' (Rom. viii. 32), and 'his only begotten Son' (John i. 18), which expressions, we affirm, are tantamount to his being called [*naturalis*] by nature, the Son of God.
 - c) Because he is called 'King of kings and Lord of lords' (Rev. xvii. 14; xix. 16); and 'the Lord of glory' (1 Cor. ii. 8). These appellations prove much more strongly what we wish to establish, if they be compared with the scriptures of the Old Testament, in which the same names are ascribed to him who is called Jehovah (Psalm xcv. 3; xxiv. 8–10).
 - d) Pious antiquity established the same truth from the name, of Λογος, 'the Word;' which cannot signify the outward word that is devoid of a proper subsistence, on account of those things which are attributed to it in the Scriptures. For it is said to have been 'in the beginning, to have been with God, and to be God,' and to have 'created all things,' etc.
2. **XI.** The essential attributes of the Deity which are in the Scriptures ascribed to the Son of God, likewise declare this in the plainest manner.
- a) *Immensity*: 'My Father and I will come unto him, and make our abode with him' (John xiv. 23). 'That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith' (Ephes. iii. 17). 'I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world' (Matt. xxviii. 20).
 - b) *Eternity*: 'In the beginning was the Word' (John i. 1). 'I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last' (Rev. i. 11; ii. 8).
 - c) *Immutability*: 'But thou, O Lord, remainest; thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail' (Heb. i. 11, 12).
 - d) *Omniscience* is also attributed to him: For he searches the reins and hearts' (Rev. ii. 93). He 'knows all things' (John xxi. 17). And he perceived the thoughts of the Pharisees (Matt. xii. 25).
 - e) *Omnipotence*: 'According to the efficacy whereby the Lord Jesus Christ is able even to subdue all things unto himself' (Phil. iii. 21). But the Divine nature cannot, without a contradiction, be taken away from him to whom the proper essentials of God are ascribed.
 - f) Lastly, *Majesty and Glory* belong to Him equally with the Father: 'That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father' (John v. 23). 'Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever' (Rev. v. 13).
3. **XII.** The divine works which are attributed to Him, establish the same truth.
- a) *The creation of all things*: 'All things were made by Him' (John i. 3). 'By whom also, he made the worlds,' or [*secula*] the ages (Heb. i. 2). 'One Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things' (1 Cor. viii. 6). But what are these 'all things?' Exactly the same as those which are said, [in the same verse], to be 'of the Father.'

- b) *The preservation of all things*: all things by the word of his power' (Heb. i. 3). 'My Father worketh hitherto, and I work' (John v. 17).
- c) *The performing of miracles*: 'Which He works by the Holy Spirit, who is said to 'have received of the things of Christ, by which he will glorify Christ' (John xvi. 14). 'By which, also, he went and preached unto the spirits in prison' (1 Pet. iii. 19). This Spirit is so peculiar to Christ, that the Apostles are said to perform miracles in the name and power of Christ.
- d) To these let *the Works which relate to the salvation of the Church* be added; which cannot be performed by one who is a mere man.

4. **XIII.** A comparison of those passages which in the Old Testament, are ascribed to God, who claims for himself the appellation of Jehovah, with the same passages which in the New, are attributed to the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ supplies to us the Fourth Class of Arguments. But because the number of them is immense, we will refrain from a prolix recital of the whole, and produce only a few out of the many.

- In Numbers xxi. 5–7, it is said, 'The people spoke against God, and the Lord sent fiery serpents among them, and they bit the people,' many of whom 'died.'
- In 1 Corinthians x. 9, the apostle says, 'Neither let us tempt CHRIST, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.'
- The passage in the 68th Psalm (18), which describes God as 'ascending on high and leading captivity captive,' is interpreted by the apostle (Ephes. iv. 8), and applied to CHRIST.
- What is spoken in Psalm cii. 25, 26, about the TRUE GOD, ['Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth,' etc.] is, in Heb. i. 10–12, expressly applied to CHRIST.
- St John, in his Gospel (xii. 40, 41), interprets the vision described by Isaiah (vi. 9, 10), and declares that 'Esaias said these things when he saw the glory of Christ.'
- In Isai. viii. 14, JEHOVAH, it is said, 'shall be a rock of offense, and a snare to the houses of Israel,' etc. Yet Simeon (in Luke ii. 34), St Paul (in Romans ix. 33), and St Peter (1 Epis. ii. 8), severally declare that CHRIST was 'set for the rising and falling of many,' for 'a stumbling block, and rock of offense' to unbelievers, and to 'the disobedient.'

XIV. We call Christ 'the *Second Person*,' according to the order which has been pointed out to us by Himself in Matt. xxviii. 19. For the Son is of the Father, as from one from whom he is said to have come forth. The Son lives by the Father (John vi. 57), and the Father hath given to the Son to have life in himself' (v. 26). The Son understands by the Father, because 'the Father sheweth the Son all things that himself doeth' (v. 20), and what things the Son saw while 'He was in the bosom of the Father, he testifies and declares to us' (i. 18; iii. 32). The son works from the Father, because 'the Son can do nothing of himself: But what he seeth the Father do' (v. 19). Thus 'the Son does not

speak of himself, but the Father, that dwelleth in him, doeth the works' (xiv. 10). This is the reason why the Son, by a just right, refers all things to the Father, as to Him from whom he received all that he had (xix. 11; xvii. 7). 'When he was in the form of God, he thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, etc. and became obedient' to the Father, 'even unto the death of the cross' (Phil. ii. 6–8).

XV. We say 'that the Son was begotten of the Father from all eternity.'

1. Because 'his goings-forth have been from of old, from everlasting,' and 'these goings-forth' are from the Father (Micah v. 2, 3). If any one be desirous to give them any other interpretation than 'the goings-forth' of generation, he must make them subsequent to the 'goings-forth' of generation; and thus likewise he establishes the eternity of generation.
2. Because, since the Son is eternal, as we have previously shewn, [§ VII], and since he had no existence at all before he existed as the Son, (but [*competit*] it is proper to a son to be begotten), we correctly assert on these grounds, that 'he was eternally begotten.'
3. Since Λογος, 'the Word,' was 'in the beginning with the Father' (John i. 1, 9), he must of necessity have been in the beginning from the Father; (unless we wish to maintain that the Word is collateral with the Father); in truth, according to the order of nature he must have been *from* the Father, before he was *with* the Father. But he is not from the Father, except according to the mode of generation; for if it be otherwise, 'the Word' will be from the Father in one mode, and 'the Son' in another, which contradicts the eternity of the Son that we have already established. THEREFORE, 'the Word' is eternally begotten.

XVI. From these positions we perceive, that an agreement and a distinction subsists between the Father and the Son.

1. AN AGREEMENT in reference to one and the same nature and essence, according to which the Son is said to be 'in the form of God,' and 'equal with the Father' (Phil. ii. 6); and according to the decree of the Nicene Council to be ομοουσιος ['of the same substance,'] 'consubstantial with the Father,' not ομοιωσιος 'of like substance;' because the comparison of things in essence must be referred not to *similitude* or *dissimilitude*, but to EQUALITY or INEQUALITY, according to the very nature of things and to truth itself:
2. A DISTINCTION according to the mode of existence or subsistence, by which both of them have their divinity: for the Father has it *from no one*, the Son has it *communicated to him by the Father*. According to the former, the Son is said to be one with the Father (John x. 30); according to the latter, He is said to be 'another' than the Father (v. 32); but according to both of them, the Son and the Father are said to 'come to those whom they love, and to make their abode with them' (xiv. 23), by the Spirit of both Father and Son 'who dwelleth in believers' (Rom. viii. 9–11), and 'whom the Son sends to them from the Father' (John xv. 26). May the God of

our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of all consolation, deign to bestow upon us the communion of this Spirit, through the Son of his love. Amen!

6 Disputation VI

ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

Respondent: JAMES MAHOT

As the preceding Disputation treated of God the Father and God the Son, order requires us now to enter on the subject of the Holy Ghost.

I. The word SPIRIT signifies primarily, properly, and adequately, a thing which in its first act and essence is most subtle and simple, but which in its second act and efficacy is exceedingly active, that is, powerful and [*actuosam*] energetic. Hence it has come to pass, that this word is received, by way of distinction and opposition, sometimes [*hypostaticâ*] for a personal and self-existing [*vis*] energy and power, and sometimes for an energy inhering to some other thing according to the mode of quality or property: but this word belongs primarily and properly to a self-existing Power; and to an inhering power or energy, only secondarily and by a metaphorical communication (John iii. 8; Psalm civ. 4; Luke i. 35; 1 Kings ii. 9).

II. But it is, in the first place, and with the greatest truth, ascribed to God (John iv. 24),

- both because He according to Essence is a pure and most simple act;
- and because according to Efficacy He is most active, and most prompt and powerful to perform,
- that is, because He is the First and Supreme Being, as well as the First and Supreme Agent.

But it is with singular propriety attributed to the hypostatical energy which exists in God, and which is frequently marked with an addition, thus, ‘The Spirit of Elohim’ (Gen. i. 9), ‘The Spirit of Jehovah’ (Isa. xi. 2), and ‘His Holy Spirit’ (lxiii. 10). By these expressions is signified, that He is the person by whom God the Father and the Son perform all things in heaven and earth (Matt. xii. 28; Luke xi. 20), and that He is not only Holy in himself, but likewise the Sanctifier of all things which are in any way holy and so called. Our present discourse is concerning the Holy Spirit understood according to this last signification.

III. We may not attempt to *define* the Holy Spirit, (for such an attempt is unlawful), but we may be allowed in some degree to *describe* Him according to the Scriptures, after the following manner: He is the Person subsisting in the Sacred and undivided Trinity, who is the Third in order, emanates from the Father and is sent by the Son; and therefore He is the Spirit proceeding from both, and, according to his Person, distinct from both; an infinite, eternal illimitable Spirit, and of the same Divinity with God the Father and the Son. This description we will now consider in order, according to its several parts (Matt. xxviii. 19; John i. 26; and Luke iii. 16; John xiv. 16; 1 Cor. ii. 10, 11; Gen. i. 2; Psalm cxxxix. 7–12).

IV. On this subject four things come under our consideration and must be established by valid arguments.

1. That the Holy Spirit *υπισταμενον*, is subsistent and a Person; not something after the manner of a quality and property, (suppose that of Goodness, Mercy, or Patience), which exists within the Deity.
2. That He is a Person proceeding from the Father and the Son, and therefore is in order the Third in the Trinity.
3. That according to his Person He is distinct from the Father and the Son.
4. That He is infinite, eternal, [*immensus*] immeasurable, and of the same Divinity with the Father and the Son, that is, not a creature, but God.

V.

1. The first is proved by those attributes which the whole of mankind are accustomed to ascribe to a thing [*subsistanti*] that has an existence, and which they conceive under the notion of ‘a Person:’ for we assert, that all those things belong to the Holy Spirit, whether they agree with a person in the First Act or in the Second.
 - a) From those things which agree *in the First Act* with a thing that has an existence and is a Person, we draw the following conclusion: That to which belongs Essence or Existence, Life, Understanding, Will and Power, is justly called ‘a Person,’ or nothing whatever in the nature of things can receive that appellation. But to the Holy Spirit belong:
 - i. *Essence or Existence:* for He is in God (1 Cor. ii. 11), emanates from God and is sent by the Son (John xv. 26).
 - ii. *Life:* for He ‘brooded over the waters’ (Gen. i. 2), as a hen covers her chickens with her wings; and He is the Author of animal and of spiritual life to all things living (Job xxxiii. 4; John iii. 5; Rom. viii. 2, 11).
 - iii. *Understanding:* ‘The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God’ (1 Cor. ii. 10).
 - iv. *Will:* for He ‘distributes his gifts to every man severally as He will’ (1 Cor. xii. 11).

- v. Lastly, *Power*: with which, the prophets, and other holy persons, and in particular the Messiah himself, were furnished and strengthened (Micah iii. 8; Ephes. iii. 16; Isa. xi. 2).

VI. The same thing is proved

- b) from those things which are usually attributed to a Person *in the Second Act*. For of this description are the actions which are ascribed to the Holy Spirit, and which [*solent*] usually belong to nothing except a subsistence and a person. Such are to create (Job xxxiii. 4; Psalm civ. 30), to preserve, to vivify or quicken, to instruct or furnish them with knowledge, faith, charity, hope, the fear of the Lord, fortitude, patience, and other virtues; to ‘rush mightily upon Sampson’ (Judges xiv. 6); to ‘depart from Saul’ (1 Sam. xvi. 14); to ‘rest upon the Messiah’ (Isa. xi. 2); to ‘come upon and overshadow Mary’ (Luke i. 35); to send the prophets (Isa. lxi. 1); to appoint bishops (Acts xx. 28); to descend in a bodily appearance like a dove upon Christ (Luke iii. 22), and similar operations. To these may also be added those metaphorical expressions which attributes such passions to Him as agree with no other thing than a subsistence and a person, and as are signified in the following passages: ‘I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh’ (Joel ii. 28). ‘Jesus breathed on them, and said, receive ye the Holy Ghost’ (John xx. 22). ‘They vexed his Holy Spirit’ (Isa. lxiii. 10). ‘Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God’ (Ephes. iv. 30). To blaspheme and speak a word against the Holy Ghost (Matt. xii. 31, 32). ‘He hath done despite to the Spirit of Grace’ (Heb. x. 29).

VII. A similar bearing have those passages of Scripture which [*connumerant*] reckon the Holy Spirit in the same series with the Father and the Son. Of which class is that commanding men ‘to be baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost’ (Matt. xxviii. 19); that which says, ‘There are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost’ (1 John v. 7); that which declares, ‘The same Spirit, the same Lord, and the same God, effect the diversities of operations, institute the differences of administrations, and pour out the diversities of gifts (1 Cor. xii. 4–6); and that which beseeches, ‘that the grace of’ the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost may be with all believers’ (2 Cor. xiii. 13). For it would be absurd to number an inly-existent quality, or property, in the same series with two subsistences or persons.

2. **VIII.** The second topic of consideration [§ IV], contains three members:

- a) Of which *the First*, that is, the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father, is proved by those passages of Scripture in which he receives the appellation of ‘the Spirit of God and of the Father,’ and of ‘the Spirit who is of God;’ and by those in which the Spirit is said to proceed and go forth from, to be given, poured out, and sent forth by the Father, and by whom the Father acts and operates (John xiv. 16, 26; xv. 26; Joel ii. 28; Gal. iv. 6).
- b) *The Second member*, that is, the procession from the Son, is proved by similar passages, which style Him ‘the Spirit of the Son’ (Gal. iv. 6), and which declare, that He is given and sent by the Son (John xv. 26), and that He therefore

receives from the Son and glorifies Him (xvi.14). To which must likewise be added, from another passage (xx.22), a mode of giving, which is called ‘breathing,’ or inspiration.

- c) *The Third member*, that is, His being the Third Person in the Holy Trinity in order, but not in time and degree, appears principally from the fact, that the Spirit of the Father and the Son is said to be sent and given by the Father and the Son, and that the Father and the Son are said to work by Him. It is also manifest from the order which was observed in the institution of Baptism, ‘Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost’ (Matt. xxviii. 19).

3. **IX.** All those passages of Scripture which have been produced in the preceding Theses for another purpose, prove ‘that the Holy Spirit is distinguished from the Father and the Son, not only according to name, but likewise according to person,’ which is the third part of the description which we have given [§ IV]. Among other passages, the following expressly affirm this distinction: ‘I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter’ (John xiv.16). ‘That Comforter, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name’ (xiv.26). ‘When that Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father’ (xv.26). ‘The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon me; because Jehovah hath annointed me,’ etc. (Isa. lxi. 1). There are numerous other passages in confirmation of this distinction: so that the blindness of Sabellius was most wonderful, who could possibly be in darkness amidst such a splendour of daylight.

4. **X.** Lastly. The Fourth part comes now to be considered.

- a) *The Infinity* of the Holy Spirit is proved,

- both by his Omniscience, by which he is said to ‘search all things, yea, the deep things of God,’ and to know all the things which are in God (1 Cor. ii. 10, 11; John xvi. 13);
- and by his Omnipotence, by which He hath created and still preserves all things (Job xxxiii. 4) and according to both of which He is styled ‘the Spirit of wisdom and of knowledge,’ and ‘the Power of the Highest’ (Luke i. 35).

- b) His *Eternity* is established (Isa. xi. 2),

- both by the Creation of all things; for whatsoever is before all things which have been made, that is eternal;
- and by the titles with which He is signalized, for he is called ‘the Power of the Highest,’ and the Finger of God’ (Luke xi. 20). These titles cannot apply to a thing that has its beginning in time.

- c) A most luminous argument for His *Immensity* lies in this. It is said, that ‘no one can flee from the Spirit of God (Psalm cxxxix. 7); and that the Spirit of the Lord dwells in all his saints, as in a temple (1 Cor. vi. 19).

XI. From all these particulars it clearly appears, that the Holy Ghost is of the same Divinity with the Father and the Son, and is truly distinguished by the name of GOD.

For He who is not a creature, and yet has a real subsistence, must be God; and He who is from God, and who proceeds from the Father, not by an external emanation, nor by a creation performed through the intervention of any other Divine [*virtute*] Power, but by an internal emanation, He, being the *Power of God*, by what right shall He be despoiled of the *Name of 'GOD?'* For when He is said to be given, poured out, and sent; this does not betoken any diminution of his Divinity, but is an intimation of his origin from God, of his procession from the Father and the Son, and of his mission to his office. A clear indication of his Deity is also apparent from its being said, that He also with plenary power distributes Divine gifts according to his own will (1 Cor. xii. 11), and he bestows his gifts with an authority equal to that with which 'God' the Father is said to 'work his operations' (6), and to that with which the Son, who is called 'the Lord,' is said to 'institute administrations' (5).

XII. This doctrine of the sacred and undivided Trinity contains a mystery which far surpasses every human and angelical understanding, if it be considered according to the internal union which subsists between the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and according to the relation among them of origin and procession. But if regard be had to that economy and dispensation by which the Father and the Son, and both of them through the Holy Spirit, accomplish our salvation; the contemplation is one of admirable sweetness, and produces in the hearts of believers the most exuberant fruits of Faith, Hope, Charity, Confidence, Fear, and Obedience, to the praise of God the Creator, the Son the Redeemer, and of the Holy Ghost the Sanctifier. May 'the Love of God the Father, the Grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Communion of the Holy Ghost, be with us,' and with all saints. AMEN! (2 Cor. xiii. 14).

'If the SPIRIT be Third in *dignity* and *order*, what necessity is there for his being also the Third in *nature*? Indeed the doctrine of piety has perhaps taught that He is third in *dignity*. But to employ the expression 'the third in *nature*,' we have neither learned out of the Holy Scriptures, nor is it possible to collect it as a consequence from what precedes. For as the Son is in truth Second in *order*, because He is from the Father, and Second in *dignity*, because the Father exists that He may be himself [*principium*] the Principle and the Cause, and because through the Son there is a [*processus*] procession and an access to God the Father; (but He is no more Second in *nature*, because the Deity is one in both of them). So, *undoubtedly*, is likewise the Holy Spirit, though He follows the Son both in *order* and *dignity*, as we completely grant, yet He is not at all resembling one who exists in the *nature* of another (BASILIUS Eversor 3).

In brief, in things to be distinguished, the Deity is incapable of being divided; and resembles one vast attempered mass of effulgence proceeding from three suns which mutually embrace each other. Wherefore when we have had regard to the Deity itself, or to the First Cause, or to the Monarchy, we have formed in our minds a conception of some one thing. Again, when I apply my mind to these things in which Deity consists, and which exist from the First Cause itself, flowing from it with equal glory and without any relation to time, I

6 *On the Holy Spirit*

discover three things as the objects of my adoration (GREGORY NAZIANZEN,
Orat. 3 De Theolog.)

7 Disputation VII

ON THE FIRST SIN OF THE FIRST MAN

Respondent: ABRAHAM APPART

THE USE OF THE DOCTRINE

I. When an inquiry is instituted concerning this first evil, we do not agitate the question for the purpose of unworthily exposing to disgrace the nakedness of the first formed pair, which had been closely covered up, as impious Ham did in reference to his father (Gen. ix. 22). But we enter on this subject, that, after it is accurately known, as when the cause of a mortal disease is discovered, we may with the greater earnestness implore the hand which heals and cures (Gal. ii. 16). In this discussion four things seem to be principally entitled to a consideration.

1. The sin itself.
2. Its causes.
3. Its heinousness.
4. Its effects.

THE SIN ITSELF

II. This sin is most appropriately called by the Apostle, ‘disobedience,’ and ‘offense’ or fall (Rom. v. 18, 19).

1. *Disobedience*; for, since the law against which the sin was committed, was symbolical, having been given to testify that man was under a law to God, and to prove his obedience, and since the subsequent performance of it was to be a confession of devoted submission and due obedience; the transgression of it cannot, in fact, be denoted by a more commodious name than that of ‘disobedience,’ which contains within itself the denial of subjection and the renunciation of obedience.
2. *Offense*, or fall. Because as man, having been previously [*constitutus*] placed in a state of integrity, walked [*inoffenso*] with unshaking feet in the way of God’s commandments; by this foul deed he impinged or offended against the law itself, and fell from his state of innocence (Rom. v. 15–18).

III. This sin, therefore, is a transgression of the law which was delivered by God, to the first human beings, about not eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; perpetrated by the free will of man, from a desire to be like God, and through the persuasion of Satan that assumed the shape of a serpent. On account of this transgression, man fell under the displeasure and the wrath of God, rendered himself subject to a double death, and deserving to be deprived of the primeval righteousness and holiness, in which a great part of the image of God consisted (Gen. ii. 17; Rom. v. 19; Gen. iii. 3–6, 23, 24; Rom. v. 12, 16; Luke xix. 26).

THE CAUSE OF THIS SIN

IV. The efficient cause of this sin is two fold. The one *immediate and near*. The other *remote and mediate*.

1. The former is *Man himself*, who, of his own free will and without any necessity either internal or external (Gen. iii. 6), transgressed the law which had been proposed to him (Rom. v. 19), which had been sanctioned by a threatening and a promise (Gen. ii. 16, 17), and which it was possible for him to have observed (ii. 9; iii. 23, 24).
2. *The remote and mediate efficient cause* is the Devil, who, envying the Divine glory and the salvation of mankind, solicited man to a transgression of that law (John viii. 44). The instrumental cause is the Serpent, whose tongue Satan abused, for proposing to man these arguments which he considered suitable to persuade him (Gen. iii. 1; 2 Cor. xi. 3). It is not improbable, that the grand deceiver made a conjecture from his own case; as he might himself have been enticed to the commission of sin by the same arguments (Gen. iii. 4, 5).

V. Those arguments which may be called ‘both the inwardly moving’ and ‘the outwardly-working causes,’ were two.

1. The one, directly persuading, was deduced from a view [*utili*] of the advantage which man would obtain from it, that is, a likeness to God (Gen. iii. 5, 6).
2. The other was a removing argument, one of dissuasion, taken from God’s threatening; lest the fear of punishment, prevailing over the desire of a similitude to God, should hinder man from eating (iii. 4).

Though the first of these two arguments occupies the first station, with regard to order, in the proposition; yet, we think, it obtained the last place with regard to efficiency. To these arguments may be added two qualities imparted by the Creator to the fruit of the tree, calculated blandly to affect and allure the senses of a human being; these qualities are intimated in the words, ‘that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes’ (iii. 6). But there is this difference between the two principal arguments and these qualities. The former were proposed by the Devil to persuade to the commission of sin, as such; while the two qualities implanted by God were proposed only for the purpose of persuading [the woman] to eat, if that could have been done without sinning.

VI. The inwardly-moving causes, but which became such by accident, were two.

1. Such an affection, or desire, for a likeness to God, as had been implanted in man by God himself; but it was to be exercised in a certain order and method. For the gracious image and likeness of God, according to which man was created, tended towards his glorious image and likeness (2 Cor. iii. 18).
2. A natural affection for the fruit which was good in its taste, pleasant in its aspect, and well adapted for preserving and recruiting animal life.

VII. But as it was the duty of man to resist the efficacy of all and each of these several causes, so was it likewise in power; for he had been ‘created after the image of God,’ and therefore, in ‘the knowledge of God’ (Gen. i. 27; Col. iii. 10), and endued with righteousness and true holiness (Ephes. iv. 24). This resistance might have been effected by his repelling and rejecting *the causes which operated outwardly*, and by reducing into order and subjecting to the Law and to the Spirit of God *those which, impelled inwardly*. If he had acted thus, the temptation, out of which he would have departed victorious, would not have been imputed to him as an offense against the violated law (Gen. iii. 7–12).

VIII. But [*culpa*] the guilt of this sin can by no means be transferred to God, either as an Efficient or as a Deficient Cause.

1. *Not as an Efficient Cause.* For He neither perpetrated this crime through man, nor employed against man any action, either internal or external, by which he might incite him to sin (Psalm v. 5; James i. 13).
2. *Not as a Deficient Cause.* For He neither denied nor withdrew any thing that was necessary for avoiding this sin and fulfilling the law; but He had endowed Him sufficiently with all things requisite for that purpose, and preserved him after he was thus endued.

IX. But the Divine permission intervened; not as having permitted that act to man’s [*jus*] legitimate right and [*potestas*] power, that he might commit it without sin, for such a permission as this is contrary to legislation (Gen. ii. 17); but as having permitted it to the free will and [*potestas*] capability of man. This Divine Permission is not the denial or the withdrawing of the grace necessary and sufficient for fulfilling the law (Isa. v. 4); for if a permission of this kind were joined to legislation, it would ascribe the efficiency of sin to God. But it is the suspension of some efficiency, which is possible to God both according to right and to capability, and which, if exerted, would prevent sin in its actual commission. This is commonly called ‘an *efficacious* hindrance.’ But God was not bound to employ this impediment, when He had already laid down those hindrances to sin which might and ought to have withheld and deterred man from sinning, and which consisted in the communication of his own image, in the appointment of his law, in the threat of punishments, and in the promise of rewards.

X. Though the Cause of this Permission may be reckoned in the number of those things which, such is the will of God, are hidden from us (Deut. xxix. 29), yet, while with modesty

and reverence we inspect the acts of God, it appears to us that a two-fold cause may be maintained, the one *a priori*, the other *a posteriori*.

1. We will enunciate the former in the words of Tertullian:¹

If God had once allowed to man the free exercise of his own will and had [*digne*] duly granted this permission, He undoubtedly had permitted the enjoyment of these things through the very authority of the institution. But they were to be enjoyed as in Him, and according to Him; that is, according to God, that is, for good. For who will permit any thing against himself? But as in man [they were to be enjoyed] according to the motions of his liberty.

2. The cause *a posteriori* shall be given in the words of St Augustine:²

A good being would not suffer evil to be done, unless He was likewise Omnipotent, and capable [*facere bene*] of bringing good out of that evil.

XI. The material cause of this sin is the tasting of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, which is an act in its own nature indifferent, and easily avoidable by man in the midst of such abundant plenty of good and various fruits. From this shine forth the admirable benignity and kindness of God; whose will it was to have experience of the obedience of his creature, in an act which that creature could with the utmost facility omit, without injury to his nature, and even without any detriment to his pleasure. This seems to have been intimated by God himself when he propounded the precept in this manner. ‘Of every tree of the garden thou shalt freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat’ (Gen. ii. 16, 17).

XII. But the Form of this sin is *ἄνομία* ‘the transgression of the law’ (1 John iii. 4), which belongs to this act in reference to its having been forbidden by the law. And because this [*respectus*] relation adhered to the act from the time when God circumscribed it by a law, the effect of it was *that the act ought to be omitted* (Dan. iii. 18). For the moral evil, which adhered to it through the prohibition of God, was greater, than the natural good which was in the act by nature. There was also in man the image of God, according to which he ought to have been more abhorrent of that act because sin adhered to it, than to be inclined by a natural affection to the act itself, because some good was joined with it.

XIII. No end can be assigned to this sin. For evil, of itself, has not an end, since an end has always reference to a good. But the acts of the end were, that man might obtain a likeness to God in the knowledge of good and evil, and that he might satisfy his senses of taste and seeing (Gen. iii. 5, 6). But he did not suppose, that he would gain this similitude by sin as such, but by an act as it was a natural one. It had the boundary which the Divine determination placed round about it, and which was two-fold. *The one*, agreeing with the nature of sin, according to the severity of God. *The other*, transcending sin, nay, contravening it, according to the grace and mercy of God (Rom. ix. 22, 23).

¹Advers. Marc. l. 2, c. 3

²Enchir. c. 100

THE HEINOUSNESS OF THIS SIN

XIV. From the particulars already discussed, some judgment may be formed of the heinousness of this sin, which seems principally to consist of these four things.

1. That it is the transgression of a law that is not peculiar [to one person, or only to a few], but of a law which universally bears witness to the obligation of man towards God, and which [*explorat*] is a test of his obedience. A contempt of this law has in it a renunciation of the covenant into which God has entered with man, and of the obedience which from that covenant is due to God (Gen. xvii. 14).
2. That man perpetrated this crime, after he had been placed in a state of innocence and adorned by God with such excellent endowments as those of ‘the knowledge of God,’ and ‘righteousness and true holiness’ (Gen. i. 26, 27; Col. iii. 10; Ephes. iv. 24).
3. That when so many facilities existed for not sinning, especially in the act itself, yet man did not abstain from this sin (Gen. ii. 16, 17),
4. That he committed this sin in a place that was sanctified as a type of the celestial Paradise (ii. 15, 16; iii. 6, 23; Rev. ii. 7).

There are some other things which may aggravate this sin; but since it has them in common with most other offenses, we shall not at present enter into a discussion of them.

THE EFFECTS OF THIS SIN

XV. The proper and immediate effect of this sin was the offending of the Deity. For since the form of sin is ‘the transgression of the law’ (1 John iii. 4), it primarily and immediately [*impingit*] strikes against the legislator himself (Gen. iii. 11), and this with the offending of one whose express will it was that his law [*non impingi*] should not be offended. From this violation of his law, God conceives just displeasure, which is the second effect of sin (iii. 16–19, 23, 24). But to anger succeeds infliction of punishment, which was in this instance two-fold.

1. [*Reatus*] A liability to two deaths (ii. 17; Rom. vi. 23).
2. [*Privatio*] The withdrawing of that primitive righteousness and holiness, which, because they are the effects of the Holy Spirit dwelling in man, ought not to have remained in him after he had fallen from the favour of God, and had incurred the Divine displeasure (Luke xix. 26). For this Spirit is a seal of God’s favour and good will (Rom. viii. 14, 15; 1 Cor. ii. 12).

XVI. The whole of this sin, however, is not peculiar to our first parents, but is common to the entire race and to all their posterity, who, at the time when this sin was committed, were in their loins, and who have since descended from them by the natural mode of propagation, according to the primitive benediction. For in Adam ‘all have sinned’ (Rom. v. 12). Wherefore, whatever punishment was brought down upon our first parents, has likewise pervaded and yet pursues all their posterity. So that all men ‘are by nature the children of wrath’ (Ephes. ii. 3), obnoxious to condemnation, and to temporal

7 *On the First Sin of the First Man*

as well as to eternal death; they are also devoid of that original righteousness and holiness (Rom. v. 12, 18, 19). With these evils they would remain oppressed forever, unless they were liberated by Christ Jesus; to whom be glory forever.

8 Disputation VIII

ON ACTUAL SINS

Respondent, CASPER WILTENS

I. As divines and philosophers are often compelled, on account of a penury of words, to distinguish those which are synonymous, and to receive others in a stricter or more ample signification than their nature and etymology will allow; so in this matter of actual sin, although the term applies also to the first sin of Adam, yet, for the sake of a more accurate distinction, they commonly take it for that sin which man commits, through the corruption of his nature, from the time where he knows how to use reason; and they define it thus: ‘Something thought, spoken or done against the law of God; or the omission of something which has been commanded by that law to be thought, spoken or done.’ Or, with more brevity, ‘Sin is the transgression of the law;’ which St John has explained in this compound word ἀνομία ‘anomy’ (1 John iii. 4).

II. For as the law is perceptive of good and prohibitory of evil, it is necessary not only that an action, but that the neglect of an action, be accounted a sin. Hence arises the first distinction of sin into that of *Commission*, when a prohibited act is perpetrated, as theft, murder, adultery, etc. And into that of *Omission*, when a man abstains from [the performance of] an act that has been commanded; as if any one does not render due honour to a magistrate, or bestows on the poor nothing in proportion to the amplitude of his means. And since the Law is two-fold,

- one ‘the Law of works,’ properly called, ‘the Law,’
- the other ‘the Law of faith’ (Rom. iii. 27), which is the gospel of the grace of God;

therefore sin is either that which is committed against the Law, or against the gospel of Christ (Heb. ii. 2, 3). That which is committed against the Law, provokes the wrath of God against sinners; that against the gospel, causes the wrath of God to abide upon us; the former, by deserving punishment; the latter, by preventing the remission of punishment.

III. One is a sin *per se*, ‘of itself;’ another, *per accidens*, ‘accidentally.’

1. A sin *per se* is every external or internal action which is prohibited by the law, or every neglect of an action commanded by the law.
2. A sin is *per accidens* either in things necessary and restricted by law, or in things indifferent. *In things necessary*,

- either when an act prescribed by law is performed without its due circumstances, such as to bestow alms that you obtain praise from men (Matt. vi. 2);
- or when an act prohibited by law is omitted, not from a due cause and for a just end; as when any one represses his anger at the moment, that he may afterwards exact more cruel vengeance.

In things indifferent, when any one uses them to the offense of the weak (Rom. xiv. 15, 21).

IV. Sin is likewise divided in reference to the personal object against whom the offense is committed; and it is either against God, against our neighbour, or against ourselves, according to what the Apostle says: ‘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’ (Tit. ii. 11). Where *soberness* is appropriately referred to the man himself; *righteousness* to our neighbour; and *godliness* to God: These, we affirm, are likewise contained in the two grand precepts, ‘Love God above all things,’ and ‘Love thy neighbour as thyself.’ For howsoever it may seem, that the Ten Commandments prescribe only what is due to *God* and to *our neighbour*; yet this very requirement is of such a nature that it cannot be performed by a man without fulfilling at the same time his duty to *himself*.

V. It is further distinguished, from its cause, into sins of Ignorance, Infirmity, Malignity and Negligence.

1. A sin *of Ignorance* is, when a man does any thing which he does not know to be a sin; thus, Paul persecuted Christ in his Church (1 Tim. i. 13).
2. A sin *of Infirmity* is, when, through fear, which may befall even a brave man, or through any other more vehement passion and perturbation of mind, he commits any offense; thus, Peter denied Christ (Matt. xxvi. 70), and thus David, being offended by Nabal, was proceeding to destroy him and his domestics (1 Sam. xxv. 13, 21).
3. A sin *of Malignity* or malice, when any thing is committed with a determined purpose of mind, and with deliberate counsel; thus Judas denied Christ (Matt. xxvi. 14, 15), and thus David caused Uriah to be killed (2 Sam. xi. 15).
4. A sin *of Negligence* is, when a man is overtaken by a sin (Gal. vi. 1), which encircles and besets him before he can reflect within himself about the deed (Heb. xii. 1). In this description will be classed that of St Paul against Ananias the High Priest, if indeed he may be said to have sinned in that matter (Acts xxiii. 3).

VI. Nearly allied to this is the distribution of sin into that which is *contrary to conscience*, and that which is *not contrary to conscience*.

1. A sin *against conscience* is one that is perpetrated through malice and deliberate purpose, laying waste the conscience, and (if committed by holy persons) grieving the Holy Spirit so much as to cause Him to desist from his usual functions of leading them into the right way, and [*exhilarandi*] of making them glad in their consciences

by his inward testimony (Psalm li. 10, 13). This is called, by way of eminence, ‘a sin against conscience;’ though, when this phrase is taken in a wide acceptation, a sin which is committed through infirmity, but which has a previous sure knowledge that is applied to the deed, might also be said to be against conscience.

2. A sin *not against conscience* is either that which is by no means such, and which is not committed through a willful and wished-for ignorance of the law, as the man who neglects to know what he is capable of knowing: or it is that which at least is not such in a primary degree, but is precipitated through precipitancy, the cause of which is a vehement and unforeseen temptation. Of this kind, was the too hasty judgment of David against Mephibosheth, produced by the grievous accusation of Ziba, which happened at the very time when David fled. This bore a strong resemblance to a falsehood (2 Sam. xvi. 3, 4). Yet that which, when once committed, is not contrary to conscience, becomes contrary to it when more frequently repeated, and when the man neglects self-correction.

VII. To this may be added, the division of sin from its causes, with regard to the real object about which the sin is perpetrated. This object is either ‘the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, or the pride of life,’ that is, either pleasure specially so called, or avarice, or arrogant haughtiness; all of which, proceeding from the single fountain of self love or inordinate affection, tend distinctly towards the good things of the present life,

- haughtiness towards its honours,
- avarice towards its riches, and
- pleasure towards those things by which the external senses may experience self-gratification.

From these arise those works of the flesh which are enumerated by the apostle in Gal. v. 19–21, perhaps with the exception of Idolatry. Yet it may be made a legitimate subject of discussion, whether Idolatry may not be referred to one of these three causes.

VIII. Sin is also divided into *Venial* and *Mortal*: but this distribution is not deduced from the nature of sin itself, but accidentally from the gracious estimation of God. For every sin is in its own nature *mortal*, that is, it is that which merits death; because it is declared universally concerning sin, that ‘its wages is death’ (Rom. vi. 23), which might in truth be brought instantly down upon the offenders, were God wishful to enter into judgment with his servants. But that which denominates sin *venial*, or capable of being forgiven, is this circumstance, God is not willing to impute sin to believers, or [*statuere*] to place sin against them, but is desirous to pardon it; although with this difference, that it requires express penitence from some, while concerning others it is content with this expression: ‘Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me, O Lord, from secret faults’ (Psalm xix. 12). In this case, the ground of fear is not so much, lest, from the aggravation of sin, men should fall into despair, as, lest, from its extenuation, they should relapse into negligence and security; not only because man has a greater propensity to the latter than to the former, but likewise because that declaration is always [*praesens*] at hand: have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth,’ that is, of the sinner who has merited death by his transgressions, ‘but that he be converted and live’ (Ezek. xviii. 32).

IX. Because we say that the wages of every sin is death,' we do not, on this account, with the Stoics, make them all equal. For, beside the refutation of such an opinion by many passages of Scripture, it is likewise opposed to the diversity of objects against which sin is perpetrated, to the causes from which it arises, and to the law against which the offense is committed. Besides, the disparity of punishments in the death that is eternal, proves the falsehood of this sentiment: For a crime against God is more grievous than one against man (1 Sam. ii. 25); one that is perpetrated with [*elata*] a high hand, than one through error; one against a prohibitory law, than one against a mandatory law. And far more severe will be the punishment inflicted on the inhabitants of Chorazin and Bethsaida, than on those of Tyre and Sidon (Matt. xi. 23). By means of this dogma, the Stoics have endeavoured to turn men aside from the commission of crimes; but their attempt has not only been fruitless, but also injurious, [as will be seen] when we institute a serious deliberation about bringing man back from sin into the way of righteousness.

X. Mention is likewise made, in the Scriptures, of 'a sin unto death' (1 John v. 16); which is specially so called, because it in fact, brings certain death on all by whom it has been committed. Mention is made in the same passage of 'a sin which is not unto death,' and which is opposed to the former. In a parallel column with these, marches the division of sin into *pardonable* and *unpardonable*.

1. A sin which is 'not unto death' and *pardonable*, is so called, because it is capable of having subsequent repentance, and thus of being pardoned, and because to many persons it is actually pardoned through succeeding penitence — such as that which is said to be committed against 'the Son of Man.'
2. The 'sin unto death' or *unpardonable*, is that which never has subsequent repentance, or the author of which cannot be recalled to penitence — such as that which is called 'the sin' or 'blasphemy against the Holy Ghost' (Matt. xii. 32; Luke xii. 10), of which it is said, 'it shall not be forgiven, either in this world, or in the world to come.' For this reason, St John says, we must not pray for that sin.

XI. But, though the proper meaning and nature of the sin against the Holy Ghost are with the utmost difficulty to be ascertained, yet we prefer to follow those who have furnished the most weighty and grievous definition of it, rather than those who, in maintaining six species of it, have been compelled to explain 'unpardonable' in some of those species, for *that which is with difficulty or is rarely remitted, or which of itself deserves not to be pardoned*. With the former class of persons, therefore, we say that the sin against the Holy Ghost is committed when any man, with determined malice, resists divine, and in fact, evangelical truth, for the sake of resistance, though he is so overpowered with the refulgence of it, as to be rendered incapable of pleading ignorance in excuse. This is therefore called 'the sin against the Holy Ghost, not because it is not perpetrated against the Father and the Son; (for how can it be that he does not sin against the Father and the Son, who sins against the Spirit of both?) but because it is committed against the operation of the Holy Spirit, that is, against the conviction of the truth through miracles, and against the illumination of the mind.

XII. But the cause why this sin is called ‘irremissible,’ and why he who has committed it, cannot be renewed to repentance, is not the impotency of God, as though by his most absolute omnipotence, he cannot grant to this man repentance unto life, and thus cannot pardon this blasphemy; but since it is necessary, that the Mercy of God should stop at some point, being circumscribed by the limits of his Justice and Equity according to the prescript of his Wisdom, this sin is said to be ‘unpardonable,’ because God accounts the man who has perpetrated so horrid a crime, and has done despite to the Spirit of grace, to be altogether unworthy of having the Divine Benignity and the operation of the Holy Spirit occupied in his conversion, lest he should himself appear to esteem this sacred operation and kindness at a low rate, and to stand in need of a sinful man, especially of one who is such a monstrous sinner!

XIII. The *Efficient Cause* of actual sins is, man through his own free will. The *Inwardly-working Cause* is the original propensity of our nature towards that which is contrary to the divine law, which propensity we have contracted from our first parents, through carnal generation. The *Outwardly-working Causes* are the objects and occasions which solicit men to sin. The Substance or Material Cause, is an act which, according to its nature, has reference to good. The Form or Formal Cause of it is a transgression of the law, or an *anomy*. It is destitute of an End; because sin is ἀμαρτία, a transgression, which wanders from its aim. The Object of it is [*commutabile*] a variable good; to which, when man is inclined, after having deserted the unchangeable good, he commits an offense.

XIV. The Effect of actual sins are all the calamities and miseries of the present life, then death temporal, and afterwards death eternal. But in those who are hardened and blinded, even the effects of preceding sins become cousequent sins themselves.

9 Disputation IX

ON THE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND EFFICACY OF THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD CONCERNING
EVIL

Respondent: RALPH DE ZYLL

I. Among the causes and pretenses by which human ignorance has been induced, and which human perverseness has abused, to deny the Providence of God, the entrance of evil (that is, of sin) into the world, and its most wonderful and fertile exuberance, do not by any means occupy the lowest stations. For since, with Scripture as our guide and Nature as our witness, we must maintain that *God is good, omniscient, and of unbounded power* (Mark x. 18; Psalm cxlvii. 5; Rev. iv. 8; Rom. i. 20); and since this is a truth of which every one is fully persuaded who has formed in his mind any notion of the Deity; men have concluded from this that evil could not have occurred under *the three preceding conditions of the divine Majesty*, if God managed all things by his providence, and if it was his will [*curare*] to make provision respecting evil, according to these properties of his own nature. And therefore, since, after all, evil has occurred, they have concluded that the providence of God must be entirely denied. For they thought it better to set up a God that was at repose, and negligent of mundane affairs, especially of those in which a rational creature's freedom of will intervened, than to deprive Him of the honour of his Goodness, Wisdom and Power. But it is not necessary to adopt either of these methods; and that it is possible to preserve to God, without disparagement, these three ornaments of Supreme Majesty, as well as His Providence, will be shewn by [*commoda*] a temperate explanation of the Efficacy of God concerning evil.

II. A few things must be premised about this evil itself, as a basis for our explanation.

1. What is properly sin?
2. Was it possible for it to be perpetrated by a rational creature, and how?
3. That *a chief evil* cannot be granted, which may contend on an equality with the chief Good, as the Manichees asserted; otherwise, of all the evils which can be devised, sin, of which we are now treating, is, in reality, the chief; and, if we may speak with strictness, sin is the only and sole evil; for all other things are not evils, in themselves, but are [*mala*, evils] injurious to some one.

III.

1. Sin is properly an aberration from a rule. This rule is the equity which is preconceived in the mind of God, which is expressed to the mind of a rational creature by legislation, and, according to which [*fas est*] it is proper for such a creature to regulate his life. It is therefore defined by St John in one compound word, ἀνομία, 'the transgression of the law' (1 John iii. 4); whether such a law be preceptive of Good, or prohibitory of evil (Psalm xxxiv. 14), hence the evil of commission is perpetrated against the prohibitory part, and that of omission against the preceptive. But in sin, two things come under consideration:

- a) The act itself, which has reference to natural good; but under the act, we comprehend likewise the cessation from action.
- b) Anomy, or 'the transgression of the law,' which obtains the place of a moral evil.

The act may be called *the Substance* or *Material Cause* of sin; and the transgression of the law, *its Form* or *Formal Cause*.

2. **IV.** But it was possible for sin to be perpetrated by a rational creature; for, as a *creature*, he was capable of declining or revolting from the Chief Good, and [*affici*] of being inclined towards an inferior good, and towards the acts by which he might possess this minor good. As *rational*, he was capable of understanding that he was required to live in a godly manner, and what that equity was according to which his life and actions were to be specially regulated. As a *rational creature*, a law could be imposed on him by God, nay, according to equity and justice, it ought to be imposed, by which he might be forbidden to forsake the chief good, and to commit that act, though it was naturally good. The mode is placed in the freedom of the will, bestowed by God on a rational creature, according to which he was capable of performing the obedience which is due to the law, or could by his own strength exceed or transgress its limits.

3. **V.** But since a *chief evil* cannot be allowed, it follows from this, that, though evil be contrary to good, yet it cannot [*excedere*] pass beyond the universal order of that good which is chief, but can be reduced to order by this chief good, and evil can thus be directed to good,

- on account of the infinite Wisdom of this Chief Good, by which He knows what is possible to be made from evil; and
- on account of this Power, by which he can make from this evil what He knows may be made from it.

Granting, therefore, that sin has exceeded the order of every thing created, yet it is circumscribed within the order of the Creator himself and of the Chief Good. Since it is apparent from all these premises, that the Providence of God ought not to [*incedere*] intervene, or come between, to prevent the perpetration of evil by a free creature; it also follows, from the entrance of evil into the world, and [*eousque ingresso*] it has entered so far 'that the whole world lieth in wickedness' (1 John v. 19), — that the Providence of God cannot

be destroyed. This truth we will demonstrate at greater length, when we treat upon the Efficacy of the Providence of God concerning evil.

VI. We have already said, that, in sin, the act or the cessation from action, and ‘the transgression of the law,’ come under consideration: But the Efficiency of God about evil, concerns both the act itself and its viciousness, and it does this, whether we have regard to the beginning of sin, to its progress, or to its end and consummation. The consideration of the efficiency which is concerned about the BEGINNING of sin, embraces either a Hindrance or a Permission; to which we add, the Administration of Arguments and occasions inciting to sin; that which regards its PROGRESS, has Direction and Determination; and that concerning THE END AND TERMINATION, Punishment and Remission. We will refrain from treating upon the Concurrence of God, since it is only in reference to the act, considered, also, as naturally good.

VII.

1. The FIRST Efficiency of God concerning evil, is a *hindrance* or the placing of an impediment, whether such hindrance be sufficient or efficacious (Jer. xxxi. 32, 33). For [*convenit*] it belongs to a Good, to hinder an evil as far as the Good knows it to be lawful to do so. But a hindrance is placed either [*potestati*] on the Power, [*potentiae*] on the Capability, or on the Will, of a rational creature. These three things must also be considered in that which hinders.
 - a) On *the Power* an impediment is placed, by which some act is taken away from the power of a rational creature, to the performance of which it has [*affectum*] an inclination and sufficient powers. By being thus circumscribed, it comes to pass, that the creature cannot perform that act without sin, and this circumscription is made by legislation. The tasting of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was thus circumscribed, when leave was granted to eat of all others (Gen. ii. 17): and this is the hindrance of sin *as such*; and it is placed by God before a rational creature [*quâ*] as he has the right and power over that creature.
 - b) **VIII.** On *the Capability* also an impediment is placed: The effect of this is, that the rational creature cannot perform the act, for the performance of which he has an inclination, and powers that, without this impediment, would be sufficient. But this hindrance is placed before a rational creature by four methods:
 - i. By depriving the creature of essence and life, which are the foundation of capability. Thus was the attack upon Jerusalem hindered (2 Kings 19), as was also the forcible abduction of Elijah to Ahaziah (2 Kings 1), when, in the former instance, ‘an hundred fourscore and five thousand men were slain by the angel of the Lord,’ and, in the latter, two different companies, each containing fifty men, were consumed by fire.
 - ii. The Second method is by the taking away or the diminution of capability. Thus Jeroboam was prevented from apprehending the prophet of the Lord, by ‘the drying up of his own hand’ (1 Kings xiii. 4). Thus, sin is hindered,

so as not to exercise dominion over a man, when the body of sin [*enervatur*] is weakened and destroyed (Rom. vi. 6).

- iii. The Third is by the opposition of a greater capability, or at least of one that is equal. Thus was Uzziah prevented from burning incense unto Jehovah, when the priests resisted his attempt (2 Chron. xxvi. 18, 21). Thus also is 'the flesh' hindered from 'doing what it would,' 'because the Spirit lusteth against the flesh' (Gal. v. 17), and because 'greater is He that is in us, than he that is in the world' (1 John iv. 4).
 - iv. The Fourth method is by the withdrawing of the object. Thus the Jews were frequently hindered from hurting Christ, because He withdrew himself from the midst of them (John viii. 59). Thus was Paul taken away, by the Chief Captain, from the Jews, who had conspired together for his destruction (Acts xxiii. 10).
- c) **IX.** An impediment is placed on *the Will*, when by some argument it is persuaded not to will to commit a sin. But we refer the arguments by which the will is moved, to the following three classes. For they are taken,
- i. either from the impossibility or the difficulty of the thing,
 - ii. from its unpleasantness or inconvenience, its usefulness or injuriousness,
 - iii. or from its being dishonourable, unjust and indecorous.
- i. By the *First* of these, the Pharisees and Scribes were frequently prevented from laying violent hands on Christ (Matt. xxi. 46): for they were of opinion, that he would be defended by the people, 'who took him for a prophet.' In the same manner were the Israelites hindered from departing to their lovers, to false gods; for God 'hedged up their way with thorns, and made a wall, so that they could not find their customary paths' (Hosea ii. 6, 7). Thus the saints are deterred from sinning, when they see wicked men 'wearied in the ways of iniquity and perdition' (Wisdom v. 7).
 - ii. By the *Second Argument*, the brethren of Joseph were hindered from *killing* him, since they could obtain their end by *selling* him (Gen. xxxvii. 26, 27). Thus Job was prevented from sinning 'with his eyes' because he knew what was 'the portion of God from above, and what the inheritance of the Almighty from on high,' for those who have their eyes full of adultery (Job xxxi. 1, 2).
 - iii. By the *Third*, Joseph was hindered from defiling himself by shameful adultery (Gen. xxxix. 8, 9), and David was prevented from 'stretching forth his hand against the Lord's anointed' (1 Sam. xxiv. 7).
2. **X.** The *Permission* of sin succeeds, which is opposed to *Hindering*. Yet it is not opposed to *hindering*, as the latter is an act which is taken away from the power of a rational creature by legislation; for, in that case, the same act would be a sin, and not a sin. It would be *a sin* in reference to its being a forbidden act; and it would be *no sin* in reference to its being permitted in this manner, that is,

not forbidden. But Permission is opposed to Hindrance, in reference to the latter being an impediment placed on the Capability and Will of an intelligent creature. But Permission is the suspension, not of one impediment or two, which may be presented to the Capability or the Will, but of all impediments at once, which, God knows, if they were all employed, would [*re ipsâ*] effectually hinder sin. Such [*necesse est*] necessarily would be the result, because sin might be hindered by a single impediment of that kind.

- a) Sin therefore is permitted to the Capability of the creature, when God employs none of those hindrances of which we have already made mention in the 8th Thesis: for this reason, this Permission consists of the following acts of God who permits,
- the continuation of life and essence to the creature,
 - the conservation of his capability,
 - a cautiousness against its being opposed by a greater capability, or at least by one that is equal,
 - and [*oblatione*] the exhibition of an object on which sin is committed.
- b) Sin is also permitted to the Will; not because no such impediments are presented by God to the Will, as are calculated to deter the Will from sinning; but because God, seeing that these hindrances which are propounded will produce no effect, does not employ others which He possesses in the treasures of his Wisdom and Power (John xviii. 6; Mark xiv. 56). This appears most evidently in the passion of Christ, with regard not only to the power but also to the will of those who demanded his death (John xix. 6). Nor does it follow from these premises, that those impediments are employed in vain: for though such results do not follow as are in accordance with these hindrances, yet God in a manner the most powerful gains his own purposes, because the results are not such as ought to have followed (Rom. x. 20, 21).

XI. The foundation of this Permission is

- a) The Liberty [*arbitrii*] of choosing, with which God formed his rational creature, and which his constancy does not suffer to be abolished, lest he should be accused of mutability.
- b) The infinite Wisdom and Power of God, by which He knows and is able out of darkness to bring light, and to produce good out of evil (Gen. i. 2, 3; 2 Cor. iv. 6). God therefore permits that which He does permit,
- not in ignorance of the powers and [*affectus*] the inclination of rational creatures, for he knows them all,
 - not with reluctance, for he could have refrained from producing a creature that might possess freedom of choice,
 - not as being incapable of hindering, for we have already seen by how many methods he is able to hinder both the Capability and the Will of a rational creature;

- not as if at ease, indifferent, or negligent of that which is transacted, because before anything is done he already [*obivit* 'has gone through'] has looked over the various actions which concern it, and, as we shall subsequently see, [§ XV–XXII], he presents arguments and occasions, determines, directs, punishes and pardons sin. But whatever God permits, He permits it designedly and willingly, His will being immediately occupied about its Permission, but His Permission itself is occupied about sin; and this order cannot be inverted without great peril.

XII. Let us now explain a little more distinctly, by some of the differences of sin, those things which we have in this place spoken in a general manner concerning Hindering and Permission.

1. From its causes, sin is distinguished into that of Ignorance, Infirmity, Malignity and Negligence.
 - a) An impediment is placed on a sin of Ignorance, by the revelation of the Divine Will (Psalm cxix. 105).
 - b) On a sin of Infirmity, by the strengthening influence of the Holy Spirit against the machinations of the world and Satan, and also against the weakness of our flesh (Ephes. iii. 16; vi. 11–13).
 - c) On a sin of Malignity, by 'taking away the stony heart, and bestowing a heart of flesh' (Ezek. xi. 19), and inscribing upon it the law of God (Jer. xxxi. 33).
 - d) And on a sin of Negligence, by exciting in the hearts of believers a holy solicitude and a godly fear (Mark xiv. 38; Jer. xxxii. 40).

From these remarks those acts will easily be manifest, in the suspension of which consists the permission of sins of every kind. God permitted Saul of Tarsus, a preposterous zealot for the law, to persecute Christ through *Ignorance*, until 'he revealed his Son in him,' by which act out of a persecutor was formed a pastor (Gal. i. 13–15). Thus, he permitted Peter, who loved Christ, though he was somewhat too self-confident, to deny Him through *Infirmity*; but, when afterwards endued with a greater [*vis*] energy of the Holy Spirit, he confessed him with intrepidity even unto death (Matt. xxvi. 70; Acts v. 41; John xxi. 19). God permitted Saul, whom 'in his anger he had given to the Israelites as their king' (Hosea xiii. 11; 1 Sam. ix. 1), through *Malignity* to persecute David, of whose integrity he had been convinced (1 Sam. xxiv. 17–19), while his own son Jonathan resisted [his father's attempts against David] in vain. And God permitted David, after having enjoyed many victories and obtained leisure and retirement, to defile himself with the foul crime of adultery at a moment when he was acting with *Negligence* (2 Sam. 11).

2. **XIII.** Sin, in the next place, is distinguished with respect to the two parts of the law
 - that which is perceptive of good,
 - and that which is prohibitory of evil [§ III].

Against *the latter* of these an offense may be committed, either by performing an act, or by omitting its performance from an undue cause and end. Against *the former*,

either by omitting an act, or by performing it in an undue manner, and from an undue cause and end. To these distinctions the Hindering and the Permission of God may likewise be adapted. God *hindered* Joseph's brethren from killing him; while he permitted them to spare his life, from an undue cause and end; for since it was in their power to sell him, the opportunity for which was divinely offered to them, they considered it unprofitable or useless to kill him (Gen. xxxvii. 26, 27). Thus Absalom was hindered from following the counsel of Ahithophel, though it was useful to himself and injurious to David; not because he considered it to be unjust, but because of its supposed injury to David; for he persisted in the purpose of persecuting his father, which he also completed in fact (2 Sam. 17). God hindered Balaam from cursing the children of Israel, and caused him to bless them; but so that he abstained from the former act, and performed the latter, with a perverse mind (Num. 23). We shall in some degree understand the reasons of this Hindering and Permission, if, while distinctly considering in sin *the act* and *the anomaly* or 'transgression of the law,' we apply to each of them divine hindrance and permission.

XIV. But though *the act*, and 'the transgression of the law,' are inseparably united in one sin, and therefore neither of them can be hindered or permitted without the other; yet they may be distinguished in the mind; and hindrance as well as permission may be effected by God, sometimes chiefly with regard to *the act*, and at other times chiefly with regard to 'the transgression of the law,' and, when so done, they may be considered by us in these relations not without high commendation of the wisdom of God and to our own profit. God hindered Joseph's brethren from killing him, not as it was *a sin*, (because He permitted them, while remaining in the same mind to sell him), but as it was *an act*. For they would have deprived Joseph of life, when it was the will of God that he should be spared. God permitted his vendition, not chiefly *as it was a sin*, but *as an act*; because by the sale of Joseph *as it was an act*, God obtained his own end (Gen. xxxvii. 27). God hindered Elijah from being forcibly brought to Ahaziah to be slain, not *as that was a sin*, but *as it was an act*. This is apparent from the End, and from the Mode of hindering. *From the End*; because it was His will that the life of his prophet should be spared, not lest Ahaziah should sin against God. *From the Mode of hindering*; because he destroyed two companies, of fifty men each, who had been sent to seize him; which was a token of divine anger against Ahaziah and the men, by which sin as such is not usually hindered, but *as it is an act which will prove injurious to another*; yet, through grace, sin is hindered *as such* (2 Kings i).

- God permitted Satan and the Chaldeans to bring many evils on Job, not as that was *a sin*, but as it was *an act*: for it was the Will of God to try the patience of his servant, and to make that virtue conspicuous to the confusion of Satan. But this was done by an act, by which, *as such*, injuries were inflicted on Job (Job 1, 2).
- David was hindered from laying violent hands on Saul, not as it was *an act*, but as it was *a sin*: this is manifest from the ARGUMENT by which being hindered he abstained [from completing the deed]. 'The Lord forbid,' said he, 'that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed.' This argument deterred him from the sin *as such*. The same is also evident from the END of the Hindrance: for it was the Will of God for David to come to [the possession

of] the kingdom through the endurance of afflictions, as a type of Christ the true David (1 Sam. xxiv. 7).

- God permitted Ahab to kill Naboth, not as that foul deed was *an act*, but as it was *a sin*: For God could have translated Naboth, or taken him to himself, by some other method; but it was the Divine Will, that Ahab should fill up the measure of his iniquities, and should accelerate his own destruction and that of his family (1 Kings 21).
- Abimelech was hindered from violating the chastity of Sarah, the wife of Abraham, both as it was *an act*, and as it was *a sin*. For it was not the will of God, that Abimelech should defile himself with this crime, because 'in the integrity of his heart' he would then have done it. It was also His will to spare his servant Abraham, in whom indelible sorrow would have been produced by the deflowering of his wife, as by an act (Gen. xx. 6).
- God permitted Judah to know Tamar his daughter-in-law, both as it was an act, and as it was a sin: because it was the Will of God, to have his own Son as a direct descendant from Judah; and at the same time to declare, that nothing is so polluted as to be incapable of being sanctified in Christ Jesus (Gen. xxxviii. 18). For it is not without reason that St Matthew says, 'Judas begat Phares and Zara of Thamar' and 'David the king begat Solomon of her who had been the wife of Urias' (i. 3, 6); and from whom in an uninterrupted line Christ was born.

XV. But since an act, though permitted to the Capability and the Will of the creature, may have been taken away from its Power by legislation [§ VII]; and since, therefore, it will very often happen, that a rational creature not altogether hardened in evil is unwilling to perform an act which is connected with sin, unless when some arguments and opportunities are presented to him, which are like incentives to commit that act; [*administratio*] the management of this presenting of arguments and opportunities, is also in the hands of the Providence of God, who presents these excitements.

- a) Both to try whether it be the will of the creature to abstain from sinning, even when it is excited by these incentives; since small praise is due to abstaining in cases in which such excitements are absent (S. of Sirach xx. 21–23; xxxi. 8–10).
- b) And then, if it be the will of the creature to yield to these incentives, to effect His own work by the act of the creature;
 - not impelled by necessity, as if God was unable to produce his own work without the intervention of the act of his creature;
 - but moved to this by the will to illustrate his own manifold Wisdom.

Thus the *arguments* by which Joseph's brethren were incited through their own malice to wish to kill him, and the opportunities by which it was in their power to send him out of their way, were offered by Divine dispensation, partly in an intervening manner by the mediate act of men, and partly by the immediate act of God himself. *The Arguments* for this malignity were,

- Joseph's accusation, by which he revealed to his father the wicked actions of his brethren,
- the peculiar regard which Jacob entertained for Joseph,
- the sending of a dream,
- and the relation of the dream after it had occurred.

By these, the minds of his brethren were inflamed with envy and hatred against him. *The Opportunities* were,

- the sending of Joseph to his brethren by his father,
- and the presenting of the Ishmaelites journeying into Egypt, at the very moment of time in which they were in deliberation about murdering their brother (Gen. 37).

The preceding considerations have related only to the BEGINNING of sin; to its PROGRESS belong Direction and Determination [§ VI].

XVI.

1. The DIRECTION of sin is an act of Divine Providence, by which God in a manner the wisest and most potent directs sin wherever he wills, 'reaching from one end to another mightily, and sweetly ordering all things' (Wisd. viii. 1). We must consider in this Direction [*terminus a quo ad quem*] the point at which it has its origin and that at which it terminates. For when God directs sin wherever He wills, it is understood that He leads it away from the point to which it is not His will that it should [*tendere*] proceed. But this direction is two-fold, unto an Object, and unto an End. *Direction unto an OBJECT* is when God allows the sin which He permits, to be borne, not [*pro arbitrato*] at the option of the creature, towards an object which in any way whatsoever is exposed and liable to the injury of sin; but which he directs to a particular object, which on some occasions has either been no part of the sinner's [*petitum*] aim or desire, or which at least he has not absolutely desired. The Scriptures enunciate this kind of Direction, *generally*, in the following words: 'A man's heart deviseth his way; but the Lord directeth his steps' (Prov. xvi. 9). But, *especially*, concerning the heart of a King: 'As the rivers of water are in the hand of the Lord, he turneth the heart of the king whithersoever he will' (Prov. xxi. 1). Of which we have a signal example in Nebuchadnezzar, who, after he had determined in his own mind to subjugate the nations, and hesitated whether he should move against the Ammonites, or against the Jews, God [*administravit*] managed the king's divinations so, that he resolved to march against the Jews, and to abstain from an attack upon the Ammonites (Ezek. xxi. 19–22).

XVII. *Direction unto an END* is, when God does not allow the sin (which he permits), to be subservient to the end of any thing which the creature intends; but he employs it to that end which he himself wills,

- whether the creature intend the same end, (which if he were to do, yet he would not be excused from sin), or
- whether he intend another, and one quite contrary.

For God knows how to educe the light of his own glory, and the advantage of his creatures, out of the darkness and mischief of sin.

- Thus 'the thoughts of evil,' which Joseph's brethren entertained against him, were converted by God into a benefit, not only to Joseph, but also to the whole of Jacob's family, and to all the kingdom of Egypt (Gen. i. 20, 21).
- By the afflictions which were sent to Job, Satan endeavoured to drive him to blasphemy. But by them, God tried the patience of his servant, and through it triumphed over Satan (Job i. 11, 12, 22; ii. 9, 10).
- The king of Assyria had determined 'in his heart to destroy and cut off all nations not a few.' But God executed his own work by him, whom 'he sent against an hypocritical nation and the people of his wrath' (Isa. x. 5–12).

Nor is it at all wonderful, that God employs acts, which his creatures do not perform without sin, for ends that are pleasing to himself; because he does this most justly, for three reasons:

- a) For He is the Lord of his creature, though that creature be a sinner; because he has no more power to exempt or deliver himself from the dominion of God, than he has to reduce himself into nothing.
- b) Because, as a creature endowed by God with inclination and capability, he performs those acts, though not without sin, as they have been forbidden.
- c) Because the creature is a saw, in the hands of the Creator; and instrumental causes do not [*attungunt*, 'concern'] reach to the intention of the First Agent (Isa. x. 15).

2. **XVIII.** DETERMINATION is an act of Divine Providence, by which God places a limit on his Permission, and a boundary on sin that it may not wander and stray *in infinitum* at the option of the creature. The limit and boundary are placed by the Prescribing of the Time, and the Determination of the Magnitude. *The Prescribing of the Time*, is the prescribing of the very point or moment when it may be done, or the length of its duration.

- a) God determines *the Moment of time*, when he permits a sin, to the commission of which his creature is inclined, to be perpetrated, not indeed at the time when it was the will of the creature to commit it; but He wisely and powerfully [*administrat*] contrives for it to be done at another time. 'The Jews sought to take Jesus: but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come' (John vii. 30). 'Yet when the time before appointed of the Father' approached, Christ said to them, 'This is *your hour*, and the power of darkness' (Luke xxii. 53).
- b) A limit is placed on *the Duration*, when the space of time in which the permitted sin could endure, is diminished and circumscribed so as to stop itself. Thus Christ says, 'Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved,' etc. (Matt. xxiv. 22).

But in this part of the discussion also, regard must be had to the act as such, and to the sin as such.

- a) A limit is placed on the duration of *the act*, in the following passages: ‘The rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity’ (Psalm cxxv. 3). ‘The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations,’ etc. (2 Pet. ii. 9).
- b) A limit is placed on the duration of *the sin*, in these passages: ‘Therefore I will hedge up thy way with thorns, etc. And she shall not find her lovers: then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband’ (Hosea ii. 6). ‘In times past God suffered all nations to walk in their own ways: but now he commandeth all men every where to repent’ (Acts xiv. 16; xvii. 30).

XIX. A mode is placed on the *Magnitude of sin*, when God does not permit sin [*excrescere*] to increase beyond bounds and to assume greater strength. But this also is done, with regard to it both as *an act*, and as *a sin*.

- a) With respect to it as an act, in the following passages of Scripture: God permitted ‘the wrath of their enemies to be kindled against’ the Israelites, but ‘he did not suffer them to swallow them up’ (Psalm cxxiv. 2, 3). ‘There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to man’ (1 Cor. x. 13). ‘We are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed’ (2 Cor. iv. 8, 9). God permitted Satan, *First*, ‘To put forth his hand upon *all that Job had*,’ but not to touch *him* (Job i. 12); and, *Secondly*, ‘To touch his bone and his flesh, but to save his *life*’ (ii. 6). ‘I will not destroy them by the hand of Shishak; nevertheless, they shall be his servants’ (2 Chron. xii. 7, 8).
- b) With respect to it as *a sin*, God permitted David to resolve in his mind to destroy with the sword, Nabal and all his domestics, and to go instantly to him; but he did not permit him to shed innocent blood, and to save himself by his own hand (1 Sam. xxv. 22, 26, 31). God permitted David to flee to Achish, and to ‘feign himself mad’ (1 Sam. xxi. 13); but he did not permit him to fight, in company with the army of Achish, against the Israelites, or by the exercise of fraud to prove injurious to the army of Achish (xxvii. 2; xxix. 6, 7). For he could have done neither of these deeds without committing a most flagrant wickedness: though both of them might have been determined [by David] as acts, by which great injury could be inflicted on those against whom it was the will of God that no mischief should be done.

XX. On account of this PRESENTING of Incitements and Opportunities, and this DIRECTION and DETERMINATION of God, added to the PERMISSION of sin, God is said himself to do those evils which are perpetrated by bad men and by Satan. For instance,

- Joseph says to his brethren, ‘It was not *you* that sent me hither, but *God*’ (Gen. xlv. 8); because, after having completed the sale of their brother, they were unconcerned about the place to which he was to be conducted, and about his future lot in life: but God [*curavit*] caused him to be led down into Egypt and there to be sold, and he raised him to an eminent station in that country by the interpretation of some dreams (xxxvii. 25, 28; xl. 12, 13; xli. 28–42).

- Job says, 'The Lord hath taken away' what was taken away at the instigation and by the aid of Satan (Job 1 and 2); both because that evil spirit was of his own malice instigated against Job by God's commendation of him; and because, after having obtained power to do him harm, he produced no further effect than that which God had determined.
- Thus God is also said to have done what Absalom did (2 Sam. xii. 11, 12, 15, 16); because the principal parts, in the various actions employed for producing this consummation, belonged to God.

To these we must add the remark, that since the Wisdom of God knows that if he administers the whole affair by such a Presenting, Direction, and Determination, that will certainly and infallibly come to pass which cannot be done by the creature without criminality; and since His Will decrees this administration, it will more clearly appear why a deed of this kind may be attributed to God.

XXI. Last in the discussion follow the Punishment and the Pardon of sin, by which acts Divine Providence is occupied about sin already perpetrated, as it is *such*, not as it is *an act*: for sin is punished and pardoned *as* it is an evil, and *because* it is an evil.

1. The PUNISHMENT of sin is an act of the Providence of God, by which sin is recompensed with [*poena*] the chastisement that is due to it according to the righteousness of God. This punishment either concerns the life to come, or takes place in the ages of the present life: the former is an eternal separation of the whole man from God; the other, which is usually inflicted in this life, is two-fold: corporal and spiritual. *The punishments which relate to the body*, are various; but it is not necessary for our purpose to enumerate them at present. But *spiritual punishment* deserves to be diligently considered: for it is such a chastisement of sin, as to be also a cause of other [sins] which follow on account of the wickedness of him on whom it is inflicted. It is a privation of grace, and a delivering up to the power [*mali*] of evil [or the evil one].
 - a) *Privation of Grace* is two-fold according to the two kinds of grace, that which is Habitual and that which is Assisting.
 - *The former* is the taking away of grace, by blinding the mind and hardening the heart (Isa. vi. 9, 10).
 - *The other*, is the withdrawing of the assistance of the Holy Spirit, who is wont
 - *inwardly* 'to help our infirmities' (Rom. viii. 26), and
 - *outwardly* to restrain the furious rage of Satan and the world, by employing also the ministration and care of good angels (Heb. i. 14; Psalm xci. 11).
 - b) *A delivering up to the power of evil* is, either
 - 'giving sinners over to a reprobate mind,' and to the efficacy of error (Rom. i. 28; 2 Thess. ii. 9–11), or

- to the desires of the flesh and to sinful lusts (Rom. i. 24), or
- to the power of Satan, ‘the god of this world’ (2 Cor. 4), ‘who worketh powerfully in the children of disobedience’ (Ephes. ii. 2).

But because from this Punishment arise many other sins, and this not only according to the certain Knowledge of God, by which He knows that if He thus punishes they will thence arise, but likewise according to his Purpose, by which He resolves so to punish as, on account of more heinous sins thence committed, to punish with still greater severity; therefore these expressions occur in the Scriptures:

- ‘But I will harden the heart of Pharaoh, that he shall not let the people go; he shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt’ (Exod. iv. 21; vii. 4).
- ‘Notwithstanding, the sons of Eli hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the Lord would slay them’ (1 Sam. ii. 25).
- ‘But Amaziah would not hearken to the answer of Joash king of Israel; for it came of God, that he might deliver them into the hand of their enemies, because they sought after the gods of Edom’ (2 Chron. xxv. 20).

This consideration distinguishes the governance of God concerning sins, so far as it is concerned about those sinners who are hardened, or those who are not hardened.

2. **XXII.** The PARDON or Remission of sin is an act of the Providence of God, by which the guilt of sin is forgiven, and the chastisement due to sin according to its guilt is taken away. As this Remission restores, to the favour of God, the man who had before been an enemy; so it likewise causes the Divine administration concerning him to be afterwards entirely gracious so far as Equity and Justice require: that is, through this Pardon, he is free from those spiritual punishments which have been enumerated in the preceding paragraph (Psalm ii. 10–12); and though not exempt from corporal chastisements, yet he is not visited with them through the anger of God as the punisher of sin, but only [*affectu*] through the desire of God thus to declare that he hates sin, and besides so to chastise as [*ne incidatur*] to deter him from falling again into it (2 Sam. xii. 11–13). For which reason, the government of Providence with regard to this man is entirely different from that under which he remained before he obtained remission (Psalm cxix. 67; 1 Cor. xi. 32; Psalm xxxii. 1–6).

XXIII. From those topics on which we have already treated, it is clearly evident, we think, that, because evils have entered into the world, neither Providence itself, nor its government respecting evil, ought to be denied. Neither can God be accused as being guilty of injustice on account of this his governance; not only because he hath administered all things to the best ends; that is, to the chastisement, trial, and manifestation of the godly — to the punishment and exposure of the wicked, and to the illustration of his own glory; (for ends, alone, do not justify an action); but, much more, because he has employed that form of administration which allows intelligent creatures not only [*sponte*] of their own

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choice or spontaneously. but likewise freely, to perform and accomplish their own motions and actions.

10 Disputation X

ON THE RIGHTEOUSNESS AND EFFICACY OF THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD CONCERNING
EVIL

Respondent: GERARD ADRIANS

I. The consideration of evil, which is called ‘the evil *of culpability*’ or ‘*of delinquency*,’ has induced many persons to deny the providence of God concerning creatures endowed with understanding and freedom of will, and concerning their actions. These persons have denied it for two reasons:

1. They have thought that, because God is good and just, omniscient and omnipotent, he would have entirely prevented sin from being committed, if in reality [*curaret*] he cared by his Providence for his rational creatures and their actions (Mark x. 18; Psalm cxlvii. 5; Rev. iv. 8; Mal. ii. 17; iii. 14).
2. Because they can conceive in their minds no other administration of Divine Providence concerning evil, than such as would involve God himself in the culpability, and would exempt from all criminality the creature, as if he had been impelled to sin by an irresistible act of God’s efficiency.

For this reason, then, since a belief in the Providence of God is absolutely necessary (Luke xii. 28), from whom a considerable part of his government is taken away if it be denied that he exercises any care over rational creatures and their actions; we will endeavour briefly to explain the Efficiency of Divine Providence concerning evil; and at the same time to demonstrate from this efficiency, that God cannot possibly be aspersed with the charge of injustice, and that no stain of sin can attach to him, on the contrary, that this efficiency is highly conducive to the commendation of God’s [*Justitiae*] righteousness.

II. But in sin are to be considered not only the act, (under which we likewise comprise the omission of the act), but also ‘the transgression of the law.’ The *Act* has regard to a natural good, and is called [*materiale*] the material cause of sin; the *Transgression* is a moral evil, and is called [*formale*] the formal cause of sin. An investigation into both of them is necessary, when we treat upon the Efficiency of God concerning sin: for it is occupied *about the Act* as it is an act, and as it is done against the law which prohibits its commission; *about the Omission of the Act* as such, and as it is against the law which commands its performance. But this Efficiency is to be considered:

1. With regard to the Beginning of sin, and its first conception in the heart of a rational creature;

2. its [*conatum*] attempt, and, through this attempt, its perpetration; and,
3. With regard to sin when finished.

The Efficiency of God concerning *the Beginning of sin* is either its Hindrance or Permission; and, added to permission, the Administration both of arguments and occasions inciting to sin; as well as an immediate Concurrence to produce the Act. The Divine Efficiency concerning *the Progress of sin* comprises its Direction and Determination; and concerning *the Completion of sin*, it is occupied in Punishing or Pardoning.

III. The FIRST Efficiency of God concerning sin, is HINDRANCE or the placing of a hindrance, which, both with regard of the Efficiency and of the object, is three-fold.

- *With respect to efficiency:* For
 1. the impediment is either of sufficient efficacy, but such as does not hinder sin in the act (Matt. xi. 21, 23; John xviii. 6).
 2. Or it is of such great efficacy as to render it impossible to be resisted.
 3. Or it is of an efficacy administered in such a way by the Wisdom of God, as in reality to hinder sin with regard to the event, and with [*certo*] certainty according to the foreknowledge of God, although not necessarily and inevitably (Gen. xx. 6).
- *With respect to the object,* it is likewise three-fold: for a hindrance is placed either on the Power, the Capability, or the Will of a rational creature.
 1. The impediment placed on *the Power*, is that by which some act is taken away from the power of a rational creature, for the performance of which it has [*affectum*] an inclination and sufficient powers. This is done by legislation, through which it comes to pass that the creature cannot perform that act without sin (Gen. ii. 16, 17).
 2. The impediment placed on *the Capability*, is that by which this effect is produced, that the creature cannot commit the deed, for the performance of which it possesses an inclination, and powers which, without this hindrance, would be sufficient. But this hindrance is placed on the Capability in four ways:
 - a) *First.* By depriving the creature of the essence and life, which are the foundation of Capability (1 Kings 19; 2 Kings 1).
 - b) *Secondly.* By the ablation or diminution of Capability (1 Kings xiii. 4; Rom. vi. 6).
 - c) *Thirdly.* By the opposition of a greater Capability, or at least of one that is equal (2 Chron. xxvi. 18–21; Gal. v. 17).
 - d) *Fourthly.* By the withdrawing of the object towards which the act tends (John viii. 59).
 3. An impediment is placed on *the Will* when, by some argument, it is persuaded not to will the perpetration of a sin, whether this argument be taken

from the Impossibility or the Difficulty of the thing (Matt. xxi. 46; Hosea ii. 6, 7); from its Unpleasantness or Inconvenience, its Uselessness or Injuriousness (Gen. xxxvii. 26, 27); and, lastly, from its Injustice, Dishonour, and Indecency (Gen. xxxix. 8, 9).

IV. The PERMISSION of sin is contrary to the Hindering of it. Yet it is not opposed to Hindrance as the latter is an act which is taken away from the power of a creature by legislation; for, in this case, the same act would be a sin, and not a sin

- *a sin* as it was an act forbidden to the power of the creature, and
- *not a sin* as being permitted, that is not forbidden.

But Permission is opposed to this Hindrance, by which an impediment is placed on the Capability and the Will of the creature. This Permission is a suspension of all impediments, that, God knows, if they were employed, would in fact, hinder the sin; and it is a necessary result, because sin might be hindered by a single impediment of this description.

1. Sin, therefore, is permitted to *the Capability* of the creature, when God employs none of those impediments which have been mentioned in the third thesis of this disputation: on which account, this permission has the following, either as conjoint or preceding acts of God. The continuance of essence and life to the creature, the preservation of his power, a care that it be not opposed by a greater power, or at least by one equal to it, and, lastly, the exhibition of the object on which sin is committed (Exod. ix. 16; John xviii. 6; 1 Sam. xx. 31, 32; Matt. xxvi. 2, 53).
2. Sin is permitted also to *the Will*, not by the suspension of every impediment suitable to deter the will from sinning, but by not employing those which in reality would hinder, [*qualia fieri nequit quin*], of which kind God must have an immense number in the treasures of his Wisdom and Capability.

V. The foundation of this Permission is,

1. The liberty of choice, which God, the Creator, has implanted in his rational creature, and the use of which the constancy of the Donor does not suffer to be taken away from this creature.
2. The infinite Wisdom and Capability of God, by which He knows and is able to produce good out of evil (Gen. i. 2, 3; 2 Cor. iv. 6).

And therefore, God permits that which he does permit,

- not in ignorance of the powers and the inclination of rational creatures, for he knows all things (1 Sam. xxiii. 11, 12);
- [*non invitus*] not with reluctance, for it was in his power, not to have produced a creature who possessed freedom of will, and to have destroyed him after he was produced (Rev. iv. 11);
- not as being incapable of hindering, for how can this be attributed to Him who is both Omniscient and Omnipotent? (Jer. xviii. 6; Psalm xciv. 9, 10);

- not as an unconcerned spectator, or negligent of that which is transacted, because even before any thing is done, he has already gone through the various actions concerning it, and has, besides, an attentive eye upon it to direct and determine to punish or to pardon it (Psalm lxxxi. 12, 13).

But whatever God permits, he permits it designedly and voluntarily, His will being immediately concerned about its permission, which permission itself is immediately occupied about sin, which order cannot be inverted without injury to divine justice and truth (Psalm v. 4, 5).

VI. We must now, with more distinctness, explain, by some of the differences of sin, those things which we have spoken thus generally about Hindering and Permitting.

1. The distinction of sin, from its causes, into those of Ignorance, Infirmity, Malignity, and Negligence, will serve our purpose. For an impediment is placed
 - on a sin of *Ignorance*, by the revelation of the Divine Will (Psalm cxix. 105);
 - on a sin of *Infirmity*, by the strengthening of the Holy Spirit (Ephes. iii. 16);
 - on a sin of *Malignity*, by 'taking away the stony heart, and by bestowing a heart of flesh' (Ezek. xi. 19), and inscribing on it the law of God (Jer. xxxi. 33); and
 - on a sin of *Negligence*, by a holy solicitude excited in the hearts of believers (Jer. xxxii. 40).

From these, it will be easily evident, in the suspension of which of these acts consists the Permission of sins under each of the preceding classes.

2. The distinction of sin according to the relation of the law which commands the performance of good, and of that which prohibits the commission of evil, has also a place in this explanation. For, against the prohibitory part, an offense is committed, either by performing an act, or from an undue cause and end, omitting its performance — against the perceptive part, either by omitting an act, or by performing it in an undue manner, and from an undue cause and end. To these distinctions also, God's Hindering and Permitting may be adapted. For Joseph's brethren were hindered from killing him; but they were induced to omit that act from an undue cause and end (Gen. xxxvii. 26, 27). Absalom was hindered from following the counsel of Ahithophel, which was useful to himself, and hurtful to David; but he did not abstain from it through a just cause, and from a good end (2 Sam. 17). God hindered Balaam from cursing the children of Israel, and caused him to bless them; but it was in such a manner that he abstained from the former act, and performed the latter with [*pravo*] an insincere and knavish mind (Num. 23).

VII. We shall more correctly understand the reasons and causes both of Hindering and Permitting, if, while distinctly considering in sin *the act*, and *the transgression of the law*, we apply to each of them the Divine Hindrance and Permission. But though, in sin, *the act* and *the transgression of the law* are inseparably connected, and therefore neither can be hindered or permitted without the other; yet they may be distinguished in the mind,

and God may hinder and permit sometimes with regard to *the act* or to *the transgression* alone; at other times, principally with regard to the one of them or to both, and these his acts may become objects of consideration to us. God hindered Elijah from being forcibly brought to Ahaziah to be killed, not as that was a Sin, but as it was an Act. This is apparent from the End and the Mode of hindering.

- *From the End*, because it was His Will that the life of His prophet should be spared, not lest Ahaziah should sin against God.
- *From the Mode of hindering*, because he destroyed two companies, of fifty men each, who had been sent to seize him, which was a token of Divine ANGER against Ahaziah and the men, by which Sin is not usually hindered *as such*, but *as it is an act which will prove injurious to another*: but through GRACE, sin is hindered *as such* (2 Kings 1).
 - God permitted Joseph to be sold, when he hindered his murder. He permitted his vendition, not more as it was a Sin than as it was an Act; for by the sale of Joseph, as it was an Act, God obtained his end (Gen. xxxvii. 1, 20; Psalm cv. 17).
 - But God hindered David from laying violent hands on Saul, not so much as it was an Act, as in reference to its being a Sin. This appears from the argument by which David was induced to refrain. ‘The Lord forbid,’ said he, ‘that I should stretch forth mine hand against the Lord’s anointed’ (1 Sam. xxiv. 7).
 - God permitted Ahab to kill Naboth, rather as it was a Sin than as it was an Act; for thus Ahab filled up the measure of his iniquities, and accelerated the infliction of punishment on himself; for, by some other way than this, God could have taken Naboth to himself (1 Kings 21).
 - But Abimelech was hindered from violating the chastity of Sarah
 - * both as it was an Act by which indelible grief would have been brought down upon Abraham, whom He greatly loved,
 - * and as it was a sin;
 for God was unwilling that Abimelech should defile himself with this crime, because ‘in the integrity of his heart,’ he would have done it (Gen. xx. 6).
 - On the contrary, God permitted Judah to know Tamar, his daughter-in-law
 - * both as an Act because God willed to have Christ born in direct descent from Judah,
 - * and as it was a Sin,
 for it was the will of God thus to declare: Nothing is so polluted that it cannot be sanctified in Christ Jesus (Gen. xxxviii. 18). For it is not in vain that Matthew has informed us, that Christ was the Son of Judah by Tamar, as he was also the Son of David by the wife of Uriah (Matt. 1).

This matter when diligently considered by us, conduces both to illustrate the Wisdom of God, and to promote our own profit, if in our consciences, we solicitously observe from what acts and in what respect we are hindered, and what acts are permitted to us.

VIII. Beside this Permission, there is another Efficiency of the Providence of God concerning the BEGINNING of sin, that is, the ADMINISTRATION or management of arguments and occasions, which incite to an act that cannot be committed by the creature without sin, if not through the intention of God, at least according to the inclination of the creature, and not seldom according to the events which thence arise (2 Sam. xii. 11, 12; xvi. 21–23). But these arguments are presented either to the mind (2 Sam. xxiv. 1; 1 Chron. xxi. 1; Psalm cv. 25), or to the senses, both external and internal (Job 1 and 2; Isa. x. 5–7); and this indeed, either by means of the service or intervention of creatures, or by the immediate act of God himself. The end of God in this administration is — to try whether it be the will of the creature to abstain from sinning, even when it is excited by these incentives, (for small praise is due to the act of abstaining, in those cases in which such excitements are absent); and, if it be the will of the creature to yield to these alluring attractions, to effect his own work by the act of the creature; not impelled by necessity, as if He was unable to complete his own work without the aid of the creature; but through a desire to demonstrate his manifold Wisdom. Consider the ARGUMENTS by which the brethren of Joseph, through their own malice, were incited to will his murder: these were

- Joseph's accusation, by which he disclosed to his father the deeds of his brethren,
- the peculiar affection which Jacob cherished for Joseph,
- the sending of a dream, and
- the relation of it.

Consider also the OCCASIONS or opportunities,

- the mission of Joseph to his brethren at his father's request, and
- the opportune appearance of the Ishmaelites who were traveling into Egypt (Gen. 37).

IX. The last Efficiency of God concerning the BEGINNING of sin, is *the Divine Concurrence*, which is necessary to produce every act; because nothing whatever can have an entity except from the First and Chief Being, who immediately produces that entity. The Concurrence of God is not his immediate influx into a second or inferior *cause*, but it is an action of God immediately [*influens*] flowing into *the effect* of the creature, so that the same effect in one and the same entire action may be produced [*simul*] simultaneously by God and the creature. Though this Concurrence is placed in the mere [*arbitrio*] pleasure or will of God, and in his free dispensation, yet he never denies it to a rational and free creature, when he has permitted an act to his power and will. For these two phrases are contradictory, 'to grant permission to the power and the will of a creature to commit an act,' and 'to deny the Divine Concurrence without which the act cannot be done.' But this Concurrence is to the act *as such*, not *as it is a sin*: And therefore God is at once the Effector and the Permitter of the same act, and the Permitter before he is the Effector. For if it had not been the will of the creature to perform such an act, the influx of God would not have been upon that act by Concurrence. And because the creature cannot perform that act without sin, God ought not, on that account, to deny the Divine Concurrence to the creature [*propensae*] who is inclined to its performance. For it is right and proper that the obedience of the creature should be tried, and that he should abstain from an unlawful act and from the desire of obeying his own inclinations, not through a

deficiency of the requisite Divine Concurrence; because, in this respect, he abstains from an act *as it is a natural good*, but it is the Will of God that he should refrain from it *as it is a moral evil*.

X. The preceding considerations relate to the BEGINNING of sin. In reference to the PROGRESS of sin, a two-fold Efficiency of Divine Providence occurs, Direction and Determination. *The Direction of Sin* is an act of Divine Providence, by which God wisely, justly, and powerfully directs sin wherever he wills, 'reaching from one end to another mightily, and sweetly ordering all things' (Wisdom viii.1). In *the Divine Direction* is likewise contained [*abductio*] a leading away from that [point] whither it is not the will of God [*intendere*] to direct it. This direction is two-fold,

- unto an object, and
- unto an end.
- *Direction unto an object* is when God allows the sin, which he permits, to be borne, not at the option of the creature, towards an object which, in any way whatsoever, is exposed and liable to the injury of sin; but which he directs to a particular object that sometimes has been no part of the sinner's aim or intention, or that he has at least not absolutely intended (Prov. xvi.9; xxi.1). Of this we have a signal example in Nebuchadnezzar, who, when he had prepared himself to subjugate nations, preferred to march against the Jews rather than the Ammonites, through the divine administration of his divinations (Ezek. xxi. 19–22).
- *Direction unto an end* is, when God does not allow the sin, which he permits, to be conducive to any end which the creature intends; but he uses it for that end which he himself wills, whether the creature intend the same end, (by which he would not still be excused from sin), or whether he has another purpose which is directly contrary. The vendition of Joseph into Egypt, the temptation of Job, and the expedition of the king of Assyria against the Jews, afford illustrations of these remarks (Gen. i. 20, 21; Job 1 and 2; Isa. x. 5–12).

XI. *The Determination of sin* is an act of Divine Providence by which God places [*modum*] a measure or check on his Permission, and a boundary on sin, that it may not, at the option and will of the creature, wander *in infinitum*. This mode and boundary are placed by the Circumscription of the Time, and the Determination of the Magnitude.

- *The Circumscription of the Time* is, when the space of time, in which the permitted sin could [*durare*] continue, is diminished and circumscribed so as to stop itself (Matt. xxiv. 22). In this part also, regard must be had to the act as such, and to the sin as such.
 1. God places a boundary to the duration of *the Act*, when he takes the rod of iniquity from the righteous, lest they commit any act unworthy of themselves (Psalm cxxv. 3); and when 'he delivers the godly out of temptation' (2 Pet. ii. 9).
 2. God places a boundary to the duration of *the Sin* when he 'hedges up the way of the Israelites with thorns,' that they may no longer commit idolatry (Hosea ii. 6, 7); when 'He commands all men every where to repent,' among

‘all nations, whom he suffered, in times past, to walk in their own ways’ (Acts xiv. 16; xvii. 30).

- A boundary is fixed to *the Magnitude of sin*, when God does not permit sin to increase to excess and assume greater strength. This also is done with respect to it as *an act*, or as *a sin*.
 1. In the former respect, [as an Act], God hindered ‘the wrath of their enemies from swallowing up’ the children of Israel, though he had permitted it to rise up against them (Psalm cxxiv. 2, 3); He permitted ‘no temptation to seize upon’ the Corinthians ‘but such as is common to man’ (1 Cor. x. 13); He hindered the devil from putting forth his hand against the life of Job (1 and 2); He prevented Shishadk, the king of Egypt, from ‘destroying’ the Jews, and permitted him only to subject them to servitude (2 Chron. xii. 7–9).
 2. In respect to it as *a sin*, God hindered David from contaminating himself with the blood of Nabal and his domestics. which he had sworn to shed, and with whom he was then in a state of contention (1 Sam. xxv. 22, 26). He also prevented David from going forth to battle in company with the army of Achish (xxvii. 2; xxix. 6, 7), to whom he had fled, and ‘before whom he had reigned himself mad’ (xxi. 13), thus, at the same time he hindered him from destroying his own countrymen, the Israelites, and from bringing disasters on the army of Achish. For he could have done neither of these things without the most flagrant wickedness; though the sin, also, *as an act*, seems thus to have been hindered.

XII. On account of this Divine Permission, the Offering of arguments and opportunities in addition to Permission, also on account of this Direction, Determination, and Divine Concurrence, God is said Himself to do those evils which are perpetrated by men and by Satan:

- To have sent Joseph down into Egypt (Gen. xlv. 8),
- to have taken the property of Job (1 and 2),
- to have done openly ‘and before the sun’ what David had perpetrated ‘secretly’ against Uriah (2 Sam. xii. 11, 12, 16).

This mode of speech is adopted for the following reasons:

1. Because the principal parts, in the actions which are employed to produce such effects, belong to God himself.
2. Because the effects and [*eventus*] issues, which result from all these, even from actions performed by the creature, are not [*respondent*] so much in accordance with the intention of the creatures themselves, as with the purpose of God (Isa. x. 5–7).
3. Because the Wisdom of God knows, if an administration of this kind be employed by Him, that will certainly arise, or ensue, which cannot be perpetuated by the creature without wickedness; and because His Will [*decernit*] decrees to employ this administration (1 Sam. xxiii. 11–13).

4. A fourth reason may be added: Because God, who is the Universal Cause, [*influit*] moves into the effect with a stronger influence than the creature does, whose entire efficacy depends upon God.

XIII. Lastly, follows the Efficiency of Divine Providence concerning sin already perpetrated; which consists in its Punishment and Remission. This Efficiency is occupied about sin as it is such: For sin is punished and pardoned *as* it is an evil, and *because* it is an evil.

1. The PUNISHMENT of sin is an act of the Providence of God, by which sin is repaid with the punishment that is due to it according to the Justice of God. This Punishment either belongs to *the present life*, or to *that which is to come*.
 - a) The latter is the eternal separation of the whole man from God, and his anguish and torture in the lake of fire (Matt. xxv. 41; Rev. xx. 15).
 - b) The Punishment inflicted in this life, is either Corporal or Spiritual. Those chastisements *which relate to the body*, and to the state of the animal life, are various; but the enumeration of them is not necessary for our purpose. But *spiritual Punishment* must be diligently considered; which is such a punishment of a previous sin, as to be also the cause of other subsequent sins, through the malice of him on whom it is inflicted. It is a Privation of Grace, and a delivering up to the power of evil.
 - But PRIVATION is either that of habitual grace, or that of assisting grace. *The former* is through the blinding of the mind, and the hardening of the heart (Isa. vi. 9, 10). *The latter* is [*ablatio*] the withdrawing of the assistance of the Holy Spirit, who is wont, inwardly ‘to help our infirmities’ (Rom. viii. 26), and outwardly to repress the temptations of Satan and the world both on the right hand and on the left; in this holy service, he also engages the ministry and the care of good angels (Heb. i. 14; Psalm xci. 11).
 - A DELIVERING UP to the power of evil is, either ‘giving sinners over to a reprobate mind’ and to the efficacy of error (Rom. i. 28; 2 Thess. ii. 9–11), or to the desires of the flesh and to the lusts of sin (Rom. i. 24), or lastly to the power of Satan, ‘the god of this world’ (2 Cor. iv. 4), ‘who worketh powerfully in the children of disobedience’ (Ephes. ii. 2). But because from this punishment arise many other sins, and this not only according to the certain Knowledge of God, by which He knows that if He thus punishes, they will thence arise, but likewise according to his purpose by which He resolves thus to punish — hence occur the following expressions: ‘I will harden the heart of Pharaoh,’ etc. (Exod. iv. 21; vii. 4). ‘Notwithstanding, the sons of Eli harkened not unto the voice of their father, because it was the will of the Lord to slay them’ (1 Sam. ii. 25). ‘But Amaziah would not hearken to the answer of Joash, king of Israel; for it came of God, that he might deliver them into the hand of their enemies, because they sought after the gods of Edom’ (2 Chron. xxv. 20).

This consideration distinguishes the governance of God concerning sins, so far as it is occupied concerning either those sinners who are hardened, or those who are not hardened.

2. **XIV.** The PARDON or Remission of sin is an act of the Providence of God, by which the guilt of sin is forgiven, and the Punishment due to sin on account of its guilt is taken away. As this Remission restores, to the favour of God, the man who had previously been an enemy; so it also causes the Divine administration respecting him to be afterwards entirely gracious, so far as Equity and Justice require. That is, through this Pardon, he is free from those spiritual punishments which have been enumerated in the preceding Thesis (Psalm ii. 10–12); and though not exempt from corporal chastisements, yet he is not visited with them through the anger of God as the Punisher of sin, but only through [*affectu*] the desire of God thus to declare that He hates sin, and besides so to chastise as to deter the sinner from again falling into it (2 Sam. xii. 11–13). For which reason, the government of Providence with regard to this man is entirely different from that under which he remained before he obtained remission (Psalm cxix. 67; 1 Cor. xi. 32; Psalm xxxii. 1, 6). This consideration is exceedingly useful for producing in man a solicitous care and a diligent endeavour to obtain grace from God, which may not only be sufficient to preserve him in future from sinning but which may likewise be so administered by the gracious Providence of God, as God knows to be [*congruum*] best fitted to keep him in the very act from sin.

XV. This is the Efficiency of Divine Providence concerning sin, which cannot be accused of the least injustice.

1. For with respect to THE HINDERING OF SIN, that which is employed by God is sufficient in its own nature to hinder, and by which [*deberet*] it is the duty of the creature to be hindered from sin, by which also he might actually be hindered unless he offered resistance and [*deesset*, 'was wanting to' or] failed of the proffered grace. But God is not bound to employ all the methods which are possible to Him for the Hindrance of sin (Rom. 1 and 2; Isa. v. 4; Matt. xi. 21–23).
2. But the cause of sin cannot be ascribed to the Divine PERMISSION. Not *the Efficient Cause*; for it is a suspension of the Divine efficiency. Not *the Deficient Cause*; for it pre-supposed, that man had [*potentiam*] a capability not to commit sin, by the aid of Divine grace, which is either near and ready; or if it be wanting, it is [*non presto*] removed to a distance by the fault of the man himself.
3. The PRESENTING OF ARGUMENTS AND OCCASIONS does not cause sin, unless, *per accidens*, accidentally: For it is administered in such a manner, as to allow the creature not only the spontaneous but also the free use of his own motions and actions. But God is perfectly at liberty in this manner to try the obedience of his creature.
4. Neither can injustice be ascribed with any propriety to THE DIVINE CONCURRENCE: For there is no reason in existence why God ought to deny his concurrence to that act which, on account of the precept imposed, cannot be committed by the creature without sin (Gen. ii. 16, 17); which concurrence God would grant to the same act of the creature, if a law had not been made.

5. DIRECTION and DETERMINATION have no difficulty.
6. PUNISHMENT and PARDON have in them manifest equity, even that Punishment which contains blinding and hardening; since God is not wont to inflict it except for the deep demerit and the almost [*deploratum*] desperate contumacy of his intelligent creature (Isa. vi. 7; Rom. 1; 2 Thess. ii. 9–12).

11 Disputation XI

ON THE FREE WILL OF MAN AND ITS POWERS

Respondent: PAUL LEONARDS

- I. The word, *arbitrium*, ‘Choice,’ or ‘Free Will,’ properly signifies
- both *the faculty of the mind or understanding*, by which the mind is enabled to judge about any thing proposed to it,
 - and *the judgment itself* which the mind forms according to that faculty.

But it is transferred from the MIND to the WILL on account of the very close [*unionem*] connection which subsists between them. LIBERTY, when attributed to the Will, is properly an affection of the Will, though it has its root in the understanding and reason. Generally considered, it is various.

1. It is a FREEDOM from [*imperio*] the control or jurisdiction of one who commands, and from an obligation to render obedience.
2. From the inspection, care, and government of a Superior.
3. It is also a Freedom from necessity, whether this proceeds from an external cause compelling, or from a nature inwardly determining absolutely to one thing.
4. It is a Freedom from sin and its dominion.
5. And a Freedom from misery.

II. Of these five modes of Liberty, the first two appertain to God alone; to whom also on this account, *αυτεξουσια* perfect independence, or complete freedom of action, is attributed: But these two modes cannot belong to the creatures, as being those who are subject to the command and the Providence of God. Wherefore, when we treat of the Free Will of man, neither of these modes forms any part of our considerations on this subject. But the remaining three modes may belong to man, nay in a certain respect they [*conveniunt*] agree with to him. And, in truth, that which is a *Freedom from necessity* always agrees with him because it is by nature situated in the will, as its proper attribute, so that there cannot be any will if it be not free. The *Freedom from misery*, which agreed with man when recently created and not then fallen into sin, will again be in accordance with him when he shall be translated in body and soul into celestial blessedness. But about these two modes also, of *Freedom from necessity and from misery*, we have here no dispute. It remains, therefore, for us, to discuss that which is a *Freedom from sin and its dominion*, and which is the principal controversy of these times.

III. It is therefore asked, is there within man a freedom of will from sin and its dominion, and how far does it extend? Or rather, what are the powers of the whole man to understand, to will, and to do that which is good? To return an appropriate answer to this question, the distinction of a good object, and the diversity of men's conditions, must both enter into our consideration. The GOOD THINGS presented to man are three,

- *Natural*, which he has in common with many other creatures;
- *Animal*, which belong to him as a man; and
- *Spiritual*, which are also deservedly called *Celestial* or *Divine*, and which are contemporaneous to him as being a partaker of the Divine Nature.

The STATES, or CONDITIONS are likewise three,

- that of *Primitive Innocence*, in which God placed him by creation;
- that of *Subsequent Corruption*, into which he fell through sin when destitute of primitive innocence; and, lastly,
- that of *Renewed Righteousness*, to which state he is restored by the grace of Christ.

IV. But because it is of little importance to our present purpose to investigate what may be the powers of Free Will to understand, to will, and to do *natural* and *animal* good things; we will omit them, and enter on the consideration of *spiritual good*, that concerns the spiritual life of man, which he is bound to live according to godliness, inquiring from the Scriptures what powers man possesses, while he is in the way of this animal life, to understand, to will, and to do spiritual good things, which alone are truly good and pleasing to God. In this inquiry the office of a Director will be performed by a consideration of the three states, of which we have already treated, [§ III], varied as such consideration must be in the relation of these powers to the change of each state.

V. In the state of PRIMITIVE INNOCENCE, man had a mind endued with a clear understanding of heavenly light and truth concerning God, and his works and will, as far as was sufficient for the salvation of man and the glory of God; he had a heart imbued with 'righteousness and true holiness,' and with a true and saving love of good; and powers abundantly [*instructas*] qualified or furnished perfectly to fulfill the law which God had imposed on him. This admits easily of proof, from the description of the image of God, after which man is said to have been created (Gen. i. 26, 27), from the law divinely imposed on him, which had a promise and a threat appended to it (ii. 17), and lastly from the analogous restoration of the same image in Christ Jesus (Ephes. iv. 24, Col. iii. 10).

VI. But man was not so confirmed in this state of innocence, as to be incapable of being moved, [*specie*] by the representation presented to him of some good, (whether it was of an inferior kind and relating to this animal life, or of a superior-kind and relating to spiritual life), inordinately and unlawfully to look upon it and to desire it, and of his own spontaneous as well as free motion, and through a preposterous desire for that good, to decline from the obedience which had been prescribed to him. Nay, [*aversus*] having turned away from the light of his own mind and his Chief Good, which is God, or, at least,

[*conversus*] having turned towards that Chief Good not in the manner in which he ought to have done, and besides having turned in mind and heart towards an inferior good, he transgressed the command given to him for life. By this foul deed, he precipitated himself from that noble and elevated condition into a state of the deepest infelicity, which is UNDER THE DOMINION OF SIN. For ‘to whom any one yields himself a servant to obey’ (Rom. vi. 16), and ‘of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage,’ and is his regularly assigned slave (2 Pet. ii. 19).

VII. In this state, the Free Will of man towards the True Good is not only wounded, maimed, infirm, bent, and [*attenuatum*] weakened; but it is also imprisoned, destroyed, and lost. And its powers are not only debilitated and useless unless they be assisted by grace, but it has no powers whatever except such as are excited by Divine grace. For Christ has said, ‘Without me ye can do nothing.’ St Augustine, after having diligently meditated upon each word in this passage, speaks thus: ‘Christ does not say, *Without me ye can do* BUT LITTLE; neither does He say, *Without me ye can do* ANY ARDUOUS THING, nor *Without me ye can do it with difficulty*. But he says, *Without me ye can do* NOTHING! Nor does he say, *Without me ye cannot* [*perficere*] COMPLETE *any thing*; but *Without me ye can do* NOTHING.’ That this may be made more manifestly to appear, we will separately consider the Mind, the Affections or Will, and [*potentiam*] the Capability, as contra-distinguished from them, as well as the Life itself of an unregenerate man.

VIII.

1. *The Mind* of man, in this state, is dark, destitute of the saving knowledge of God, and, according to the Apostle, incapable of those things which belong to the Spirit of God. For ‘the animal man has no perception of the things of the Spirit of God’ (1 Cor. ii. 14); in which passage man is called ‘animal,’ not from the animal body, but from *anima*, the soul itself, which is the most noble part of man, but which is so encompassed about with the clouds of ignorance, as to be distinguished by the epithets of ‘vain’ and ‘foolish;’ and men themselves, thus darkened in their minds, are denominated [*amentes*] ‘mad’ or foolish, ‘fools,’ and even ‘darkness’ itself (Rom. i. 21, 22; Ephes. iv. 17, 18; Tit. iii. 3; Ephes. v. 8). This is true, not only when, from the truth of the law which has in some measure been inscribed on the mind, it is preparing to form conclusions by the understanding; but likewise when, by simple apprehension, it would receive the truth of the gospel externally offered to it. For the human mind judges that to be ‘foolishness’ which is the most excellent ‘wisdom’ of God (1 Cor. i. 18, 24). On this account, what is here said must be understood not only of *practical* understanding and the judgment [*singularis*] of *particular* approbation, but also of *theoretical* understanding and the judgment of *general* estimation.
2. **IX.** To the Darkness of the Mind succeeds the *Perverseness of the Affections and of the Heart*, according to which it hates and has an aversion to that which is truly good and pleasing to God; but it loves and pursues what is evil. The Apostle was unable to afford a more luminous description of this perverseness, than he has given in the following words: ‘The carnal mind is enmity against God. For it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the flesh cannot

please God' (Rom. viii. 7). For this reason, the human heart itself is very often called deceitful and perverse, uncircumcised, hard and stony' (Jer. xiii. 10; xvii. 9; Ezek. xxxvi. 26). Its [*figmentum*] imagination is said to be 'only evil from his very youth' (Gen. vi. 5; viii. 21); and 'out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries,' etc. (Matt. xv. 19).

3. **X.** Exactly correspondent to this Darkness of the Mind, and Perverseness of the Heart, is [*impotentia*] *the utter Weakness of all the Powers* to perform that which is truly good, and to omit the perpetration of that which is evil, in a due mode and from a due end and cause. The subjoined sayings of Christ serve to describe this impotence. 'A corrupt tree cannot bring forth good fruit' (Matt. vii. 18). 'How can ye, being evil, speak good things?' (xii. 34). The following relates to the good which is properly prescribed in the gospel: 'No man can come to me, except the Father draw him' (John vi. 44). As do likewise the following words of the Apostle: 'The carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be' (Rom. viii. 7); therefore, that man over whom it has dominion, cannot perform what the law commands. The same Apostle says, 'When we were in the flesh, the motions of sins wrought in us,' or flourished energetically (vii. 5). To the same purpose are all those passages in which the man existing in this state is said to be under the power of sin and Satan, reduced to the condition of a slave, and 'taken captive by the Devil' (Rom. vi. 20; 2 Tim. ii. 26).
4. **XI.** To these let the consideration of *the whole of the Life of Man* who is [*constituti*] placed under sin, be added, of which the Scriptures exhibit to us the most luminous descriptions; and it will be evident, that nothing can be spoken more truly concerning man in this state, than that he is altogether dead in sin (Rom. iii. 10–19). To these let the testimonies of Scripture be joined, in which are described the benefits of Christ, which are conferred by his Spirit on the human mind and will, and thus on the whole man (1 Cor. vi. 9–11; Gal. v. 19–25; Ephes. ii. 2–7; iv. 17–20; Tit. iii. 3–7). For, the blessings of which man has been deprived by sin, cannot be rendered more obviously apparent, than by the immense [*cumulo*] mass of benefits which accrue to believers through the Holy Spirit; when, in truth, nature is understood to be devoid of all that which, as the Scriptures testify, is performed in man and communicated by the operation of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, if 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty' (2 Cor. iii. 17); and if those alone be free indeed whom the Son hath made free' (John viii. 36); it follows, that our will is not free from the first fall; that is, it is not free to good, unless it be made free by the Son through his Spirit.

XII. But far different from this is [*ratio*] the consideration of the Free Will of man, as constituted in the Third State of RENEWED RIGHTEOUSNESS. For when a new light and knowledge of God and Christ, and of the Divine Will, have been kindled in his mind; and when new affections, inclinations and motions agreeing with the law of God, have been excited in his heart, and new powers have been [*ingeneratae*] produced in him; it comes to pass,

- that, being liberated from the kingdom of darkness, and being now made 'light in the Lord' (Ephes. v. 8), he understands the true and saving good;

- that, after the hardness of his stony heart has been changed into the softness of flesh, and the law of God according to the covenant of grace has been inscribed on it (Jer. xxxi. 32–35), he loves and embraces that which is good, just, and holy; and
- that, being made capable in Christ, co-operating now with God, he prosecutes the good which he knows and loves, and he begins himself to perform it in deed. But this, whatever it may be of knowledge, holiness and power, is all begotten within him by the Holy Spirit; who is, on this account, called ‘the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, of counsel and might, of knowledge and the fear of Jehovah’ (Isa. xi. 2), ‘the Spirit of grace’ (Zech. xii. 10), ‘of faith’ (2 Cor. iv. 13), ‘the Spirit of adoption’ into sons (Rom. viii. 16), and ‘the Spirit of holiness;’ and to whom the acts of illumination, regeneration, renovation, and confirmation, are attributed in the Scriptures.

XIII. But two things must be here observed. The FIRST that this work of regeneration and illumination is not completed in one moment; but that it is advanced and promoted, from [*die*] time to time, by daily increase. For ‘our old man is crucified, that the body of sin might be destroyed’ (Rom. vi. 6), and ‘that the inward man may be renewed day by day’ (2 Cor. iv. 16). For this reason, in regenerate persons, as long as they inhabit these mortal bodies, ‘the flesh lusteth against the Spirit’ (Gal. v. 17). Hence it arises, that they can neither perform any good thing without great resistance and violent struggles, nor abstain from the commission of evil. Nay, it also happens, that, either through ignorance or infirmity, and sometimes through [*malitia*] perverseness, they sin, as we may see in the cases of Moses, Aaron, Barnabas, Peter and David. Neither is such an occurrence only accidental; but, even in those who are the most perfect, the following Scriptures have their fulfillment: ‘In many things we all offend’ (James iii. 9); and ‘There is no man that sinneth not’ (1 Kings viii. 46).

XIV. The SECOND thing to be observed is, That as the very first commencement of every good thing, so likewise the progress, continuance and confirmation, nay, even the perseverance in good, are not from ourselves, but from God through the Holy Spirit. For ‘he who hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ’ (Phil. i. 6); and ‘we are kept by the power of God through faith’ (1 Pet. i. 5). ‘The God of all grace makes us perfect, stablishes, strengthens and settles us’ (i. 10). But if it happens that persons fall into sin who have been born again, they neither repent nor rise again unless they be raised up again by God through the power of his Spirit, and be renewed to repentance. This is proved in the most satisfactory manner, by the example of David and of Peter. ‘Every good and perfect gift, therefore, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights’ (James i. 17), by whose power the dead are animated that they may live, the fallen are raised up that they may recover themselves, the blind are illuminated that they may see, the unwilling are incited that they may become willing, the weak are confirmed that they may stand, the willing are assisted that they may work and may co-operate with God. ‘To whom be praise and glory in the church, by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. AMEN!’

Subsequent or *following* grace does indeed assist the good purpose of man; but this good purpose would have no existence unless through preceding or *preventing* grace. And though the desire of man, which is called *good*, be assisted by grace when it begins to be; yet it does not begin without grace, but is inspired by Him, concerning whom the Apostle writes thus, *Thanks be to God, who put the same earnest care into the heart of Titus for you*. If God [*dat*] incites any one to have an earnest care' for others, He will put it into the heart' of some other person to have an earnest care' for him. AUGUSTINUS, *Contra 2 Epist. Pelag.* lib. 2, cap. 9.

What then, you ask, does Free Will do? I reply with brevity, it saves. Take away FREE WILL, and nothing will be left to be saved. Take away GRACE, and nothing will be left [*unde salvetur*] as the source of salvation. This work [of salvation] cannot be effected without two parties

- *One*, from whom [*sit*] it may come;
- *The Other*, to whom or in whom it may be [wrought].

God is the author of salvation. Free Will [*tantum capere*] is only capable of being saved. No one, except God, is able to bestow salvation; and nothing, except Free Will, is capable of receiving it. BERNARDUS, *De Libero Arbit. et Gratia*.

12 Disputation XII

THE LAW OF GOD

Respondent: DIONYSIUS SPRANCKHUYSEN

- I. LAW in general is defined,
 - either from its END, ‘an ordinance of right reason for the common and particular good of all and of each of those who are subordinate to it, [*lata*] enacted by Him who has the care of the whole community, and, in it, that of each individual.’
 - Or from its FORM and its EFFICACY, ‘an ordinance commanding what must be done, and what omitted; it is enacted by Him, who possesses the right of requiring obedience; and it binds to obedience a creature who abounds in the use of reason and the exercise of liberty, by the sacred promise of a reward and by the denunciation of a punishment.’

It is likewise distinguished into Human and Divine. A *Divine* law has GOD for its Author, a *Human* law has man for its author; not that any law enacted by man is choice and good, which may not be referred to God, the Author of every good; but because men deduce from the Divine Law such precepts as are accommodated to the state of which they have the charge and oversight, according to its particular condition and circumstances. At present we will treat upon the Divine Law.

- II. The Divine Law may be considered,
 - either as it is impressed on the minds of men [*insito*] *by the engrafted word* (Rom. ii. 14, 15);
 - as it is communicated *by words audibly pronounced* (Gal. ii. 17), or
 - as it is comprised *in writing* (Exod. xxxiv. 1).

These modes of legislation do not differ in their entire objects: but they may admit of discrimination in this way, the First seems to serve as a kind of foundation to the rest; but the Two others extend themselves further, even to those things which are commanded and forbidden. We will now treat upon *the law of God which is comprised in writing*; and which is also called ‘the law of Moses;’ because God used him as a mediator to deliver it to the children of Israel (Mal. iv. 4; Gal. iii. 19). But it is three-fold according to the variety of the object, that is, of the works to be performed. The First is called *the Ethical, or Moral Law* (Exod. 20). The Second, *the Sacred or Ceremonial*. The Third *the Political, Judicial or Forensic Law*.

III.

1. THE MORAL LAW is distributed through the whole of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, and is summarily contained in the Decalogue. It is an ordinance that commands those things which God [*habet*] accounts grateful of themselves, and which it is his will to be performed by all men at all times and in all places; and that forbids the contrary things (1 Sam. xv. 22; Amos v. 21–24; Micah vi. 6–8). It is therefore the perpetual and immutable Rule of Living, the express image of the internal Divine conception; according to which, God, the great Lawgiver, judges it right and equitable that a rational creature should always and in every place order and direct the whole of his life. It is briefly contained in *the love God and of our neighbour* (Matt. xxii. 36–39);

- whether partly consisting of those services which relate to the love, honour, fear, and worship of God (Mal. i. 6);
- or partly consisting of those duties which we owe to our neighbours, superiors, inferiors, and equals (Rom. xii, xiii and xiv);

in the wide circle of which are also comprehended those things which every man is bound to perform to himself (Tit. ii. 11, 12).

IV. The Uses of the Moral Law are various, according to the different conditions of man.

- a) The Primary Use, and that which was of itself intended by God according to his love for [*justitiam*] righteousness and for his creatures, was, *that man by it might be quickened or made alive*, that is, that he might perform it, and by its performance might be justified, and might ‘of debt’ receive the reward which was promised through it (Rom. ii. 13; x. 5; iv. 4). And this Use was accommodated to the Primitive State of man, when sin had not yet entered into the world.
- b) The First Use in order of the Moral Law, under a State of Sin, is AGAINST man as a sinner, not only *that it may accuse him of transgression and guilt, and may subject him to the wrath of God and condemnation* (Rom. iii. 19, 20); but *that it may likewise convince him [impotentia] of his utter inability to resist sin and to subject himself to the law* (Rom. 7). Since God has been pleased mercifully and graciously to treat with sinful man, the Next Use of the Law TOWARDS the sinner is, *that it may compel him who is thus convicted and subjected to condemnation, to desire and seek the grace of God, and that it may force him to flee to Christ either as the promised or as the imparted Deliverer* (Gal. ii. 16, 17). Besides, in this State of Sin, the Moral Law is serviceable,
 - not only to GOD, that, by the dread of punishment and the promise of temporal rewards, he may restrain men under its guidance at least from the outward work of sin and from flagrant crimes (1 Tim. i. 9, 10);
 - but it is also serviceable to SIN, when dwelling and reigning in a carnal man who is under the law, that it may inflame the desire of sin, may increase sin, and may ‘work within him all manner of concupiscence’ (Rom. vi. 12–14; vii. 5, 8, 11, 13).

In the former case, God employs the Law through his Goodness and his Love for [*societatem animale*m] civil and social intercourse among mankind. In the latter case, it is employed through the malice of sin which reigns and has the dominion.

c) **V.** The Third Use of the Moral Law is towards a man, as now born again by the Spirit of God and of Christ, and is agreeable to the State of Grace, *that it may be a perpetual rule for directing his life* [secundum Deum et Spiritum] *in a godly and spiritual manner* (Tit. iii. 8; James ii. 8).

- Not that man may be justified; because for this purpose it is rendered ‘weak through the flesh’ and useless, even if man had committed only a single sin (Rom. viii. 3).
- But that he may render thanks to God for his gracious Redemption and Sanctification (Psalm cxvi. 12, 13), that he may preserve a good conscience (1 Tim. i. 19), that he may make his calling and election sure (2 Pet. i. 10), that he may by his example win over other persons to Christ (1 Pet. iii. 1), that he may confound the Devil (Job 1 and 2), that he may condemn the ungodly world (Heb. xi. 7), and that through the path of good works [*contendat*] he may march towards the heavenly inheritance and glory (Rom. ii. 7), and that he may not only himself glorify God (1 Cor. vi. 20), but may also furnish occasion and matter to others for glorifying his Father who is in Heaven (Matt. v. 16).

VI. From these Uses it is easy to collect how far the Moral Law obtains among believers and those who are placed under the grace of Christ, and how far it is abrogated.

- a) It is abrogated *with regard to its power and use in justifying*: ‘For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by that law’ (Gal. iii. 21). The reason why ‘it cannot give life,’ is, ‘because it is weak through the flesh’ (Rom. viii. 3); God, therefore, willing to deal graciously with men, gave the promise and Christ himself, that the inheritance through the promise and by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But the law which came after the promise, could neither ‘make the latter of none effect,’ (for it was sanctioned by authority), nor could it be joined or super-added to the promise, that out of this union righteousness and life might be given (Gal. iii. 16–18, 22).
- b) It is abrogated *with regard to the curse and condemnation*: For ‘Christ, being made a curse for us, hath redeemed us from the curse of the law’ (Gal. iii. 10–13); and thus the law is taken away from sin, lest its ‘strength’ should be to condemn (1 Cor. xv. 55, 56).
- c) The law is abrogated and taken away from sin, *so far as ‘sin, having taken occasion by the law, works all manner of concupiscence’ in the carnal man, over whom sin exercises dominion* (Rom. vii. 4–8).
- d) It is abrogated, *with regard to the guidance by which it urged man to do good and to refrain from evil, through a fear of punishment and a hope of temporal*

reward (1 Tim. i. 9, 10; Gal. iv. 18). For believers and regenerate persons 'are become dead to the law by the body of Christ,' that they may be the property of another, even of Christ; by whose Spirit they are led and excited in newness of life, according to love and the royal law of liberty (1 John v. 3, 4; James ii. 8). Whence it appears, that the law is not abrogated *with respect to the obedience which must be rendered to God*; for though obedience be required under the grace of Christ and of the Gospel, it is required according to clemency, and not according to strict [legal] rigor (1 John iii. 1, 2).

2. **VII.** THE CEREMONIAL LAW is that which contains the precepts concerning the outward worship of God; which was delivered to the Jewish church, and was accommodated to the times in which the church of God was 'as a child' under 'the promise' and the Old Testament (Gal. iv. 1–3). It was instituted not only to typify, to prefigure and [*obsignandum*] to bear witness by sealing (Heb. viii. 5; x. 1); but likewise for the discipline, or good order which was to be observed in ecclesiastical meetings and acts (Col. ii. 14; Psalm xxvii. 4). Subserving to *the former purpose* were Circumcision, the Pascal Lamb, Sacrifices, Sabbaths, Sprinklings, Washings, Purifications, Consecrations and Dedications of living creatures (Col. ii. 11; 1 Cor. v. 7). To *the latter purpose*, [that of church discipline], were the distinct functions of the Priests, the Levites, the Singers, and the Porters, or Door-keepers, the courses or changes in their several duties, and the circumstances of the places and times in which these sacred acts were to be severally performed (1 Chron. xxiv, xxv, and xxvi).

VIII. The Use of this Ceremonial Law was,

- a) *That it might retain that ancient people under the hope and expectation of the good things which had been promised* (Heb. x. 1–3). This Use it fulfilled by various types, figures and shadows of persons, things, actions, and events (7, 9, and 10); by which not only were sins testified as in 'a hand-writing which was against them' (Col. ii. 14), that the necessity of the promise which had been given might be understood; but likewise the expiation and promised good things were shewn at a distance, that they might believe the promise would assuredly be fulfilled (Heb. ix. 8–10; Col. ii. 17; Heb. x. 1). And in this respect, since the body and express form of those types and shadows relate to Christ, the Ceremonial Law is deservedly called 'a school-master [to bring the Jews] unto Christ' (Gal. iii. 24).
- b) *That it might distinguish from other nations the Children of Israel, as a people sanctified to God on a peculiar [nomine] account, and that it might separate them as 'a middle wall of partition'* (Ephes. ii. 14, 15); yet so as that even strangers might be admitted to [*communione*] a participation in it by circumcision (Exod. xii. 44; Acts ii. 10).
- c) *That while occupied in this course of operas religious services, they might not invent and fabricate other modes of worship, nor assume such as were in use among other nations*; and thus they were preserved pure from idolatry and superstition, to which they had the greatest propensity, and for which occasions were offered on every side by those nations who were contiguous, as well as by those who dwelt amongst them (Deut. xii; xxxi. 16, 27–29).

IX. The Ceremonial Law was abrogated by the cross, the death and the resurrection of Christ, by his ascension into heaven and the mission of the Holy Ghost, by the sun's dispersion of *the shadows*, and by the entrance of '*the body which is of Christ*' into their place (Col. ii. 11, 12, 14, 17), which is [*justum*] the full completion of all the types (Heb. viii. 1–6). But the gradations to be observed in its abrogation must come under our consideration: *In the first moment* it was abrogated with regard to the necessity and utility of its observance, every obligatory right being at once and together taken from it: in that instant it ceased to live, and became dead (Gal. iv. 9, 10; 1 Cor. vii. 19; ix. 19, 20; 2 Cor. iii. 13–16). *Afterwards* it was actually to be abolished. This was effected partly, by [*doctrinam*] the teaching of the Apostles among believers, who by degrees understood 'Christ to be the end of the law,' and of that which was then abolished; they abstained therefore voluntarily from the use of that law. Its abolition was also effected in part, by the Power of God, in the destruction of Jerusalem and of the Temple, in which was the seat of religion, and the place appointed for performing those religious observances, against the contumacy of the unbelieving Jews. From this period the legal ceremonies began to be mortiferous, though in the intermediate space [which had elapsed between the death of Christ and the destruction of Jerusalem], these rites, even in the judgment of the apostles themselves, might be tolerated, but only among the Jews, and with a proviso, that they should not be imposed on the Gentiles (Acts xvi. 3; xv. 28; xxi. 21–26; Gal. ii. 3, 11, 12); which toleration must itself be considered as being tantamount to a new institution.

3. **X.** THE JUDICIAL LAW is that which God prescribed by Moses to the Children of Israel, of whom He was in a peculiar manner the king (Exod. 21, 22, 23, etc.). It contained precepts about the form of the political government to be exercised in civil society, for procuring the benefit both of [*animales*] natural and spiritual life, by the preservation and exaction of the outward worship and of the external discipline commanded in Moral and Ceremonial Law, such as concerned Magistrates, Contracts, Division of property, Judgments, Punishments, etc. (Deut. xvii. 15). These laws may appropriately be referred to two kinds:

- a) Some of them, with regard to their substance are [*communis juris*] of general obligation, though with regard to some circumstances they are peculiar to the Jewish commonwealth.
- b) Others belong simply to a particular right or authority (Deut. xv. 1, 2; vi. 19).

XI. The Uses of this Judicial Law also were three:

- a) *That the whole* [status] *community of the Children of Israel* [ordinaretur] *might be regulated by a certain rule of public equity and justice*; that it might be 'as a city that is compact together' (Psalm cxxii. 3), [or as a body] 'which is knit together' according to all and each of its parts,' 'by the joints and sinews' of the precepts prescribed in this law.
- b) *That the Israelites might, by this Law, be distinguished from other nations who had their own laws.* Thus was it the Will of God, that this his people should have nothing in common with other nations, wherever this was possible

according to the nature of things and of man himself. These two Uses related to the existing condition of the Jewish Commonwealth.

- c) *It had reference to future things, and was typical of them.* For all that State, and the whole kingdom and its administration, the chiefs of administration, the Judges and Kings, prefigured Christ and his kingdom, and its spiritual administration (Psalm 2; Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 24). In this respect also *the Judicial Law* may be called 'a schoolmaster [to bring the Jews] to Christ.'

XII. *This Law, so far as it had regard to Christ, was universally abrogated.* No kingdom, no nation, no administration, serves now typically to figure Christ and his kingdom or administration. For his kingdom, which is the kingdom of heaven and not of this world, has already come, and he has come into his kingdom (Matt. iii. 2; xvi. 28; John xviii. 36; Matt. xi. 11). But with respect to its simple observance, this *Judicial Law* is neither forbidden nor prescribed to any people, nor is it of absolute necessity to be either observed or omitted. Those matters are accepted which are of universal obligation, and founded in natural equity. For it is necessary, that they be strictly observed, in every place and by all persons. And those things [in the judicial law] which relate to Christ as it respects the very substance and principal end, cannot be lawfully used by any nation.

COROLLARY

The doctrine of the Papists respecting *Councils* and of *Works of Supererogation*, derogates from the perfection of the Divine commands.

13 Disputation XIII

ON THE COMPARISON OF THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL

Respondent: PETER CUNAEUS

- I. Since the Law ought to be considered in two respects,
- not only as it was originally delivered to men constituted in primitive innocence,
 - but also as it was given to Moses and imposed on sinners, (on which account it has in the Scriptures obtained the name of ‘the Old Testament,’ or ‘the Old Covenant’),

it may very properly, according to this two-fold respect, be compared with the Gospel, which has received the appellation of ‘the New Testament’ as it is opposed to the Old. This may be done in reference both to their agreement and their difference; indeed, it would-be inconvenient for us to take their agreement generally into consideration without their difference, lest we should be compelled twice to repeat the same thing.

II. The law, therefore, both as it was first delivered to Adam and as it was given by Moses, agrees with the Gospel,

1. In the general consideration of *having one Author*. For one and the same God is the Author of both, who delivered the Law as a Legislator (Gen. ii. 17; Exod. xx. 2); but he promulgated the Gospel as the Father of mercies and the God of all grace: whence the former is frequently denominated ‘the Law of God,’ and the latter ‘the Gospel of God’ (Rom. i. 1).
2. In the general relation of *their Matter*. For the doctrine of each consists of a command to obedience, and of the promise of a reward. On this account each of them has the name of תורה ‘the law,’ which is also commonly ascribed to both in the Scriptures (Isa. ii. 3).
3. In the general consideration of *their End*, which is the glory of the Wisdom, Goodness and Justice of God.
4. *In their common subject*, as not being distinguished by special respects. For the Law was imposed on men, and to men also was the Gospel manifested.

III. There is, besides, a certain proper agreement of the Law, as it was delivered to Adam, with the Gospel; from which agreement the Law, as given through Moses, is excluded: it is placed in the possibility of its performance. For Adam was able, with the aid of God, to fulfill the Law by those powers which he had received in Creation: otherwise, transgression could not have been imputed to him for a crime. The Gospel also is inscribed in the hearts of those who are in covenant with God, that they may be able to fulfill the condition which it prescribes.

IV. But the difference between the Law, as it was first delivered, and the Gospel, consists principally in the following particulars.

1. *In the special respect of the Author.* For, in the exercise of Benevolence to his innocent creature, God delivered the Law without regard to Christ, yet of strict Justice requiring obedience, with the promise of a reward and the denunciation of a punishment. But in the exercise of Grace and Mercy, and having respect to Christ his Anointed One, God revealed the Gospel; and, through Justice attempered with Mercy, promulgated his demands and his promises.
2. *In the particular relation of its Matter.* For the Law says, 'Do this, and thou shalt live' (Rom. x. 5). But the Gospel says, 'If thou wilt BELIEVE, thou shalt be saved.' And this difference lies not only in the postulate, from which the former is called 'the law of Works,' but the Gospel 'the law of Faith' (Rom. iii. 27), but also in the promise: for though in each of them eternal life was promised, yet by the Gospel it was to be conferred as from death and ignominy, but by the Law as from natural felicity (2 Tim. i. 10). Besides, in the Gospel is announced remission of sins, as [*praecedanea*] preparatory to life eternal; of which no mention is made in the [Adamic] law; because neither was this remission necessary to one who was not a sinner, nor would its announcement have [then] been useful to him, although he might afterwards have become a sinner.
3. **V.** They likewise differ in *the mode of remuneration.* For according to the [primeval] law, 'To him that WORKED, the reward would be *of debt*' (Rom. iv. 4); and to him that transgressed, the punishment inflicted would be of the severity of strict Justice. But to him that BELIEVETH, the reward is bestowed *of Grace*; and to him that believeth not, condemnation is due according to Justice tempered with Clemency in Christ Jesus (John iii. 16, 19; xi. 41).
4. They are discriminated *in the special consideration of their subject.* For the Law was delivered to man while innocent, and already constituted in the favour of God (Gen. ii. 17). But the Gospel was bestowed upon man as a sinner, and one who was to be brought back into the favour of God, because it is 'the word of reconciliation' (2 Cor. v. 19).
5. They differ *in the peculiar respect of their End.* For by the Law are illustrated the Wisdom, Goodness, and strict Justice of God: but by the Gospel is manifested a far more illustrious display of the Wisdom of God, of his Goodness united with gracious Mercy, and of Justice mildly attempered in Christ Jesus. (1 Cor. i. 20–24; Ephes. i. 8; Rom. iii. 24–26).

VI. But the difference between the Law, as it was given by Moses, and is styled ‘the Old Testament,’ and the gospel as it comes under the appellation of ‘the New Testament,’ lies according to the Scriptures in the following particulars.

1. *In the distinct Property of God who instituted them.* For He made the Old Covenant, as One who was angry at the sins which remained without expiation under the preceding [Adamic] Covenant (Heb. ix. 5, 15). But He instituted the New, as being reconciled, or, at least as about to accomplish reconciliation by that Covenant, in the Son of his Love, and by the word of his grace (2 Cor. v. 17–21; Ephes. ii. 16, 17).
2. *In the Mode of Institution,* which corresponds in each of them to the condition of the things to be instituted. For the Law of Moses was delivered with the most obvious signs of the Divine displeasure and of God’s dreadful judgment against sins and sinners. But the gospel was given with assured tokens of benevolence, good pleasure and love in Christ. Hence the Apostle says: ‘For ye are not come unto the mount which might be touched and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness and darkness, and tempest,’ etc. ‘But ye are come unto Mount Sion,’ etc. (Heb. xii. 18–24).
3. *In the Substance of the Commands and Promises.* For the commands of the law were chiefly carnal (Heb. vii. 16), and contained ‘the handwriting of ordinances which was contrary to us’ (Col. ii. 14). Most of the promises were likewise corporal, and stipulated engagements for an earthly inheritance, which [*convenientem*] suited ‘the old man’ (Heb. x. 1). But the Gospel is spiritual (John iv. 21, 23), containing spiritual commands and the promise of a heavenly inheritance agreeing with ‘the new man’ (Heb. viii. 6; Ephes. i. 3), though it promises earthly blessings, as additions, to those who ‘seek first the kingdom God and his righteousness’ (Matt. vi. 33).
4. **VII.** We place the Fourth Difference in *the Mediator or Intercessor.* For Moses is the mediator of the Old Testament, Jesus Christ of the, New (Gal. iii. 19; Heb. ix. 15). The Law was given by a servant, but the Gospel was given by the Lord himself revealed (Heb. iii. 5, 6). ‘The law was given by Moses; Grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ’ (John i. 17). The Law was given by the hands of a mediator (Gal. iii. 19), agreeably to what is mentioned in other passages (Lev. xxvi. 46; Deut. v. 26–31); and Christ is styled ‘the Mediator of the New Testament’ (Heb. ix. 16).
5. They also differ in *the blood employed for the confirmation of each Testament.* The Old Covenant was ratified by the blood of animals (Exod. xxiv. 5, 6; Heb. ix. 18–20); but the New one was confirmed by the precious blood of the Son of God (Heb. ix. 14), which is likewise on this account called ‘the blood of the New Testament’ (Matt. xxvi. 28).
6. They differ in *the Place of their Promulgation.* For the Old Covenant was promulgated from Mount Sinai (Exod. xix. 18); But the New one ‘went forth out of Zion and from Jerusalem’ (Isa. ii. 3; Micah iv. 2). This difference is likewise pointed out in the plainest manner by the Apostle Paul (Gal. iv. 24–31; Heb. xii. 18–21).
7. **VIII.** The Seventh Difference shall be taken from *the Subjects,* both those to whom each was given, and on whom each was inscribed. The Old Law was given to the ‘old

man.' The New Testament was instituted for 'the new man.' From this circumstance, St Augustine supposes that these two Testaments have obtained the appellation of 'the Old' and of 'the New Testament.' The Old Law was inscribed on 'tables of stone' (Exod. xxx. 1, 18). But the Gospel is 'written in fleshly tables' (Jer. xxxi. 33; 2 Cor. iii. 3).

8. The Eighth Difference is *in their Adjuncts*: and this in two ways:
 - a) The Old Law was 'weak and beggarly,' and incapable of giving life (Gal. iv. 9; iii. 21). But the Gospel contains the unsearchable riches of Christ' (Ephes. iii. 8), and 'is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth' (Rom. i. 16).
 - b) The Old Law was an insupportable burden, which 'neither the Jews nor their fathers were able to bear' (Acts xv. 10). But the Gospel contains 'the yoke' of Jesus Christ, which is 'easy,' and 'his burden,' which is 'light' (Matt. xi. 29, 30).
9. **IX.** The Ninth Difference shall be taken *from the Diversity of their Effects*.
 - For the Old Testament is 'the letter which killeth,' 'the administration of death and of condemnation.' But the New Testament is 'the Spirit that giveth life,' 'the ministration of the Spirit of righteousness, and of life' (2 Cor. iii. 6–11).
 - The Old Covenant resembled Agar, and 'gendered to bondage;' the New like Sarah, begets unto liberty (Gal. iv. 23, 24).
 - 'The Law entered, that the offense might abound' (Rom. v. 20), and it 'worketh wrath' (iv. 15). But 'the blood of the New Testament,' exhibited in the Gospel (Matt. xxvi. 28), expiates sin (Heb. ix. 14, 15), and 'speaketh better things than that of Abel' (xii. 24).
 - The Old Testament is the bond on which sins are written (Col. ii. 14): but the Gospel is the proclamation of liberty, and the doctrine of the cross, to which was nailed the bond, or 'hand-writing against us,' and was by this very act, 'taken out of the way.'
10. The Tenth Difference shall be placed *in the Time, both of the Promulgation of each, and of their Duration*. The Old Testament was promulgated when God brought the children of Israel out of Egypt (Jer. xxxi. 32). But the New, at a later age, and in these last times (Heb. viii. 8, 9). It was designed that the Old Testament should endure down to the advent of Christ, and afterwards be abolished (Gal. iii. 19; Heb. vii. 18; 2 Cor. iii. 10). But the New Testament continueth forever, being confirmed by the blood of the Great High Priest, 'who was made a Priest after the power of an endless life' by the word of an oath (Heb. vii. 16–20), and 'through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself to God' (ix. 14). From this last Difference, it is probable, the appellations of 'the Old Testament' and 'the New,' derived their origin.

THE SAINTS UNDER THE OLD TESTAMENT

X. But, lest any one should suppose that the Fathers who lived under the Law and the Old Testament, were entirely destitute of grace, faith and eternal life; it is to be

recollected that even at that period, the promise was in existence which had been made to Adam concerning ‘the Seed of the woman’ (Gen. iii. 15), which also concerned the seed of Abraham, to whom ‘the promises were made’ (Gal. iii. 16), and in whom ‘all the kindreds of the earth were to be blessed’ (Acts iii. 25); and that these promises were received in faith by the holy Fathers. As this promise is comprehended by Divines under the name of ‘the Old Testament,’ taken in a wide acceptation, and is called by the apostle, *διαθήκη*, ‘the covenant’ (Gal. iii. 17), as well as, in the plural, ‘the covenants of promise’ (Ephes. ii. 12); let us also consider how far ‘this Covenant of Promise,’ and the New Testament, and the gospel so called, by way of excellence, as being the completion of the Promises (Gal. iii. 16, 17), and as being the promise’ (Heb. ix. 15), agree with and differ from each other.

XI. We place the AGREEMENT in those things which concern the substance of each. For,

1. With regard to *the Efficient Cause*, both of them were confirmed through the mere grace and mercy of God who had respect unto Christ.
2. *The Matter* of each was one and the same: that is, ‘the obedience of faith’ was required in both (Gen. xv. 6; Rom. 4; Heb. 11), and the inheritance of eternal life was promised through the imputation of the righteousness of faith, and through gracious adoption in Christ (Rom. ix. 4; Heb. xi. 8).
3. *One Object*, that is Christ, who was promised to the Fathers in the prophetic Scriptures, and whom God has exhibited in the Gospel (Acts iii. 19, 20; xiii. 32).
4. *One End*, the praise of the glorious Grace of God in Christ (Rom. iv. 2, 3).
5. Both these Covenants were entered into *with men invested in the same Formal Relation*, that is, with men as sinners, and to those ‘who work not, but who believe on Him that justifies the ungodly’ (Rom. ix. 8, xi. 30–33).
6. Both of them have *the same Spirit witnessing*, or sealing the truth of each in the minds of those who are parties to the covenant (2 Cor. iv. 13). For since ‘the adoption’ and ‘the inheritance’ pertain likewise to the fathers in the Old Testament (Rom. ix. 4; Gal. iii. 18), ‘the Spirit of adoption,’ who is ‘the earnest of the inheritance,’ cannot be denied to them (Rom. viii. 15; Ephes. i. 14).
7. They agree *in their Effects*. For both the Covenants beget children to liberty: ‘In Isaac shall thy seed be called’ (Rom. ix. 7). ‘So then, brethren, we are not the children of the bondwoman, but of the free; and are, as Isaac was, the children of promise’ (Gal. iv. 31, 28). Both of them administer the righteousness of faith, and the inheritance through it (Rom. iv. 13). Both excite spiritual joy in the hearts of believers (John viii. 56; Luke ii. 10).
8. Lastly, They agree in this particular — *that both of them were confirmed by the oath of God*. Neither of them, therefore, was to be abolished, but the former was to be fulfilled by the latter (Heb. vi. 13, 14, 17; vii. 20, 21).

XII. But there is a DIFFERENCE in some accidental circumstances which derogate nothing from their substantial unity.

1. Respecting the accident of *their Object*: For [*Christus venturus*] when the advent of Christ drew near, He was offered by promise (Mal. iii. 1). But He is now manifested in the Gospel (1 John i. 1, 2; iv. 14)
2. Hence also arises the Second Difference, respecting the accident of *the Faith required on their Object*. For as present and past things are more clearly known than future things, so the faith in *Christ to come* was more obscure, than the faith which beholds *a present Christ* (Heb. xi. 13; Num. xiv. 17).
3. To these let the Third Difference be added — that Christ with his benefits was formerly proposed to the Israelites *under types and shadows* (Heb. 12; Gal. iii. 16); But He is now offered in the Gospel ‘to be beheld with open face,’ and the reality of the things themselves and ‘the body’ are exhibited (2 Cor. iii. 18; John i. 17; Col. ii. 17; Gal. iii. 13, 25).
4. *This diversity of administrations* displays the Fourth Difference in the heir himself. For the apostle compares the children of Israel to the heir, who is ‘a child,’ and who required the superintendance of ‘tutors and governors: ’ but he compares believers under the New Testament to an adult heir (Gal. iv. 1–5).
5. Hence is deduced a Fifth Difference — that the infant heir, as ‘differing nothing from a servant’ was held in bondage under the economy of the Ceremonial Law; from which servitude are liberated those persons who have believed in Christ after the expiration of ‘the time of tutelage before appointed of the Father.’
6. To this condition the Spirit of the infant heir is also accommodated, and will afford us the Sixth Difference that the heir was in truth [*actus*] under the influence of ‘the Spirit of adoption,’ but, because he was then *only an infant*, this Spirit was [*contemperato*] intermixed with that of fear; but the adult heir is under the complete influence of ‘the Spirit of adoption,’ to the entire exclusion of that of fear (Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 6).
7. The Seventh Difference consists *in the number of those who are called to the communion of each of these covenants*. The Promise was confined within [*terminis*] the boundaries of ‘the commonwealth of Israel,’ from which the Gentiles were ‘aliens,’ being also ‘strangers from the covenants of promise’ (Ephes. ii. 11–13, 17). But the Gospel is announced to every creature that is under heaven, and the mound of separation is completely removed (Matt. xxviii. 19; Mark xvi. 15; Col. i. 13).

XIII. But these three, the Law, the Promise, and the Gospel, may become subjects of consideration in another order, either as opposed among themselves, or as subordinate to each other. The condition of the law, therefore, as it was delivered to Adam, excludes the necessity of making the promise and announcing the Gospel; and, on the other hand, the necessity of making the promise and announcing the Gospel, declares, that man has not obeyed the Law which was given to him. For justification cannot be at once both ‘of grace’ and ‘of debt;’ nor can it, at the same time, admit and exclude ‘boasting’ (Gal. ii. 17; Rom. iv. 4, 5; iii. 27). It was also proper that the Promise should precede the Gospel, and should in return be fulfilled by the Gospel: for, as it was not befitting that such a great blessing should be bestowed unless it were ardently desired, so it was improper that the desire of the earnest expectants should be frustrated (1 Pet. i. 10–12; Hag. ii. 7; Mal. iii. 1).

Nor was it less equitable, that, after the Promise had been made, the Law should be economically repeated, by which might be rendered apparent the necessity of the grace of the Promise (Gal. iii. 19–24; Acts xiii. 38, 39), and that, being convinced of this necessity, they might be compelled to flee to its shelter (Gal. ii. 15, 16). The use of the Law was also serviceable to the Gospel which was to be received by Faith (Col. ii. 14, 17). While the Promise was in existence, it was also the will of God to add other precepts, and especially such as were ceremonial, by which sin might be [‘sealed home’] or testified against, and a previous intimation might be given of the completion of the Promise. And when the Promise was fulfilled, it was the will of God that these additional precepts should be abrogated, as having completed their functions (Heb. x. 9, 10). Lastly, the Moral Law ought to serve both to the Promise and to the Gospel, which have now been received by faith, as a rule according to which believers ought to conform their lives (Psalm cxix. 105; Tit. iii. 8). But may God grant, that from his word we may be enabled still more clearly to understand this glorious economy of his, to his glory, and for gathering together in Christ!

14 Disputation XIV

ON THE OFFICES OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST

Respondent: PETER FAVERIUS

I. Since all offices are instituted and imposed for the sake of a certain end, and on this account bear some resemblance to means for obtaining that end; the most convenient method of treating on *the Offices of Christ* will be for us to enter into an examination of this subject according to the acceptation of the name by which He is denominated. For he is called JESUS CHRIST, in words which belong to a person according to the signification conveyed by them, as well as by way of excellence. In the first of those words is comprehended the relation of the End of his Offices; and, in the second, that of the duties which conduce to such end.

II. The word 'JESUS' signifies *the Saviour*, who is called Σωτηρ by the Greeks. But 'to save' is to render a man secure from evils, either by taking care that they do not assail him, or, if they have attacked him, by removing them, and of consequence by conferring the opposite blessings. But among the evils, two are of the very worst description: they are *Sin*, and its wages, *Eternal Death*. Among the blessings also, two are of the greatest importance, *Righteousness* and *Eternal Life*. He, therefore, is a saviour in an eminent degree who liberates men from sin and death eternal, the two greatest evils with which they are now surrounded and oppressed; and who confers upon them righteousness and life. On account of this method of saving, the name Jesus agrees well with this our saviour, according to the interpretation of it, which the angel gave in Matt. i. 21. For such a method of salvation was highly befitting the excellence of this exalted person, who is the proper, natural and only-begotten Son of God; especially when other [inferior] salvations were capable of being accomplished by his servants, Moses, Joshua, Othniel, Gideon, Jephtha and David.

III. The word 'CHRIST,' denotes *an anointed person*, who is called משיח 'the Messiah,' by the Hebrews. Under the Old Testament, oil was anciently used in anointing; because, according to its natural efficacy, it rendered bodies not only *fragrant* but *agile*, and was therefore well fitted for typifying two supernatural things. The FIRST is, the Sanctification and Consecration of a person to undertake and discharge some Divine Office. The SECOND is, Adoption, or the Conferring of Gifts necessary for that purpose. But each of these acts belongs properly and *per se* to the Holy Spirit, the Author and Donor of Holiness and of all endowments (Isa. xi. 2). Wherefore it was proper, that he who was eminently styled

‘the Messiah, should be anointed with the Holy Spirit, indeed ‘above all his fellows,’ (or those who were partakers of the same blessings) (Psalm xlv. 7), that is, that He might be made the Holy of holies, and might be endued not only with some gifts of the Holy Spirit, but with the whole of the Holy Spirit without measure (John iii. 34; i. 14). But when he is called ‘the Saviour’ by anointing, it appears to us that he must for this reason be here considered as a Mediatorial saviour, who has been constituted by God the Father, and [as Mediator] is subordinate to Him. He is therefore the nearer to us, not only according to the nature of his humanity, of which we have already treated, but also according to the mode of saving, which reflection conduces greatly to confirm us in faith and hope against temptations.

IV. Two distinct and subordinate acts appertain to the salvation which is signified by the name JESUS; and they are not only necessarily required for it, but also sufficiently embrace its entire power. The FIRST is, the asking and obtaining of redemption from sin and death eternal, and of Righteousness and Life. The SECOND is, the communication or distribution of the salvation thus obtained. According to the former of these acts, Christ is called ‘our saviour *by merit*’; according to the latter he is called ‘our saviour *by efficacy*.’ According to the First, he is constituted the Mediator ‘for men, in those things which pertain to God’ (Heb. v. 1). According to the Second, he is appointed the Mediator or vicegerent of God, in those things which are to be transacted with men. From this it is apparent, that two Offices are necessary for effecting salvation — *the Priestly and the Regal*; the former office being designed for the acquisition of salvation, and the latter for its communication: On which account this Saviour is both a Royal Priest and a Priestly King, our Melchisedec, that is, ‘King of Salem, which is *King of Peace* and Priest of the Most High GOD’ (Heb. vii. 2). His people also are a Royal Priesthood and a Sacerdotal Kingdom or nation (1 Pet. ii. 5, 9).

V. But since it has seemed good to the wise and just God, to save none except believers; nor, in truth, is it right that any one should be made partaker of the salvation procured by the Priesthood of Christ, and dispensed by His Kingly Office, except the man who acknowledges Him for his Priest and King; and since the knowledge of Christ, and faith in him, are produced in the hearts of men by the power of the Holy Ghost, through the preaching of the word as the means appointed by God; for these reasons the Prophetical Office is likewise necessary for effecting salvation, and a perfect Saviour must be *a Prophet, Priest and King*, that is, by every reason according to which this ample title can be deservedly attributed to any one. We have JESUS therefore, that is, the saviour, by a most excellent and perfect notion called CHRIST, because he has been anointed by God as a Prophet, Priest and King (Matt. xvii. 5; Psalm cx. 4; ii. 6; John xviii. 37). On each of these four Offices we shall treat in order, and shew,

1. That all and each of these Offices belong to our Christ.
2. The Quality of these Offices.
3. The Functions pertaining to each of them.
4. The Events or Consequences.

VI.

1. The Messiah was the future prophet promised to the fathers under the Old Testament. Moses said, 'The Lord thy God will raise up unto you a prophet like unto me; unto him shall ye hearken' (Deut. xviii. 15). Isaiah also says 'I will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes,' etc. (xlii. 6). 'Jehovah hath called me from the womb, and he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword,' etc. (xlix. 1, 2). The attestation, by anointing, of his call to the Prophetical Office, was likewise predicted: 'The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings,' etc. (xli. 1). So was his [*instructio*] being furnished with the necessary gifts when he was thus called and sealed: 'The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, the Spirit of Wisdom and Understanding,' etc. (xi. 2). Lastly, Divine assistance was promised: 'In the shadow of his hand hath He hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me' (xlix. 2). And this thing was publicly known, not only to the Jews, but likewise to the Samaritans, as is apparent from what the woman of Samaria said, 'When Messias is come, He will tell us all things' (John iv. 25). But our Jesus himself testifies, that these predictions were fulfilled in him, and that he was the Prophet sent into the world from God. After having read a passage out of Isaiah's prophecy, he spake thus, 'This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your ears' (Luke iv. 21). 'To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth' (John xviii. 37). God himself also bore his testimony from heaven, when he 'opened the heavens unto Christ' immediately after he had been baptized by John, sent down upon Him the Holy Spirit, and in inaugural strains of the highest commendation seemed to consecrate him to this office (Matt. iii. 16).

VII. In the QUALITY of the Prophetic Office, we take into our consideration the excellence not only of the Vocation, Instruction and Divine Assistance afforded, but likewise that of the Doctrine proposed by Him, according to each of which it far exceeds the entire dignity of all the prophets (Luke 4). For God's approval of his *Mission* was expressed by three peculiar signs. the opening of the heavens, the descent of the Holy Ghost in a bodily shape upon Him, and the voice of his Father conveyed to him. The *Instruction*, or furnishing, by which He learned what things he ought to teach, was not 'by dreams and visions,' nor by inward or outward discourse with an angel, neither was it by a communication of 'mouth to mouth,' which yet [in the case of Moses] was without the actual sight of the glory and the face of God (Num. 12); but it was by the clear vision of God and by an intimate intuition into the secrets of the Father: 'For the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, hath declared him to us' (John i. 18); 'He that cometh from heaven testified what he hath seen and heard' (iii. 32). *The Aid of the Holy Spirit to Him*, was so ready and every moment intimately near, that He, like one who was lord by possession and use, employed the Holy Spirit at pleasure, and as frequently as it seemed good to himself. But *the Excellence of the Doctrine* lies in this, that it did not announce *the Law*, neither as being the Power of God unto salvation 'to him who worked AND THAT OF DEBT' (Rom. iv. 4), nor as being the seal of sin and of condemnation (Col. ii. 14); neither did it announce *the Promise*, by which righteousness and salvation were promised OF GRACE to him that believed (Gal. iii. 17-19); but it announced *the Gospel*, according to this expression, 'He hath sent me to preach good tidings to

the meek' (Isa. lxi. 1), or, 'the Gospel to the poor' (Matt. xi. 5); because it exhibited GRACE and TRUTH, as it contained 'the end of the law,' and the accomplishment of the promise (Rom. x. 4; i. 1, 2).

VIII. The FUNCTIONS which appertain to the Prophetic Office of Christ, are, the Proposing of his Doctrine, its Confirmation and Prayers for its felicitous success; all of which were executed by Christ in a manner which evinced the utmost power and fidelity.

a) *He proposed his Doctrine,*

- with the greatest Wisdom, which his adversaries could not resist;
- with the most ardent zeal for the glory of God his Father, and for the salvation of men;
- without respect of persons; and
- with an Authority which was never exercised by other teachers, not even by the Prophets.

b) His *Confirmation* was added to the doctrine, not only by the Scriptures of the Old Testament, but likewise by signs of every kind by which it is possible to establish the Divinity of any doctrine.

- i. By the declaration of the Knowledge which is peculiar to God, such as the Inspection of the heart, the Revelation of the secrets of others, and the Prediction of future events.
- ii. By a Power which belongs to God alone, and which was demonstrated 'in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds.'
- iii. By the deepest Patience, by which He willingly suffered the death of the cross for the truth of God, that he might confirm the promises made to the Fathers, 'having witnessed before Pontius Pilate a good confession.'

c) Lastly. He employed very frequent and earnest prayers, with the most devout thanksgiving; on which account he often retired into solitary places, which he spent whole nights in prayer.

IX. The ISSUE or Consequence of the Prophetic Office of Christ, so far as he executed it in his own person while he remained on earth, was not only the Instruction of a few persons, but likewise the Rejection [of Himself and his doctrine] by great numbers, and even by their rulers. The former of these Consequences occurred according to the nature and merit of the doctrine itself. The latter, accidentally and by the malice of men. Christ himself mentions both of these Issues in Isaiah's prophecy, when he says, not without complaining, 'Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts' (viii. 18). 'I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for naught and in vain' (xlix. 4). But because this repulse of Christ's doctrine could not occur without proving a stumbling block to the weak, it was the good pleasure of God to obviate it in a manner at once the wisest and the most powerful,

- a) By a prophecy which foretold that this Rejection would actually take place: ‘The stone which the builders refused, is becoming the head-stone of the corner’ (Psalm cxviii. 22).
 - b) And by the fulfillment of that prediction, which was completed by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and by his being placed at the right hand of God; by which Christ became the Head and Foundation of the angle, or corner, uniting the two walls, that of the Jews and that of the Gentiles, in accordance with these words of the prophet Isaiah, ‘It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant, to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I have also given thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth’ (xlix. 6). These words contain an intimation of the fruit of Christ’s [*prophetiae*] prophesying as administered by his ambassadors.
2. **X.** Topics, similar to the preceding, come under our consideration in the PRIESTLY OFFICE of Christ. The Messiah, promised of old, was to be a Priest, and Jesus of Nazareth was a Priest. This is proved
- a) by express passages from the Scriptures of the Old Testament; and which attribute to the Messiah the NAME of ‘Priest,’ and the Thing signified by the name. With regard to the Name: ‘Thou an a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec’ (Psalm cx. 4). With regard to the THING signified, ‘Surely He hath borne our griefs: He was wounded for our transgressions: And the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, He shall see his seed, etc. He bore the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressor’ (Isa. liii. 4–6, 10–12; Rom. iv. 15).
 - b) By arguments taken from a comparison of the Dignity of his Person and Priesthood. For the Messiah is the first-begotten Son of God, the principal Dignity of the Priesthood, and Governor over the house of his Father (Psalm ii. 7; lxxxix. 27; Gen. xlix. 3). Therefore, to Him appertains the excellence of administering the Priesthood in the house of God, which is Heaven (Heb. iii. 6; x. 21). For that is properly typified by a temple, the place of the Priesthood; and principally by the innermost part of it, which is called ‘the holy of holies’ (ix. 24). Also, by Arguments deduced from the Nature of the People over whom He is placed. This People is ‘a kingdom of Priests’ (Exod. xix. 6), and ‘a royal Priesthood’ (1 Pet. ii. 9).

But the Christian Faith holds it, an indisputable axiom, that ‘Jesus of Nazareth is a Priest,’ by the most explicit Scriptures of the New Testament, in which the title and all things pertaining to the Sacerdotal Office are attributed to him (Heb. ii. 5). For the Father conferred that honour upon Him, sanctified and consecrated Him (ii. 10); and ‘He was made perfect through sufferings,’ ‘that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest, and be able [*compati*] to sympathize with, or to succour them that are tempted’ (ii. 18). The Father also ‘opened his ears’ (Psalm xl. 6), or ‘prepared a body for Him’ (Heb. x. 5), ‘that He might have somewhat also to offer’ (viii. 3), and hath placed Him, after his resurrection from the dead, at his own right hand in heaven, that He may there perpetually ‘make intercession for us’ (Rom. viii. 34).

XI. But the Scriptures of the Old Testament speak of the NATURE and QUALITY peculiar to Messiah the Priest, and assert that his Priesthood is not according to the order of Levi (Psalm cx. 4; Heb. v. 5, 6). For David speaks thus, in the person of the Messiah, ‘Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire. Mine ears thou hast opened. Burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, *Lo, I come. In the volume of the book it is written of me, to do thy will, O my God! Yea, I have willed; and thy law is within my heart*’ (Psalm xl. 6–8). That is, ‘Thou hadst no pleasure in the sacrifices which are offered by the law’ according to the Levitical ritual (Heb. x. 6–9). They also assert, that ‘He is a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec’ (Psalm cx. 4). But the entire nature of that Priesthood is more distinctly explained in the New Testament, especially in the Epistle to the Hebrews, the excellence and superiority of the Messiah’s Priesthood above the Levitical having been previously established (Heb. x. 5). This pre-eminence is shewn by [*dissimilem collationem*] the contrast between them.

- a) The Levitical Priesthood was typical and shadowy; but that of the Messiah is real and true, and contains the very body and express [*imaginem*] pattern of the things.
- b) In the Levitical Priesthood, the Priest and the Victim differed in the subject. For the Priest after the order of Levi offered the sacrifices of other men. But the Messiah is both the Priest and the Victim. For ‘He offered himself’ (Heb. ix. 14), and ‘by his own blood has entered into heaven’ (ix. 12), and all this as it is an *expiatory* priesthood. But as it is *eucharistical*, (for it embraces the entire amplitude of the Priesthood), the Messiah offers sacrifices which are distinguished by him according to the person; yet they are such as, being born again of his Spirit from above, are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bones (x. 14; ix. 26; Ephes. v. 30; 1 Pet. ii. 5).
- c) They differ in the mode of their Institution and Confirmation. The Levitical Priesthood was ‘instituted after the law of a carnal commandment;’ but that of the Messiah, after the law of a spiritual commandment, and ‘the power of an endless life’ (Heb. vii. 16). The Levitical was instituted ‘without an oath;’ but Christ’s ‘with an oath,’ by which it was corroborated beyond the other (vii. 20, 21, 28).
- d) The Fourth Difference is in the Time of their Institution. The Levitical Priesthood was instituted first; that of Christ, afterwards. The first, in the times of the Old Testament: the other, in those of the New. The former, when the church was in its infancy; the latter, when it had arrived at maturity. The former, in the time of slavery; the latter, in that of liberty.
- e) **XII.** The Fifth Distinction lies in the Persons discharging the Functions of the Priesthood. In the former, the Priests were of the tribe of Levi, ‘men who had infirmities,’ who were mortal and sinful, and who, therefore, accounted it ‘needful to offer up sacrifice for their own sins and for the people’s’ (Heb. vii. 28; v. 3). But the Messiah was of the tribe of Judah (vii. 14), weak indeed ‘in the days of his flesh’ (v. 7), but now when raised immortal from the dead and endued with ‘the power of an endless life,’ He is ‘holy, harmless, undefiled,

and separate from sinners, and therefore needeth not to offer up sacrifice for himself' (vii. 26, 27)

- f) We may denote a Sixth Difference in the End of the Institution. The Levitical Priesthood was instituted to ratify the Old Covenant; but that of the Messiah, for confirming the New. He is on this account called both 'the Mediator of the New Testament' (ix. 15), and 'the Surety of a better Covenant, which was established upon better promises' (viii. 6).
- g) They differ in their Efficacy. For the Levitical is useless and inefficacious, 'not being able to take away sins (x. 11), (for they remained under the old covenant), nor could it sanctify or perfect the worshippers in their consciences, for 'it sanctifieth only to the purifying of the flesh' (ix. 9, 10, 13). But the Priesthood of the Messiah is efficacious. For He hath destroyed sin and obtained eternal redemption (ix. 12, 14). He consecrates priests and sanctifies the worshipers in their consciences, and 'saves them to the uttermost that come to God by Him' (vii. 25).
- h) With the Apostle we place the Eighth Difference in the Duration of each. [*Debut*] It was necessary that the Levitical Priesthood should be abrogated, and it was accordingly abrogated (viii. 13); but that of the Messiah endures for ever. For this Difference between them we have as many reasons as for the Differences which we have already enumerated.
- i) **XIII.** The ninth quality by which the Messiah's Priesthood is distinguished from the Levitical, is this, 'Now once in the end of the world, the Messiah hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself (Heb. vii. 26); and thus 'by one offering hath He perfected for ever them that are sanctified' (x. 14). But the Priests after the order of Levi 'offered oftentimes the same sacrifices, 'through each succeeding day, and month, and year (x. 11; ix. 25).
- j) The Tenth Property of the Messiah's Priesthood is that of its Nature. It does not pass from one person to another. For the Messiah has neither a predecessor nor a successor (vii. 24, 25). But the Levitical Priesthood was transmitted down from father to son.
- k) To this we add the Eleventh Difference, the Messiah was the only person of his order. For Melchizadeck was a type of Him, 'like unto Him,' but by no means equal with Him (vii. 3). But the Levitical Priests 'truly were many, because they were not suffered to continue by reason of death' (vii. 23); and among them, some were of superior, some of inferior, and others of equal dignity.
- l) We deduce the Twelfth and last Distinction from the Place in which each of them was administered. For the Levitical Priesthood was administered on earth, and in fact in a certain spot peculiarly assigned to it; but though that of the Messiah commenced on earth, yet it consummated in heaven (ix. 24).

XIV. The ACTIONS which appertain to the Priestly Office of Christ, are those of Oblation and Intercession, according to the following passages: 'Every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins (Heb. v. 1). And 'He ever liveth to make intercession for them.'

- a) Of the Messiah's OBLATION two acts are described to us: *The First* of which is performed on earth; the delivering of his own body unto death, and the shedding of his blood. By this act He was consecrated or perfected, and opened heaven to himself (ix. 12; x. 9, 10; ix. 24–26). For [*debutit*] it was a part of his office to enter into heaven by his own blood, and 'through the veil, which is his flesh' (x. 22), flesh indeed, destitute of blood, that is, destitute of life, and delivered up to death 'for the life of the world' (John vi. 51), although it was afterwards raised up again from death to life. *The Second Act* is, the presenting of himself, thus sprinkled with his own blood, before the face of his Father in heaven; and the offering of the same blood. To which we must add, the sprinkling of this blood on the consciences of believers, that they, 'being purged from dead works, might serve the living God' (ix. 14).
- b) INTERCESSION is the Second Act of the Priesthood of Christ, which also contains the prayer of Christ for us, and his advocacy or defense of us against the accusation with which we are charged by the grand adversary (vii. 25; Rom. viii. 34; 1 John ii. 1, 2). Because the force of this intercession is partly placed in the blood by which, not only Christ himself, but also our consciences, are sprinkled; the blood of Christ is said 'to speak better things than that of Abel' (Heb. xii. 24), which cried unto God for vengeance against the fratricide.

XV. The Fourth Part of the Priesthood of Christ lies in the RESULTS or CONSEQUENCES. That the Sacerdotal Office concurs to the general effect of salvation, is apparent from this — that He is called Christ by consecration, which was effected 'through sufferings,' through which He is said 'to have been made perfect' (Heb. ii. 10), and thus to have 'become the Author of eternal salvation' (v. 9, 10), being denominated 'an High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedec.' 'But Christ, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable Priesthood: Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him' (vii. 24, 25). But the particular results which flow from the Sacerdotal Functions, when considered according to the two-fold act of Oblation and Intercession, are chiefly these: From OBLATION, accrue the reconciling of us unto God the Father (2 Cor. v. 19), the obtaining of the remission of sins (Rom. iii. 24–25), of eternal redemption (Heb. ix. 12), and of the Spirit of grace (Zech. xii. 10), the laying open of the vein for the expiation of sin, and the disclosing of the fountain for sprinkling (Zech. xiii. 1), the removal of the curse (Gal. iii. 13), and the acquisition of everlasting righteousness and of life eternal (Dan. ix. 24), as well as a supreme power over all things in heaven and earth (Phil. ii. 6–10), for his church, to whom all these blessings are communicated (Acts xx. 28). And, to sum up all in one expression, the procuring of the entire right to eternal life, and to all things whatsoever that are necessary either for its being given, or for its reception. INTERCESSION obtains, that we, being reconciled to God, are saved from future wrath (Rom. v. 9). Christ as our Intercessor offers to God, perfumed with the fragrant odour of his own sacrifice, the prayers and thanksgivings, and thus the whole rational worship which justified persons perform to God (1 Pet. i. 5); and he receives and turns aside the darts of accusation which Satan hurls against believers (Rom. viii. 34). All these blessings really flow from the Sacerdotal functions of Christ; because he hath offered to God the true price of redemption for us, by which He has satisfied Divine Justice, and interposed himself between us

and the Father, who was justly angry on account of our sins; and has rendered Him placable to us (1 Tim. ii. 6; Matt. xx. 28). But the Result *per accidens* is a greater [*contaminatio*] pollution and the demerits of ‘a much sorer punishment’ from having ‘trodden under foot the Son of God, and counted the blood of the covenant an unholy thing’ (Heb. x. 29).

XVI. Nor is it at all repugnant to the merits and satisfaction of Christ, which belong to Him as a Priest and a Victim, that God is himself said to have ‘loved the world and given his only begotten Son’ (John iii. 16), to have delivered him unto death (Rom. iv. 25), to have reconciled the world unto himself in Christ (2 Cor. v. 19), to have redeemed us (Luke i. 68), and to have freely forgiven us our sins (Rom. iii. 25). For we must consider the affection of love to be two-fold in God. *The First* is a Love for the creature. *The Other*, a Love for Justice, united to which is a hatred against sin. It was the will of God that each of these kinds of Love should be satisfied. He gave satisfaction to his *Love for the creature* who was a sinner, when he gave up his Son who might act the part of Mediator. But he rendered satisfaction to *his Love for Justice and to his Hatred against sin*, when He imposed on his Son the office of Mediator by the shedding of his blood and by the suffering of death (Heb. ii. 10; v. 8, 9); and He was unwilling to admit him as the Intercessor for sinners except when sprinkled with His own blood, in which he might be made [*expiatio*] the propitiation for sins (ix. 12). Again, He satisfies *his Love for the creature* when he pardons sins, and that freely, because he pardons them through his Love for the creature; although by inflicting stripes upon his Son, in which he was ‘our Peace,’ He had already rendered satisfaction to his *Love for Justice*. For it was not the effect of those stripes that God might love his creature, but that, while *his Love for Justice* presented no hindrance, through *his Love for the creature* he could remit sins and bestow life eternal. In this respect also it may with propriety be said that God rendered satisfaction to himself, and appeased himself in the Son of his love.’

XVII. It remains for us to discuss the KINGLY OFFICE of Christ. We must first consider, that the Messiah, according to the promise, was to be a King, and that Jesus of Nazareth is a King: ‘I will raise unto David a righteous branch, and a King shall reign and prosper’ (Jer. xxiii. 5). ‘David my servant, shall be king over them’ (Ezek. xxxvii. 24). But he was constituted king by unction: ‘Yet have I anointed my King upon my holy hill of Zion’ (Psalm ii. 6). On this account, the title of ‘the Messiah’ belongs to him for a certain peculiar reason. Nor should He be merely a King, but the most eminent and famous among kings: ‘Thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of joy above thy fellows’ (Psalm xlv. 7). ‘I will make him my First-born, higher than the kings of the earth’ (lxxxix. 27). Nay, he is the Lord and Master of all kings: therefore, O ye kings and judges of the earth, kiss the Son’ (ii. 12). ‘All kings shall fall down before Him’ (lxxii. 11). He was also to be instructed in all things necessary for the administration of his kingdom: ‘Give the King thy judgments, O God!’ (lxxii. 1). ‘The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion’ (cx. 2). ‘Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron’ (ii. 9). ‘The Spirit of Jehovah shall rest upon him’ (Isa. xi. 2). God will likewise perpetually [*assisturum*] stand near Him: ‘With him shall my hand be established, mine arm also shall strengthen him’ (Psalm lxxxix. 21). But God hath made Jesus of Nazareth Lord and Christ (Matt. ii. 2, 6), ‘King of kings, and Lord of lords’ (Rev. xvii. 14), ‘all power being given unto Him

in heaven and in earth' (Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts ii. 33), and 'authority over all flesh' (John xvii. 2), that 'unto Him every knee may bow.' God also [*instruxit*] furnished or supplied Him with his Word and Spirit, as necessary means for the administration of his kingdom. He hath made angels also his servants to execute his commands (Heb. i. 6, 14). He stands constantly nigh to Him, 'being placed at his right hand till he has made his enemies his footstool' (1 Cor. xv. 5; Psalm cx. 1).

XVIII. We say, in one expression, concerning the QUALITY of the Messiah's kingdom, that it is a spiritual kingdom, not of this world, but of that which is to come, not earthly, but heavenly. For it was predicted, that such would be the kingdom of the Messiah; and such also, we assert, is the kingdom of Jesus of Nazareth. We prove the FIRST,

1. Because David and Solomon, and the reign of each, were types of the Messiah and his kingdom; for the Messiah is called DAVID (Ezek. xxxvii. 25); and all the things spoken about Solomon which are high and excellent, belong with far more justness to the Messiah, and some of them to him alone (2 Sam. vii. 12–16). But earthly and carnal things are types of spiritual and heavenly things, not being homogeneous with them (Psalm 1, 2).
2. It was predicted of the Messiah, that he should die and rise again (Psalm xvi. 10), that 'he should see his seed' (Isa. liii. 10), and that he should rise again into a spiritual life (Psalm cx. 3). Therefore, that he should be a spiritual King, and that his kingdom also should be spiritual (Psalm lxxxix. 5–8; xcvi. 6–9).
3. It was predicted that the Priesthood of the Messiah should be spiritual, a real Priesthood, and not a typical one. Therefore, his Kingdom also is of the same description; for there is a mutual analogy between them, according to that expression — 'Ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests,' etc. (Exod. xix. 6).
4. Because the Law of Moses was to be abrogated on account of its being carnal. But the administration of the Priesthood and of the Kingdom of Israel was conducted according to that law. Therefore the kingdom of the Messiah ought to be administered according to another law, which was more excellent, and therefore spiritual (Jer. xxxi. 31–34). But such as was the Law, such were the King and his kingdom.
5. Because the Gentiles were to be called to a participation of the kingdom of the Messiah, and all of them were to be added to it with their kings, who should still continue as kings, and yet voluntarily serve the Messiah (Psalm ii. 10, 11; cx. 3), who should glory in him, and in him place all their blessedness. Nothing of this kind can be done, unless the kingdom of the Messiah be spiritual.
6. Because the Jews were to be rejected by the Messiah, for their rebellion, who was unwilling to have them for his people, not to the prejudice of the Messiah himself, but to the injury of the Jews alone (Mal. i. 10, 11; Isa. lxxv. 2, 3). This is a strong indication of a King and of a kingdom that are spiritual.
7. The same conclusion may be drawn from the excellence, amplitude, duration, and mode of administration, of the Messiah's kingdom. But the kingdom of Jesus of Nazareth is spiritual and heavenly. For he said, 'Repent, because the kingdom of heaven is at hand' (Matt. iv. 17). 'My kingdom is not of this world' (John xviii. 36).

This may also be shown in all those things which relate to that kingdom. For the KING is no more known after the flesh, because he is become spiritual by his resurrection, and is ‘the Lord from heaven’ (Rom. viii.; 1 Corinthians 15). His SUBJECTS are those who are already born again, [*secundum animam*] in their souls, of his Spirit, and who shall likewise hereafter be spiritual in their bodies, and conformed unto him. The LAW of the kingdom is spiritual: for it is the Gospel of God, and the prescription of a rational and spiritual worship (Rom. xii. 8; John iv. 23, 24). Its BLESSINGS are likewise spiritual — Remission of sins, the Spirit of grace and Life eternal. The MODE OF ADMINISTRATION, and all its MEANS, are spiritual; for though all temporal things are subjected to Christ, yet He administers them in such a way as He knows will be conducive to the life that is spiritual and supernatural.

XIX. The ACTS which belong to the Regal Office of Christ are generally comprehended in Vocation and Judgment. If we be desirous to consider these two acts more distinctly, we may divide them into the four parts following: Vocation, Legislation, the communication of blessings and the Removal of evils, and the final and universal Judgment.

1. *Vocation* is the first function by which Christ, the King, calls men out of a state of animal life and of sin, to the participation of the covenant of grace which he has confirmed by his own blood. For he did not find subjects in the nature of things (Isa. lxiii. 10); but as it was his office by the Priesthood to acquire them for himself, so likewise as King, it is his province to call them to him by his word, and to draw them by his Spirit (Psalm cx. 1–3; Ephes. iii. 17). This Vocation has two parts: *a Command* to repent and believe (Mark i. 14, 15), and *a Promise* (Matt. xxviii. 19, 20), to which is also subjoined a Threatening (Tit. iii. 8; Mark xvi. 16).
2. *Legislation*, which we consider in a distinct form, is the Second function of the Regal Office of Christ, by which He fully prescribes, to those who have been previously called and drawn to a participation of the covenant of grace, a rule by which they may live godly, righteously and soberly, and to which are also annexed promises and threatenings. To this must be added the Act of the Holy Spirit by which believers are rendered fit to perform their duty.
3. The Third Act is *the Communication of Blessings*, whether they be necessary or conducive to this animal life or to that which is spiritual, and *the Removal of the opposite Evils*, not through strict justice, but according to a certain dispensation, which is suited to the period of the present life. It is according to this that God equally ‘sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust’ (Matt. v. 45), and his ‘judgment often begins at his own house’ (1 Pet. iv. 17).
4. The Fourth and last Act is the final and universal *Judgment*, by which Christ, having been appointed by God to be the judge of all men, will pronounce a sentence of Justification on his elect, and will bestow on them everlasting life; but after the sentence of condemnation has been uttered against the reprobates, they will be tormented with everlasting punishments (Matt. 25).

XX. To these functions it is easy to subjoin their RESULTS or CONSEQUENCES, which exist from the functions themselves, according to their nature; and, at the same time, the EVENTS which flow from the malice of men who reject Christ as their King.

14 *On the Offices of our Lord Jesus Christ*

- Among *the former* are Repentance, Faith, and thus the church herself, and her Association with Christ her Head, Obedience performed to Christ's commands, the Participation of blessings which are bestowed on men in the course of the present life, Immunity from evils, and lastly, Life eternal.
- Among the latter, are Blinding, Hardening, the Giving over to a reprobate mind, the Delivering unto the power of Satan, the Imputation of sin, the Gnawings of conscience in this life, and the feeling endurance of many evils, and, lastly, Eternal Death itself. All these evils Christ inflicts as an omniscient, omnipotent, and inflexible Judge, who loves goodness and hates sin, from whose eyes we cannot hide ourselves, whose power we cannot avoid, and whose strictness and rigor we are unable to bend.

May God grant, through his Son, Jesus Christ, in the power and efficacy of the Holy Spirit, that these considerations may serve to beget within us a filial and serious fear of God and Christ our Judge. AMEN!

15 Disputation XV

ON DIVINE PREDESTINATION

Respondent: WILLIAM BASTINGIUS

I. We call this decree ‘PREDESTINATION,’ in Greek, προορισμον from the verb προοριζειν which signifies *to determine, appoint, or decree* any thing before you enter on its execution. According to this general notion, Predestination, when attributed to God, will be his Decree for the governance of all things, to which Divines usually give the appellation of PROVIDENCE (Acts ii. 28; xvii. 26). It is customary to consider in a less general notion, so far as it has reference to rational creatures who are to be saved or damned, for instance, angels and men. It is taken in a stricter sense about the Predestination of men, and then it is usually employed in two ways; for it is sometimes accommodated to both the Elect and the Reprobate. At other times, it is restricted to the Elect alone, and then it has Reprobation as its opposite. According to this last signification, in which it is almost constantly used in Scripture (Rom. viii. 29), we will treat on Predestination.

II. Predestination, therefore, as it regards the thing itself, is the Decree of the good pleasure of God in Christ, by which he resolved within himself from all eternity, to justify, adopt and endow with everlasting life, to the praise of his own glorious grace, believers on whom he had decreed to bestow faith (Ephes. 1; Rom. 9).

III. The genus of Predestination we lay down as a Decree which is called in Scripture Προθεσις ‘the purpose of God’ (Rom. ix. 11), and Βουλην του θεληματος Θεου ‘the counsel of God’s own will’ (Ephes. i. 11). And this Decree is not *legal*, according to what is said, ‘The man who doeth those things shall live by them’ (Rom. x. 5); but it is *evangelical*, and this is the language which it holds: ‘This is the will of God, that every one who seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life’ (John vi. 40; Rom. x. 9). This decree, therefore, is peremptory and irrevocable; because the [*extrema*] final manifestation of ‘the whole counsel of God’ concerning our salvation, is contained in the gospel (Acts xx. 27; Heb. i. 2; ii. 2, 3).

IV. The Cause of this Decree is God, ‘according to the good pleasure’ or the benevolent affection ‘of his own will’ (Ephes. i. 5). And God indeed is the Cause, as possessing the right of determining as He wills both about men as his creatures, and especially as sinners, and about his blessings (Jer. xviii. 6; Matt. xx. 14, 15), ‘according to the good pleasure of his own will,’ by which, being moved with and in himself, he made that decree. This ‘good

pleasure' not only excludes every cause which it could take from man, or which it could be imagined to take from him; but it likewise removes whatever was in or from man, that could justly move God not to make that gracious decree (Rom. xi. 34, 35).

V. As the Foundation of this Decree, we place Jesus Christ, the Mediator between God and men (Ephes. i. 4). 'in whom the Father is well pleased' (Matt. iii. 17; Luke iii. 22); 'in whom God reconciled the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them' and 'whom God made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him' (2 Cor. v. 19, 21). Through Him 'everlasting righteousness was to be brought in' (Dan. ix. 24), adoption to be acquired, the spirit of grace and of faith was to be obtained (Gal. iv. 5, 19, 6), eternal life procured (John vi. 51), and all the plenitude of spiritual blessings prepared, the communication of which must be decreed by Predestination. He is also constituted by God the Head of all those persons who will, by Divine Predestination, accept of [*communione*] the equal enjoyment of these blessings (Ephes. i. 22; v. 23; Heb. v. 9).

VI. We attribute Eternity to this Decree; because God does nothing in time, which He has not decreed to do from all eternity. For 'known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world' (Acts xv. 18); and 'He hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world' (Ephes. i. 4). If it were otherwise, God might be charged with mutability.

VII. We say that the Object or Matter of Predestination is two-fold — *Divine Things*, and *Persons* to whom the communication of those Divine Things has been predestinated by this decree.

1. These DIVINE THINGS receive from the Apostle the general appellation of 'spiritual blessings' (Ephes. i. 3). Such are, *in the present life*, Justification, Adoption as sons (Rom. viii. 29, 30), and the Spirit of grace and adoption (Ephes. i. 5; John i. 12; Gal. iv. 6, 7). Lastly, *after this life*, Eternal Life (John iii. 15, 16). The whole of these things are usually comprised and enunciated, in the Divinity schools, by the names of GRACE and GLORY.
2. We circumscribe the PERSONS within the limits of the word 'Believers,' which presupposes sin: for no one believes on Christ except a sinner, and the man who acknowledges himself to be that sinner (Matt. ix. 13; xi. 28). Therefore, the plenitude of those blessings, and the preparation of them which has been made in Christ, were necessary for none but sinners. But we give the name of 'Believers,' not to those who would be such by their own merits or strength, but to those who by the gratuitous and peculiar kindness of God [*erant credituri*] would believe in Christ (Rom. ix. 32; Gal. ii. 20; Matt. xi. 25; xiii. 11; John vi. 44; Phil. i. 29).

VIII. The Form is the decreed communication itself of these blessings to believers, and in the mind of God the pre-existent and pre-ordained relation and ordination of believers to Christ their Head: the fruit of which they receive through a real and actual union with Christ their Head. In the present life, this fruit is *gracious*, through the commencement

and increase of the union; and in the life to come, it is *glorious*, through the complete consummation of this union (2 Tim. i. 9, 10; John i. 16, 17; xvii. 11, 12, 22–24; Ephes. iv. 13, 15).

IX. The End of Predestination is the praise of the glorious grace of God: for since grace, or the gratuitous love of God in Christ, is the Cause of Predestination, it is equitable that to the same grace the entire glory of this act should be ceded (Ephes. i. 6; Rom. xi. 36).

X. But this Decree of Predestination is ‘according to election,’ as the Apostle says (Rom. ix. 6, xi.). This Election necessarily infers Reprobation. Reprobation therefore is opposed to Predestination, as its contrary; and is likewise called ‘a casting away’ (Rom. ix. 1), ‘an ordination to condemnation’ (Jude 4), and ‘an appointment unto wrath’ (1 Thess. v. 9).

XI. From the law of contraries, we define Reprobation to be a Decree of the Wrath, or of the Severe Will, of God; by which he resolved from all eternity to condemn to eternal death unbelievers, who, by their own fault and the just judgment of God, would not believe, for the declaration of his Wrath and Power (John iii. 18; Luke vii. 30; John xii. 37–40; 2 Thess. ii. 10, 11; Rom. ix. 22).

XII. Though by faith in Jesus Christ the remission of all sins is obtained, and sins are not imputed to them who believe (Rom. iv. 2–11); yet the Reprobate will be compelled to endure the punishment, not only of their unbelief, (by the contrary of which they might avoid the chastisement due to the rest of their sins), but likewise of the sins which they have committed against the law, being ‘everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power’ (John viii. 24; ix. 41; 2 Thess. i. 9).

XIII. To each of these Decrees, that of Predestination and that of Reprobation, is subjoined its Execution; the acts of which are performed in that order in which they have been appointed in and by the Decree itself; and the objects both of the Decree and of its Execution are the same, and entirely uniform, or invested with the same formal relation (Psalm cxv. 3; xxxiii. 9, 11).

XIV. Great is the Use of this doctrine, as thus delivered from the Scriptures. For it serves to establish the glory of the grace of God, to console afflicted consciences, to terrify the wicked and to drive away their security.

1. But it establishes the grace of God, when it ascribes the whole praise of our Vocation, Justification, Adoption, and Glorification, to the Mercy of God alone, and takes it entirely away from our own strength, works and merits (Rom. viii. 29, 30; Ephes. 1).
2. It comforts afflicted consciences that are struggling with temptation, when it renders them assured of the gracious [*benevolentia*] good will of God in Christ, which was from all eternity decreed to them, performed in time, and which will endure forever

(Isa. liv. 8). It also shews, that the purpose of God according to election stands firm, not of works, but of Him that calleth (1 Cor. i. 9; Rom. ix. 11).

3. It is capable of terrifying the ungodly; because it teaches, that the Decree of God concerning unbelievers is irrevocable (Heb. iii. 11, 17–19); and that ‘they who do not obey the truth, but believe a lie,’ are to be adjudged to eternal destruction (2 Thess. ii. 12).

XV. This doctrine therefore ought to resound, not only within private walls and in Schools, but also in the assemblies of the Saints and in the church of God. Yet one caution ought to be strictly observed, that nothing be taught concerning it beyond what the Scriptures say, that it be propounded in the manner which the Scriptures have adopted, and that it be referred to the same end as that which the Scriptures propose when they deliver it. This, by the gracious assistance of God, we think, we have done. ‘Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. AMEN!’

The power of God is great, but it obtains glory from the humble. Do not inconsiderately seek out the things that are too hard for thee; neither foolishly search for things which surpass thy powers. But meditate with reverence upon those things which God has commanded thee: for it is not requisite for thee to see with thine eyes those things which are secret. Do not curiously handle those matters which are unprofitable and unnecessary to thy discourse: for more things are shewn unto thee, than the human understanding can comprehend. *Ecclesiasticus* iii. 20–23.

16 Disputation XVI

ON THE VOCATION OF MEN TO SALVATION

Respondent: JAMES BONTEBAL

- I. The Title contains three terms — Vocation, Men, Salvation,
 1. The word VOCATION denotes a total and entire act, consisting of all its parts, whether essential or integral, what parts soever are necessary for the purpose of men being enabled to answer the Divine Vocation (Prov. i. 24; Matt. xi. 20, 21; xxiii. 37).
 2. MEN may be considered in a two-fold respect,
 - either as placed in the state of animal life without sin,
 - or as obnoxious to sin.

We consider them here in this last respect (Gen. ii. 16, 17; Matt. ix. 13).

- 3. SALVATION, by a Synecdoche, in addition to Vocation itself by which we are called to salvation, contains also whatsoever is necessary, through the appointment of God, for obtaining salvation or life eternal (Luke xix. 9; 2 Cor. vi. 2).

II. We define VOCATION, a gracious act of God in Christ, by which, through his word and Spirit, He calls forth sinful men, who are liable to condemnation and placed under the dominion of sin, from the condition of the animal life, and from the pollutions and corruptions of this world (2 Tim. i. 9; Matt. xi. 28; 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10; Gal. i. 4; 2 Pet. ii. 20; Rom. x. 13–15; 1 Pet. iii. 19; Gen. vi. 3), unto ‘the fellowship of Jesus Christ,’ and of his kingdom and its benefits; that, being united unto Him as their Head, they may derive from him life, [*sensum*] sensation, motion, and a plenitude of every spiritual blessing, to the glory of God and their own salvation (1 Cor. i. 9; Gal. ii. 20; Ephes. i. 3, 6; 2 Thess. ii. 13, 14).

III. The Efficient Cause of this Vocation is God the Father in the Son. The Son himself, as appointed by the Father to be the Mediator and the King of his church, calls men by the Holy Spirit; as He is the Spirit of God given to the Mediator; and as He is the Spirit of Christ the King and the Head of his church, by whom both ‘the Father and the Son hitherto work’ (1 Thess. ii. 12; Ephes. ii. 17; iv. 11, 12; Rev. iii. 20; John v. 17). But this Vocation is so administered by the Spirit, that the Holy Spirit is himself its Effector: for He [*constituit*] appoints Bishops, sends forth teachers, endues them with gifts, grants them his assistance, and obtains authority for the word and bestows efficacy upon it (Heb. iii. 7; Acts xiii. 2; xx. 28; 1 Cor. xii. 4, 7, 9, 11; Heb. ii. 4).

IV. The Inly-moving Cause is the grace, mercy and (philanthropy) ‘love of God our saviour toward man’ (Tit. iii. 4, 5); by which He is inclined to relieve the misery of sinful man, and to impart unto him eternal felicity (2 Tim. i. 9, 10). But the Disposing Cause is the wisdom and justice of God; by which he knows how it is proper for this Vocation to be administered, and wills it to be dispensed as it is lawful and befitting; and from which is formed the Decree of his will concerning the administration and its mode (1 Cor. i. 17, 18).

V. The External Cause, which outwardly moves God, is Jesus Christ by his obedience and intercession (2 Tim. i. 9). But the Instrumental Cause is the word of God, administered by means of men, either through preaching or writing, which is the *ordinary* method (1 Cor. xii. 28–30; 2 Thess. ii. 14); or without human assistance, when the word is immediately proposed by God inwardly to the mind and the will, which is *extraordinary*. And this is in fact both the word of the law and that of the Gospel, which are subordinate in the operations apportioned to each other.

VI. The Matter or Subject of Vocation is mankind constituted in the animal life; men worldly, natural, animal, carnal, sinful, alienated from the life of God, and dead in sins; and therefore UNWORTHY to be called, and [*inepti, unapt*] UNFIT to answer to the call, unless by the gracious [*dignatione*] estimation of God they be accounted worthy, and by his powerful operation they be rendered FIT to comply with the vocation (Matt. ix. 13; Tit. ii. 12; Ephes. ii. 11, 12; iv. 17, 18; v. 14; John v. 25; vi. 44; Matt. x. 11–13; Acts xvi. 14).

VII. The Form of Vocation is placed in the very administration of the word and of the Holy Spirit God hath instituted this administration so, as He knows to be suitable and becoming to himself, and to his Justice tempered with Mercy in Christ; always reserving to himself the full and free power of not employing, for the conversion of men, all the methods which are possible to himself according to the treasures of his Wisdom and Power, and of bestowing unequal grace on those who are [in every respect], equals, and equal grace on those who are unequal, nay, of employing greater grace on those who are more wicked (Rom. ix. 21–26; x. 17–21; xi. 25, 29–33; Ezek. iii. 6; Matt. xi. 21, 23).

VIII. But in every Vocation [*terminus a quo et ad quem*] the point of Commencement, and that of Termination, come to be considered. *The point of Commencement*, whence men are called by Divine Vocation, is not only the state of this animal life, but likewise that of sin and of misery on account of sin, that is, out of guilt and condemnation (1 Pet. ii. 9; 2 Pet. i. 4; Ephes. ii. 1–6; Rom. vi. 17, 18). *The point of Termination* is, FIRST, the State of Grace, or a participation of supernatural good and of every spiritual blessing, during the present life, in Christ, in whom resides a plenitude of grace and truth; and, AFTERWARDS, the state of Glory, and [*consummatam*] the perfect fruition of God himself (Ephes. i. 3, 4; John i. 14, 16; Rom. viii. 28–30).

IX. The Proximate End of Vocation is, that they who have been called answer by faith to God and to Christ who give the call, and that they thus become [*foederati*]

the covenanted people of God through Christ the Mediator of the New Covenant; and, after having become believers and parties to the covenant, that they love, fear, honour, and worship God and Christ, render in all things obedience to the Divine precepts 'in righteousness and true holiness,' and that by this means they 'make their calling and election sure' (Prov. i. 24; Heb. iii. 7; Rev. iii. 20; Ephes. ii. 11–16; Tit. iii. 8; Deut. vi. 4, 5; Jer. xxxii. 38, 39; Luke i. 74, 75; 2 Pet. i. 1, 10).

X. The Remote End is the Salvation of the elect and the Glory of God, in regard to which the very vocation to grace is a means ordained by God, yet through the appointment of God it is necessary to the communication of salvation (Phil. i. 6; Ephes. i. 14). But the Answer by which obedience is yielded to this call, is the condition which, through the appointment of God, is also requisite and necessary for obtaining this end (Prov. i. 24–26; Acts xiii. 46; Luke vii. 30). The Glory of *God*, who is supremely wise, good, merciful, just and powerful, is so luminously displayed in this communication both of his Grace and Glory, as deservedly to raise into rapturous admiration the minds of angels and men, and to employ their loosened tongues in celebrating the praises of Jehovah (Rev. iv. 8–11; v. 8–10).

XI. Vocation is partly external, partly internal. *External Vocation* is by the ministry of men, who propound the word of the Law and of the Gospel, and who are on this account called 'workers together with God, planters, waterers, builders, and ministers by whom the [members of the] church believe' (1 Cor. i. 5–9; iii. 3–6). *Internal Vocation* is by the operation of the Holy Spirit illuminating the mind and affecting the heart, that serious attention may be given to those things which are spoken, and that [*fides*] faith or credence may be given to the word. The efficacy consists in the concurrence of both the Internal and External Vocation (Acts xvi. 14; 2 Cor. iii. 3; 1 Pet. i. 22).

XII. But that distribution is not of a genus into its species, but of a whole into its parts, or of the entire vocation into partial acts which concur to produce one conclusion — which is, obedience yielded to the call. Hence an assemblage, or congregation of those who are called, and of those who answer to the call, is denominated 'the Church' (1 Cor. iii. 5, 6; Rom. i. 5); which is itself, in the same manner, distinguished into the visible and the invisible — *the visible*, that 'maketh confession with the mouth,' and *the invisible*, 'that believeth with the heart' (Rom. x. 10). As man himself is likewise distinguished into 'the outward' and 'the inward' (2 Cor. iv. 16).

XIII. But we must be cautious, lest with [*Spiritualibus*] the Mystics and the Enthusiasts, we consider the word which is propounded by the ministry of men as only preparatory; and believe that another word is inwardly employed, which is [*consummatorium*] perfective, or, (which is the same thing), lest we suppose, that the Spirit by his internal act illuminates the mind into another knowledge of God and Christ, than that which is contained in the word outwardly propounded, or that he affects the heart and the soul with other [*sensibus*] meanings, than those which are proposed from the very same word (1 Pet. i. 23, 25; Rom. x. 14–17; 2 Cor. iii. 3–6; 1 Cor. xv. 1–4).

XIV. The accidental Consequence of vocation, and that which is not of itself intended by God, is the rejection of the word of grace, the contemning of the Divine Counsel, the resistance offered to the Holy Spirit. The proper and *per se* Cause of this Result is, the malice and hardness of the human heart. But this result is, not seldom, succeeded by another, the just judgment of God, avenging the contempt shewn to his word and call, and the injury done to his Holy Spirit; and from this judgment arise the blinding of the mind, the hardening of the heart, ‘the giving over to a reprobate mind,’ and ‘the delivering unto the power of Satan’ (Acts xiii. 46; Luke vii. 30; Acts vii. 51; 2 Thess. iii. 2; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Psalm lxxxi. 11–14; Isa. lxiii. 10; vi. 9, 10; John xii. 37–40).

XV. But, because ‘known unto our God are all his works from the beginning of the world’ (Acts xv. 18), and as God does nothing in time which He has not decreed from all eternity to do, this vocation is likewise instituted and administered according to God’s eternal decree. So that what man soever is called in time, was from all eternity predestinated to be called, and to be called in that state, time, place, mode, and with that efficacy, in and with which he was predestinated. Otherwise, the Execution will vary from the Decree; which charge of mutability and change cannot be preferred against God without [*noxam*] producing mischievous effects (Ephes. iii. 5, 6, 9–11; James i. 17, 18; 2 Tim. i. 9).

17 Disputation XVII

ON REPENTANCE

Respondent: HENRY NIELLUIB

As in succeeding Disputations are discussed FAITH, and JUSTIFICATION THROUGH FAITH, the order which has hitherto been observed requires us now to treat on REPENTANCE without which we can neither have fellowship with Christ, nor be made partakers of his righteousness.

I. The Matter on which we are at present treating, is usually enunciated in the three Latin words, *Resipiscentia*, *Paenitentia*, and *Conversio*, repentance, penitence and conversion. The Greek word, Μετανοια ‘change of mind after reflection,’ answers to the first of these, terms; Μεταμελεια, ‘regret on account of misdeeds,’ to the second; and Επιστροφη ‘a turning about, a return,’ to the third. On this subject the Hebrews frequently employ the word תשובה ‘a returning,’ as corresponding with the third of the preceding terms; and the word נחם or נחמה which expresses the sense of the second. But though these words are, according to the essence and nature of the thing, synonymous, yet each of them signifies a particular formal conception. The FIRST, *Repentance*, is a conception of the Understanding; the SECOND, *Penitence*, a conception of the Affections or Passions; and the THIRD, *Conversion*, is a conception of an Action resulting from both the others. The general term, therefore, comprises the Understanding, the Affections, and an ulterior Act resulting from both the preceding.

- The FIRST signifies a change of mind after any thing has been done; and, after the commission of evil, a change of mind to a better state.
- The SECOND expresses grief or sorrow of mind after a deed; and, after an evil deed, ‘sorrow after a godly sort,’ and not ‘the sorrow of the world,’ although the word is sometimes thus used even in the Scriptures.
- The THIRD denotes *conversion* to some thing, from which *aversion* had been previously formed.

And, in this discussion, it is that conversion which is from evil to good; from sin, Satan and the world, to God.

- The FIRST comprehends a disapproval of evil and an approval of the opposite good.
- The SECOND comprises grief for a past evil, and an affection of desire towards a contrary good.

- The THIRD shews an *aversion* from the evil to which it adhered, and a *conversion* to the good from which it had been alienated.

But these three conceptions, according to the nature of things and the command of God, are so intimately connected with each other, that there cannot be either true and right Repentance, Penitence, or Conversion, unless each of these has the other two united with it, either as preceding it, or as succeeding.

II. According to this distinction of the various conceptions, have been invented different definitions of one and the same thing as to its essence. For instance, ‘Repentance is a change of mind and heart from evil to good, proceeding from godly sorrow.’ It is also ‘sorrow after the commission of sin on account of God being offended, and through this sorrow a change of the whole heart from evil to good.’ And ‘It is a true conversion of our life to God, proceeding from a sincere and serious fear of God, which consists in the mortification of our flesh and of the old man, and in the quickening of the Spirit.’ We disapprove of none of these three definitions, because in substance and essence they agree among themselves, and, sufficiently for [the purposes of] true piety, declare the nature of the thing. But a more copious definition may be given, such as the following: ‘Repentance, Penitence, or Conversion is an act of the entire man, by which *in his Understanding* he disapproves of sin universally considered, *in his Affections* he hates it, and *as perpetrated by himself* is sorry for it and in the whole of his life avoids it. By which he also in *his Understanding* approves of righteousness, *in his Affections* loves it, and *in the whole of his life* follows after it. And thus [*avertit*] he turns himself away from Satan and the world, and [*convertit*] returns unto God and adheres to Him, that God may abide in him, and that he may abide in God.’

III. We call Repentance ‘the act of man,’ that we may distinguish it from REGENERATION which is ‘the act of God.’ These two have some things in common, are on certain points in affinity; yet, in reality, according to the peculiar nature which each of them possesses, they are distinct; though, according to their *subjects*, they are not separated. — We add that it is ‘the act of the entire man:’ for it is his act with regard to the entire mind or soul, and all its faculties; and with regard to the body as it is united to the soul, and is an organ or instrument subjected to the pleasure and command of the soul (1 Kings xviii. 37; Rom. xii. 1, 2). It is an act which concerns the whole life of man as it is rational, and as it was born [*apta*] with an aptitude to tend towards sin and towards God, and to turn aside from either of them. It consists of the understanding, the affections, the senses, and motion, and concurs with all these conjointly, though subordinately, to [the production of] Repentance, Penitence or Conversion.

1. In this act, the UNDERSTANDING performs its office both by a general [*aestimatione*] appreciation of its value and by its particular approbation and disapprobation.
2. The AFFECTIONS or passions perform theirs, as they are *επιθυμητικος*, *concupiscible*, by loving, hating, mourning and rejoicing; and as they are *θυμοειδης*, *irascible*, by being angry, zealous, indignant, fearful, and hopeful (Ephes. 3 and 4).
3. The SENSES, both internal and external, perform their office by their aversion from unbecoming objects, and by their *conversion* to those which are suitable and proper (Rom. vi. 13, 19).

4. Lastly, the MOTIONS of the tongue, hands, feet, and of the other members of the body, perform their office by removal from things unlawful and inexpedient, and by their application to those which are lawful and expedient.

IV. The Object of Repentance is the evil of unrighteousness or sin, (considered both universally, and as committed by the penitent himself), and the good of righteousness (Psalm xxxiv. 15; Ezek. xviii. 28). The evil of unrighteousness is first in order, the good of righteousness is first in dignity. From the former, Repentance has its commencement; in the latter, it terminates and rests. The Object may be considered in a manner somewhat different; for, since we are commanded [*converti*] to return to God, from whom we had turned away, God is also the Object of Conversion and Repentance, as He is the Hater of sin and of evil men, the Lover of righteousness and of righteous men, Good to those who repent, and their Chief Good, and, on the contrary, the Severe Avenger and the certain Destruction of those who persevere in sin (Mal. v. 7; Zech. i. 3; Deut. vi. 5). To this Object, may be directly opposed another personal object, the Devil, from whom by Repentance we must take our departure (Ephes. iv. 27; James iv. 7). To the Devil may be added an Object which is an accessory to him, and that is, the World, of which he is called 'the Prince' (John xii. 31; xiv. 30),

- both as it contains within it arguments suitable for Satan to employ in seduction, such as riches, honours and pleasures (Luke iv. 5, 6; 1 John ii. 15, 16),
- and as it renders to the Devil something that resembles personal service (Rom. vi. 9, 7).

In both these methods, the world attracts men to itself, and detains them after they are united to it. From it, also, we are commanded to turn away. Nay, man himself may obtain the province of *an object opposed to God*; and he is commanded to separate himself from himself, that he may live not according to man, but according to God (Ephes. iv. 22; Col. iii. 9–17; Rom. vi. 10–23).

V. The primary Efficient Cause of Repentance is God, and Christ as he is through the Spirit Mediator between God and man (Jer. xxxi. 18; Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26; Acts v. 31; xvii. 30). The Inly-moving Cause is the goodness, grace, and philanthropy of God our Creator and Redeemer, who loves the salvation of his creature, and desires [*declarare*] to manifest the riches of his mercy in the salvation of his miserable creature (Rom. xi. 5). The Outwardly-moving Cause, through the mode of merit, is the obedience, the death and the intercession of Christ (Isa. liii. 5; 1 Cor. i. 30, 31; 2 Cor. v. 21); and, through the mode of moving to mercy, it is the unhappy condition of sinners, whom the Devil holds captive in the snares of iniquity, and who will perish *by their own demerits* according to the condition of the law, and *necessarily* according to the will of God manifested in the gospel, unless they repent (John iii. 16; Ezek. xvi. 3–63; Luke xiii. 3, 5; Isa. xxxi. 6; Jer. iii. 14; Psalm cxix. 71; in the prophets *passim*; Rom. vii. 6, 7).

VI. The Proximate, yet less Principal Cause, is man himself, converted and converting himself by the power and efficacy of the grace of God and the Spirit of Christ. The External Cause inciting to repent is the miserable state of the sinners who do not repent,

and the felicitous and blessed state of those who repent — whether such state be known from the law of Moses or from that of nature, from the Gospel or from personal experience, or from the examples of other persons who [*inciderunt in*] have been visited with the most grievous plagues through impenitence, or who, through repentance, have been made partakers of many blessings (Rom. ii. 5; Acts ii. 37). The Internal and inly-moving cause is, not only a consciousness of sin and a sense of misery through fear of the Deity, who has been offended, with a desire to be delivered from both, but it is likewise [an incipient] faith and hope of the gracious mercy and pardon of God.

VII. The Instrumental causes which God ordinarily uses for our Conversion, and by which we are solicited and led to Repentance, are the Law and the Gospel. Yet the office of each in this matter is quite distinct, so that the more excellent province in it is assigned to the Gospel, and the Law acts the part of its servant or attendant. For, in the first place, the very command to repent is evangelical; and the promise of pardon, and the peremptory threat of eternal destruction, unless the man repents, which are added to it, belong peculiarly to the Gospel (Matt. iii. 1; Mark i. 4; Luke xxiv. 47). But the Law proves the necessity of Repentance, by convincing man of sin and of the anger of the offended Deity, from which conviction arise a certain sorrow and a fear of punishment, which, in its commencement is servile or slavish solely through a regard to the Law, but which, in its progress, becomes a filial fear through a view of the Gospel (Rom. iii. 13, 20; vii. 7). From these, also, proceed, by the direction [*loco motivae*] of an inducement to remove, or repent, a certain external abstinence from evil works, and such a performance of some righteousness as is not hypocritical (Matt. iii. 8; vii. 17; James ii. 14–26). But as the Law does not proceed beyond ‘the ministration of death and of the letter,’ the services of the Gospel here again become necessary, which administers the Spirit, by whose illumination, inspiration and gracious and efficacious strengthening, Repentance itself, in its essential and integral parts is completed and perfected. Nay the very conviction of sin belongs in some measure to the Gospel, since sin itself has been committed against the command both concerning Faith and Repentance (Mark xvi. 16; John xvi. 8–15).

VIII. There are likewise other Causes aiding or auxiliary to Repentance, some of which are usually employed by God himself, and others of them by those who are penitent.

1. For God sometimes sends the cross and afflictions, by which, as [*stimulis*] with goads, he excites and invites to Repentance. At other times, he visits them with the contrary blessings, that he may lead them, after having been invited, by goodness and lenity to Repentance (1 Cor. xi. 32; Jer. xxxi. 18; Psalm 80 and 85).
2. The Causes employed by Penitents themselves are Watching, Fasting, and other corporeal Chastisements, as well as Prayers, which are of the greatest efficacy in obtaining and performing repentance. The other Causes employed by men are likewise serviceable in exciting the ardour of these Prayers (Psalm 119; Rom. ii. 4; v. 3, 4; xii. 11, 12).

It is possible for this relation to exist between these Auxiliary and the preceding Instrumental Causes (§ VII), that the Auxiliary Causes are subservient to the Instrumental, since they excite men to a serious and assiduous meditation on the Law and the Gospel, and by the grace of God obtain yet more and more a right understanding of both.

IX. The Form of Repentance is the Uprightness of the turning away from evil, and of the return to God and to righteousness. It is conformed to the rule of the Divine command, and [*informata*] is produced by an assured faith and hope of the Divine Mercy, and by a sincere intention to turn away and to return. As the Penitence of Saul, Ahab and Judas was destitute of this Uprightness, it is unworthy to be reckoned under this title (1 Sam. xv. 24, 25; 1 Kings xxi. 27; Matt. xxvii. 3). But since the mind of the penitent is conscious to itself of this Rectitude, or Uprightness, no necessity exists for such a man anxiously and solicitously to examine whether it be so great, either intensively, extensively, or appreciatively, as the rigor of Justice might demand.

X. The Fruits of Repentance, which may also have the relation of Ends, are,

1. *On the part of God*, the Remission of sin according to the condition of the covenant of grace in Christ, and on account of his obedience, and through faith in him (Luke xxiv. 47; Acts v. 31; Rom. iii. 24)
2. *On our part*, the fruits are good works, which are ‘meet for repentance’ (Matt. iii. 8; Luke iii. 8), and ‘which God foreordained,’ that believers and penitents, who are ‘created in Christ Jesus unto good works, should walk in them’ (Ephes. ii. 10).

The Ultimate End is the glory of God the Redeemer, who is at once just and merciful in Jesus Christ our Lord (Rev. xvi. 9). It results not only from the gracious and efficacious act of God, who bestows Repentance, and converts us to himself; but likewise from the act of the penitents themselves, by which turning themselves away from sins, and returning to God, they ‘walk in newness of living’ all the days of their life. It also results from the very intention of Repentance itself.

XI. The parts of Repentance, as is abundantly evident from the preceding Theses, according to its two boundaries, (both that from which it commences, and that towards which it proceeds and in which it terminates), are two, *an Aversion, or turning away from the Devil and sin*, and *a Conversion or returning to God and righteousness* (Psalm xxxiv. 14; Jer. iv. 1). They are united together by an indissoluble connection; but the former is preparatory to the latter, while the latter is perfective of the former. The Papists, however, make Penitence to consist of three parts; and seem to derive greater pleasure from employing the word *Penitence* about this matter, than in the use of the terms *Repentance* and *Conversion*. Their three parts are, the Contrition of the heart, the Confession of the mouth, and the Satisfaction of the work; about which we make two brief affirmations.

1. If these be received as parts of the Penitence which is necessary before God,
 - then no Contrition can be so great, either intensively or appreciatively, as to be in any wise either meritorious or capable of obtaining remission of sins.
 - No Confession of the mouth, not even that which is made to God, (provided the Confession of the heart only be present), is necessary to receive remission; much less is the Confession which is made to any man, even though he be a Priest.

- And there is no Satisfaction, except the obedience of the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the Justice of God can be satisfied either for sin or for its punishment, even for the very least of either (Acts iv. 12; Heb. x. 10, 14; 1 Cor. i. 30).
2. If these be received as part of the Penitence to which, before the church, that man submits who has injured her by scandal, that he may render her satisfaction and may [*serviat*] contribute to her edification; then indeed those words, [Contrition, Confession and Satisfaction], may bear an accommodated sense, and such a distribution of them may be useful to the church.

XII. The contrary to Repentance is Impenitence, and a pertinacious Perseverance in sinning: Of which there are two degrees, one *the Delay of Penitence*, the other *Final Impenitence unto Death*. The latter of them has a certain expectation of eternal destruction, even according to the most merciful will of God revealed in Christ and in the Gospel; lest any one should persuade himself, that the Devils themselves, and men who have passed their lives in impiety, will at length experience the mercy of God. The former of them, *the Delay of Penitence*, is marvelously dangerous, for three reasons:

1. Because it is in the power and hand of God to make even the delay of a single hour to be a final impenitence, since to Him belongs the dominion and lordship over our life and death.
2. Because after a habit of sinning has been introduced by daily exercise, a man is rendered *ανασθητος*, incapable of feeling, and his conscience becomes ‘seared with a hot iron’ (1 Tim. iv. 2).
3. Because, after the gate of grace has by the just judgment of God been closed on account of a malicious continuance in sins, no passage is open for the SPIRIT, who is necessarily the Author of Penitence.

Therefore let these words always resound in our ears, ‘Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts’ (Heb. iii. 7, 8; Psalm xcv. 7, 8). And this exhortation of the Apostle, ‘Workout your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure’ (Phil. ii. 12, 13). May this be graciously granted to us by God the Father of mercies, in the Son of his Love, by the Holy Spirit of both of them! To whom be praise and glory forever! AMEN.

COROLLARIES

It is not a correct saying, that ‘to those who relapse after having been baptized, Penitence is a second plank [for their escape] after shipwreck.’

Those persons act harshly who, from the example of God not pardoning sins except to him that is penitent, refuse to forgive their brother unless he confesses his fault, and earnestly begs pardon.

18 Disputation XVIII

ON THE CHURCH AND ITS HEAD

Respondent: GERARD, THE SON OF HELMICHIVS

As it is of the greatest utility to hold a right belief about the church of God and its Head, and as there is at present a great controversy between the Orthodox and the Papists respecting this matter, it appears to us that we shall not be profitably occupied, if we treat of the Church and of its Head in a few Theses.

I. The Church, *ecclesia*, is a word of Greek origin, used in the Greek version of the Old Testament for the Hebrew word ^{כְּנֶסֶת}, ‘the assembly’ (Deut. xxiii. 2; Judges xx. 2); and properly signifies a ‘congregation of persons called out,’ from the very etymology of the word and from the most frequent usage of the Sacred Writings, without any distinction of the small or the great number of those who belong to such an assemblage. For sometimes it signifies the universal assembly of all those who have been called out (Acts xx. 28; Ephes. i. 22); at other times, an extraordinary multitude (Acts ii. 41, 47); and at other times, only a few persons, comprised in a single family (Rom. xvi. 5). This diversity in its application is made on account of one essential reason in all of them; and as this reason belongs equally to an assembly of few persons, of many, and of all, these several assemblages equally partake of the name of ‘the Church,’ with this difference alone, that a congregation consisting of numerous members is called *a greater church*, but not *more a church*, according to the axiom of the Logicians, ‘A substance does not receive *more* and *less*.’

II. According to this very general notion the church of God is defined, ‘A congregation of men called forth by God, out of their own nature, into the supernatural dignity of adoption as sons of God to his glory, and of those who answer this call of God.’ For the act of vocation, as proceeding from God who calls, and as properly received by those who are called, completes his church. Under this definition are likewise comprehended those angels who are called in Scripture ‘the elect’ (1 Tim. v. 21); whether they be considered as an assembly separated from men, or as belonging to one church with men (Psalm lxxviii. 17; Jude 14; Rev. v. 11; Heb. xii. 22). According to this notion, the church, embracing all, is especially called ‘Catholic.’ But omitting any further mention of angels, about whose vocation the Scriptures speak sparingly, we will contemplate the church as consisting of human beings. We must here consider men in two respects:

- According to the primeval state in which they were created after the image of God,
- And in reference to their fall from that state into corruption and misery.

III.

1. Because, when men are considered in their primitive state, they were created to be not only what they actually were, but likewise to be elevated to a state of higher felicity, agreeing with the image of God; bearing the impress of which, as children they resembled their Heavenly Father (Gen. i. 27; Luke iii. 38); therefore, in this state, theirs was the calling forth, by which they were called out from nature and natural felicity to partake of the fruit of Divine adoption, by the observance of the law which had been imposed on them, and which had been sanctioned by the promise of a life of blessedness assured to them through the sacrament of the tree of life (Gen. ii. 9, 10), and by a threat of death. They were therefore the church of God, neither redeemed by the blood of Christ, nor formed anew by regeneration of the Spirit, nor by a new creation, but they were instituted as a church by the primitive creation of God, and formed by a vocation according to the Legal covenant.

IV. Before the Fall, this church in reality consisted only of our first parents, Adam and Eve; but in [*potentia*] capacity it embraced the whole of the human race that were included in their loins, and that were afterwards to proceed from them by natural propagation. This was done by God's constant and perpetual ordinance, according to which he included all their posterity in the covenant into which He had entered with the parents, provided the parents continued in this covenant (Gen. xvii. 7; Rom. v. 12, 14). And in this respect, the church before the Fall may take to itself the epithet of 'Catholic.' But, as a promise of the remission of sins was not annexed to this covenant, when our first parents transgressed this Law, which had been imposed as a trial of obedience, they fell from the covenant and ceased to be the church of God (Jer. xi. 3), they were expelled from the tree of life and out of Paradise, the symbols of life eternal and [*domicilii*] of the place in which it was to be enjoyed, and were thus by nature rendered 'children of wrath' (Gen. 3).

2. **V.** Wherefore, if a church was to be again collected from among men, it was to be called out from that state of sin and misery; but it was to be collected through the decree of the gracious mercy of God. He therefore employed such a mode of calling the members forth as was agreeable to that state, that is, the institution of a new and gracious covenant, as the word is used in the writings of the evangelism (Jer. xxxi. 33; Matt. xxvi. 28). This covenant exhibits remission of sins ratified by the blood of the Mediator, Christ the only begotten Son of God, and the Spirit of grace through faith in Him (Heb. ix. 15; Gal. iii. 2, 5; iv. 19). To a participation in this covenant men have been called 'in divers manners,' according to the economy of time most wisely [*distributam*] arranged by God. **FIRST**, by the declaration or solemn promise of the Blessed Seed (Gen. iii. 15; Rom. i. 2), when the Heir was by appointment constituted an infant: wherefore He was also to be detained for a time under the preparatory discipline of the Law economically repeated. **AFTERWARDS**, by that full manifestation in the Gospel, when, according to 'the time appointed of God the Father,' the Heir had arrived at maturity (Gal. iv. 1-4; Matt. xi. 11-13).

VI. But this economic distinction, and this diversity in the method of calling forth, do not make a double and in substance a different church. For it is one and the same [*homo*] person that is an infant and afterwards a full-grown man, not distinguished except

with regard to age and advancement according to increased age. But the whole church, both before and after Christ, is called one heir (Gal. 4). The whole church, collected together from among the Jews and the Gentiles, is also called 'one new man;' and not from those Jews only who lived after the advent of Christ, but likewise from those who lived prior to his coming, when the Gentiles were without Christ, 'being then aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise' (Ephes. ii. 12–15). The church is one city, the heavenly Jerusalem, 'the mother of all' those who are blessed with faithful Abraham, and who, 'as Isaac was, are the children of promise' (Gal. iv. 26–28). It is also one house of God founded upon Christ the Chief Corner-stone, which has been laid in a foundation the most firm and stable, through the preaching not only of the apostles, but likewise of the prophets (Ephes. ii. 20–22), to the latter of whom also belong Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, as well as Moses himself, who according to the authority of the promise was a son (Heb. xi. 24–26), although a servant in the house with regard to the economical legislation which was administered by his hands (iii. 4).

VII. This assembly being distinguished in the manner already described, by the names of 'the one heir' and 'the one new man,' of 'the one city' and 'the one house of God,' is in the most ample signification and in the widest latitude called 'the Catholic Church,' collected together from among men of every period and age from the first promise of the seed of the woman to the end of the world, and of all places; — men who have been called forth to the participation of the grace of God, and to the service of his glory; and who are obedient to this Divine calling (Heb. 11; xii. 22–24). It is distributed into two integral members, each of which is homogeneous and similar to the whole; that is, into the church *before Christ*, and that *after Him* (Gal. iv. 1–4; Heb. xi. 40). But as a discussion upon their agreement and difference will be a labour rather too prolix, we will not enter into it on this occasion: Omitting therefore the peculiar consideration of that which was before Christ, our further attention shall be directed to that which is specially called 'Christian,' yet not to the entire exclusion of the other.

VIII. We may be permitted, therefore, to define the Christian church, 'A congregation of believers, who have been called by the saving vocation of God from the state of corruption to the dignity of the sons of God through the gospel, and are by a true faith engrafted into Christ, as living members are to the Head, to the praise of the glorious grace of God (Matt. v. 15, 16; Acts iv. 31; 1 Pet. ii. 9; v. 10; Rom. viii. 28–30; vi. 5; Ephes. iii. 17; v. 30). This, as a general definition, belongs to every congregation of believers, whether it be small or large; it also appertains to the Catholic Church, which contains the entire number of believers from the time when Christ came into his kingdom unto the consummation of all things: Which Universal Company we properly describe, if we add these few words to the previous description, 'Of all the believers who have been called out from every tongue, tribe, people, nation and vocation,' etc. From this it is apparent, that the Catholic or Universal church differs from particular churches in nothing which relates to the substance of the church, but solely in its amplitude: an argument which ought to be diligently observed in our controversy with the Papists.

IX. The Efficient Cause of the church, that both produces her by regeneration and preserves her by daily education, and that perfects her by an immediate union of her to himself, is God the Father, in his well beloved Son Jesus Christ, by the Spirit of Christ who is the Redeemer and the Head of the church (2 Tim. i. 9; 1 Pet. i. 12). We view the Gospel as the Instrument, that is, ‘the incorruptible seed by which the church is born again’ (1 Pet. i. 23, 25). Hence those persons also whom God appointed to be ministers of the Gospel, were the Instrumental Causes, and are called ‘co-operators,’ or ‘workers together with God,’ of whom some are employed in laying the foundation, others in raising the superstructure (1 Cor. iii. 5, 10; Rev. xv. 18–21; Ephes. ii. 20). They are indeed the founders of many particular churches, by their oral preaching; but by their writings [*consignatam*] which have been delivered down to us, they are the founders of all churches and of the whole Catholic Church; on this account the entire church of Christ is called Apostolical.

X. We call the act of this Cause that produces the church, and preserves her, [*evocatio*] ‘a calling forth.’ This word includes, FIRST, the point from which a commencement is made to that in which it terminates, and, THEN, the means by which men proceed from the one to the other.

1. *The Point of Commencement* is the state of sin and misery, in which state, a sinner without the law [*acquiescit*] is at ease and flatters himself; but to which a sinner is averse who is under the law through the vocation previously administered by the legal spirit, that is, the spirit of bondage, and from which he desires to be delivered (Matt. ix. 13; xi. 28; Rom. 7). *The Point of Termination* is the dignity of being adopted as the sons of God, which, also, with respect to the desire of those who have been called forth, may be fitly denominated their End.
2. The Means by which men proceed from the one point to the other, is Faith in Christ, by which we obtain this dignity, and are ‘translated from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light’ and of the Son of God, through the decree of Divine Predestination (Jer. i. 12; Col. i. 13; Acts xvi. 17).

XI. Hence it will easily appear what it is that we have laid down as the Matter or Substance of this calling forth, about which it is conversant, and in which it exercises its operation. Sinners are *the remote Matter*; for to them alone is an entrance into this way necessary. *The still nearer Matter* are sinners through the law acknowledging their sins, deploring their state, and expecting redemption (Gal. ii. 15, 16, 21; Matt. ix. 13; xi. 28; Rom. viii. 28–30). Believers are *the proximate Matter*, who, alone, are called to the fellowship of Jesus Christ, and to a participation of the inheritance which he has purchased for his children with his own blood, and of which He is constituted the Dispenser to those who obey Him (Heb. v. 9). For however perfect in the act, vocation is, when it has proceeded from Him who calls us, yet a relative effect is required for this purpose, that they who are called may be numbered in the name of the church (Acts ii. 41). Wherefore we exclude from the church, unbelievers, apostates, hypocrites, and those heretics who do not hold Christ as the Head (Ephes. i. 22). We make a distinction between those who have not been baptized with the external baptism of water, those who have been excommunicated by the sentence of the church, and schismatics; and according to the

varying distinction in each case, we affirm either that they belong to the church, or that they do not belong to her.

XII. As the Form of the church is of the genus of relatives, we place it as relatively necessary, and in reality in the relation of *disquiperancy*, as we are enjoined to do by the relative names by which the church is called. For she is called ‘the Body’ (Ephes. i. 23), ‘the Bride’ (John iii. 29), ‘the city of the Kingdom’ (Heb. i. 8), and ‘the House’ (1 Tim. iii. 15), in relation to ‘the Head’ (Ephes. i. 22; Col. i. 18), to ‘the Bridegroom’ to ‘the King,’ and ‘the Master,’ or the Father of the family. But the Relation between these things which are thus relatively placed, consists of three points or degrees, Union, [*ordinatione*] Appointment and Communication.

1. The Form therefore of the church in *Union* is with her Head, Husband, King and Master of the house or family; which is formed by his Spirit, and by the faith of the church (Gal. ii. 30; Rom. viii. 9–11).
2. In her *Subordination* under her Head, Husband and King, which is required by the perfection and virtue of her Head, and by the necessity and usefulness of the church herself (Ephes. v. 23).
3. In the *Influence* of life, sensation and motion, which Influence benevolently proceeds from the Head, and is happily [*percepta*] apprehended by the church.

XIII. The Chief End of the church is the glory of Him by whose gracious evocation the church is what she is; the glory which He completes in His gracious acts towards the church, by creating, preserving, increasing and perfecting her (Ephes. i. 12). To this glory is justly subordinate, that which the church is commanded to ascribe to Him, and which she will ascribe as [*complementum*] the perfecting of her ‘throughout all ages, world without end’ (Rom. xi. 36; 1 Pet. ii. 9; Ephes. iii. 21; v. 20). As the salvation of the church is the gift of her Head and King, it cannot be the End of his church, though it may be the End which she intends by her faith, and which she strives to obtain, that she may be blessed before God.

XIV. But the church is herself now distinguished according to the acts of God towards her, so far as she perceives all or some of them.

1. She that has a perception only of the act of Creation and Preservation, is said to be in the way or course, and is called *militant*, because she must still contend with sin, the flesh, the world and Satan (Ephes. vi. 11, 12; Heb. xii. 1–4).
2. But she that is made partaker besides, of the consummation, is said to be in her own land, and is called *triumphant*.

After conquering her enemies, she rests from her labours, and reigns with Christ in Heaven (Rev. iii. 21; xiv. 13). To that part of the church which is militant on earth, the title of *Catholic* or *Universal* is likewise ascribed, as embracing within her [*ambitu*] pale every particular combatant or soldier. We place neither any church, nor anything belonging to her, in Purgatory, for that is a real Utopia, and of great notoriety among all men.

XV. Hence, since the calling forth of the church is made inwardly by the spirit, and outwardly by the word preached (Acts xvi. 14), and since those who are called answer inwardly by faith, and outwardly by the profession of their faith, as they who are called have an inward man and an outward (2 Cor. iv. 16); therefore, in reference to those who are called, the church is distinguished into *the Visible* and *the Invisible* from an external adjunct and accident. She is Invisible, as ‘believing with the heart unto righteousness;’ and she is Visible, as ‘making confession with the mouth unto salvation’ (Rom. x. 9, 10). This Visibility and Invisibility belong neither less nor more to the whole Catholic Church than to each particular church. For that which is called ‘the Catholic Invisible Church’ does not appertain to this subject, because it can not come together into one place, and thus be exposed to view. But as more persons ‘are called’ than ‘are chosen’ or elected (Matt. xx. 16). And as many of the called profess with their mouths ‘that they know God, while in works they deny him’ (Tit. i. 16); and since of the hearts of these men, God is the sole Judge, who alone ‘knoweth them that are his’ (2 Tim. ii. 19); therefore such persons are judged, on account of the promise, to belong to the visible church, although equivocally, since they do not belong to the invisible church, and have none of that inward communion with the Head, which is the Form of the church.

XVI. Then, since the church is collected out of ‘the world that lieth wholly in wickedness’ (John xv. 19; Matt. xv. 9), and as this office is frequently performed by ministers who preach another doctrine than that which the word of God contains (2 Cor. xi. 15; Gal. iii. 1–3); and since the church is composed of men who are exposed to deception and to falling — nay, of such as are actually deceived and fallen; on this account, the church is distinguished, with respect to the doctrine of faith, into ‘the Orthodox’ and ‘the Heretical;’ with respect to Divine worship, into ‘the Idolatrous,’ and that which retains the ‘right worship of God and of Christ;’ and with respect to the moral virtues prescribed in the Second Table of the Law into ‘a purer church, or into ‘one that is more impure.’ In all these respects, degrees are also to be observed, according to which one church is more heretical, idolatrous and impure, than another. But concerning all these things, a right judgment must be formed according to the Scriptures. In this relation, too, the word ‘Catholic’ is used respecting those churches which are neither oppressed with destructive heresy nor are idolatrous.

XVII. Wherefore, that question is confused and preposterous which asks, ‘Can the Catholic Church err?’ when the inquiry ought rather to be, ‘Can the assembly that errs be the church?’ For as faith is prior to the church, and as the church obtains this appellation on account of her believing, so the name of ‘the Church’ is taken away from any church so far as she errs from the faith. Yet if this question be pressed by any one, we say that by it nothing more is asked than this, ‘Can it happen that at any one time there can be no assemblage or congregation of men in the whole world who have not a right faith in Christ and God,’ To which an answer is readily made by a negation; because the church on earth will never totally fail, but must continue to be collected together without interruption to the end of the world, although not always from the same places and nations (Matt. xxviii. 20; Rev. ii. 5). Otherwise, Christ will not have any kingdom on earth, and will not rule in the midst of his enemies until they be made his footstool (Psalm cx. 1, 2).

We have hitherto treated of the church herself, let us now briefly consider her head.

XVIII. The conditions of the Head of the church are, that it should contain within itself, in a manner the most perfect, all things necessary to the life and salvation of the church, that it should have a due [*symmetriam*] proportion to the church, should be fitly united to her and placed in order with her, and that by its own virtue it may supply to her life, sensation and motion. But these conditions agree with Christ alone. For ‘in Him all fullness dwells’ (Col. i. 19); ‘and of his fullness have all we received’ (John i. 16). Him hath the Father constituted ‘the Head over all things to the church;’ and he bestows salvation on his body, which is the church (Ephes. i. 22; v. 25). By His Spirit, the Church is animated, perceives and moves (Rom. viii. 9–12). Nor is this to be understood only about internal communication, but likewise concerning external administration; for it is He who sends forth his Word and his Spirit (Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts ii. 33), who institutes a ministry in the church, who appoints, as presidents over this ministry, apostles, evangelists, pastors and teachers (Ephes. iv. 11, 12). On this account, He is called ‘the Chief Pastor or Shepherd’ (1 Pet. v. 4), who assists and ‘works with’ his ministers, ‘both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost’ (Mark xvi. 20; Acts iv. 30); and who defends his church against her enemies, and procures likewise her temporal good, so far as He considers it to be requisite for her inward and eternal benefit.

XIX. This name therefore, ‘the Head of the Church,’ cannot be adapted, according to any consideration, either to the apostle Peter or to the Roman Pontiff. The papists, themselves, grant that it cannot be *according to internal communication*; and we prove that it cannot be *according to external administration*, in the following manner:

1. St Peter was himself constituted an apostle by Christ, after the same constitution as that by which Christ is said to have appointed Apostles (Ephes. iv. 7, 11; 1 Pet. i. 1). Therefore, the rest of the apostles were not constituted by St Peter, which appointment St Paul expressly denies respecting himself, when he says that he obtained his apostleship ‘neither of men nor by man’ (Gal. i. 1).
2. St Peter is [*sym-presbyter*] a fellow-elder. Therefore, he is not the Chief of the Elders (1 Pet. v. 1).
3. To St Peter ‘was committed the Gospel of the circumcision,’ as that of the uncircumcision was by equal right and authority committed to St Paul. Therefore ‘they gave to each other the right hand of fellowship’ (Gal. ii. 7–9).
4. St Peter was reprehended by St Paul, ‘because he did not walk uprightly, according to the truth of the Gospel;’ Therefore, he was not a suitable person to receive in charge the administration of the whole church.
5. St James, Cephas and John, are all placed by the apostle Paul as equal in degree; nay, as being accounted columns by the churches, with no difference among them.
6. On the twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem are inscribed ‘the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb,’ each name on each foundation without the pre-eminence of any single one apart.
7. St Paul says that ‘in nothing was he behind the very chief apostles’ (2 Cor. xii. 11). Therefore, he was not inferior to St Peter, who was one of them.

8. St Paul says that he 'laboured more abundantly than all the rest' (1 Cor. xv. 10). But he could not have spoken this with truth, if the care of managing the whole church lay upon St Peter, and if he administered its concerns through St Paul and other persons.

The objections which the Papists urge in favour of [*Primatu*] the primacy or pre-eminence of St Peter, will be examined in the Disputation itself.

XX. Hence it follows that neither does this title of 'the Head of the church' belong to the Roman Pontiff. For whatever portion of right and dignity belongs to him, the Papists say, it is derived from St Peter, because he has succeeded to the chair and to the functions of that apostle. But let it be allowed for the sake of argument, though by no means conceded, that the Primacy of administration over the whole church was granted to Peter; yet it does not follow from this that the same right has devolved on the Roman Pontiff; for, before this inference can be deduced from such a supposition, the following propositions must be previously proved:

1. That this right was not personal but successive.
2. That this succession was inseparably connected with a certain Chair; that he who succeeded to it enjoyed this right; and that he had in fact, by some means or other, irrefragibly gained possession of this chair.
3. That St Peter was Bishop of Rome, and that he died in Rome while discharging the duties of that Bishopric.
4. That, from the period of St Peter's death in the discharge of his Episcopal functions at Rome, this Primacy has been inseparably connected with the Papal Chair.¹

All these things, therefore, they must prove by undoubted arguments, since they teach it to be of the necessity of salvation that every man be subject to the Roman Pontiff.

To that God in whom, by whom, and for whom all things subsist, be praise and glory forever and ever!

¹*Extravag. de Major et Obed.*

19 Disputation XIX

ON THE JUSTIFICATION OF MAN BEFORE GOD

Respondent: ALARD DE VRIES

As frequent mention is made in Scripture of JUSTIFICATION, and since this doctrine is of great importance to salvation, and is in these days, not a little controverted, it seems that we shall not be acting unprofitably if we institute a disquisition on this subject from the Scriptures.

I. Since the word ‘Justification’ is deduced from Justice, from this notion its signification will be appropriately derived. Justice or Righteousness, when properly considered, signifies *Rectitude* or *an agreement with right reason* (Psalm xi. 7; Ephes. vi. 14; Phil. i. 11; 1 John iii. 7). And it is contemplated either as a Quality or as an Act — a quality inhering in a subject, an act produced by an efficient cause. The word ‘Justification’ denotes an Act that is occupied either in infusing the Quality of righteousness into some person or in acquiring it for him, or in forming a judgment on a person and his acts, and in pronouncing sentence on them.

II. If, therefore, according to its Quality, Justification be the acquisition of righteousness, it is the Act of one who by repeated acts acquires a habit of righteousness, that is, the act of a rational creature (Ephes. iv. 24). If it be the infusion of righteousness, it is the act of Him who infuses the habit of righteousness into a rational creature, that is, the act of God either as Creator or Regenerator (Isa. v. 23). The Justification which is occupied about a person and his acts, is the act of a Judge making an estimate in his own mind of the deed, and of the author of it, and according to that estimate, forming a judgment and pronouncing sentence, that is, the act of a man justifying the wisdom and the justice of God (Matt. xi. 19; Psalm 81), of a Prince justifying the cause of his subject, of a Pharisee justifying himself (Luke xvi. 15), of God justifying the deed of Phinehas (Psalm cvi. 31), and our Lord’s justification of the conduct of the Publican (Luke xviii. 14).

III. From this necessary distinction of the words it appears that Bellarmine both admits an equivocation, and feigns an adversary for himself that is not adverse to him, when he proposes the state of the controversy which exists between him and us on this doctrine in these words: ‘Is the righteousness by which we are formally justified, inherent or imputative?’¹

¹Praefat. ad Lib. *De Justificat.*

1. The equivocation lies in this — that the word ‘Justification,’ when it is occupied about inherent righteousness, signifies the infusion of righteousness; but when it is employed respecting imputative righteousness, it signifies the estimate of the mind, the judgment, and the pronouncing of the sentence.
2. He invents an adversary; because no one denies that the form by which any man is intrinsically righteous, and is declared to be so, is the habit or inherent quality of righteousness.

But we deny that the word ‘Justification’ is received in this sense in St Paul’s disputation against the gentiles and the Jews (Rom. 2, 3, 4, 5), and against the false brethren (Gal. 2, 3, 5), or even by St James in his epistle. Wherefore, we must maintain, either that the controversy between the Papists and us, is respecting Justification when received as *the act of a Judge*, or that our controversy has nothing in common with that of St Paul (James 2).

IV. The Justification, therefore, of a man before God is that by which, when he is placed before the tribunal of God, he is considered and pronounced, by God as a Judge, [*justus*] righteous and worthy of the reward of righteousness; whence also the recompense of reward itself follows by necessity of consequence (Rom. 2, 3; Luke xviii. 14). But since three things come under consideration in this place — Man who is to be judged, God the Judge, and the Law according to which judgment must be passed. Each of them may be variously considered, and it is also necessary, according to these three to vary Justification itself.

1. For Man may be considered either as having discharged the works of righteousness without sin (Rom. ii. 16), or as a sinner (iii. 23).
2. God may be viewed as seated on a throne of rigid and severe Justice (Psalm cxliii. 2), or on a throne of Grace and Mercy (Heb. iv. 16).
3. The Law is either that of Works, or that of Faith (Rom. iii. 27); and since each of these has a natural correspondence together and mutually agree with each other, justification may [*revocari*] be reduced to two opposite species or forms; Of which the one is called that ‘of the law, in the law, or through the law, of the works of the law, of him that worketh and performs the law, of debt and not of grace’ (Rom. 2, 3, 4, 9, 11), But the other is styled that ‘of faith, from faith, through faith, of a sinner who believes, freely bestowed, of grace and not of debt, and without the works of the law’ (Gal. 2, 3, 5).

V. But since the Law is two-fold, of which mention is made in the question of Justification, that is, the Moral and the Ceremonial, (for the Judicial part of the Law does not in this place come under discussion), we must see how and in what sense Justification is either attributed to each of them or taken away from it.

1. Justification is ascribed to the MORAL LAW because the works prescribed are of and in themselves pleasing to God, and are righteousness itself strictly and rigidly taken, so that he who does them is on that very account [*justus*] righteous, without absolution or gratuitous imputation. For this reason Justification cannot be taken

away from it, unless for its non-performance (1 Sam. xv. 21, 22; Amos v. 21–23; Rom. x. 5). Hence Justification by the Moral Law may be defined: ‘It is that by which a man, having performed the duties of the Moral Law without transgression, and being placed before the tribunal of the severe Justice of God, is accounted and declared by God to be righteous and worthy of the reward of eternal life, in himself, of debt, according to the law, and without grace, to his own salvation, and to the glory both of Divine and human righteousness’ (Rom. iv. 4; iii. 27; Ephes. ii. 8, 9).

2. **VI.** But the rule [*ratio*] of the CEREMONIAL LAW is widely different. For its works are neither of themselves pleasing to God, to enable them to come under the name of righteousness; nor have they such a [*respectum*] consideration that absolution from sins committed against the Moral Law can be obtained through them, or that they can be graciously imputed for righteousness (Micah vi. 6–8; Col. ii. 16, 20, 21). For this reason, in the Scriptures, Justification is taken away from it, not because it was not performed, but simply on account of the weakness of itself, and not of the flesh which sinned (Acts xiii. 39; Heb. ix. 10). Yet its use for Justification is two-fold according to its double reference to *the Moral Law and the offenses committed against it*, and to *Christ and faith in Him*. According to the former, it is the hand-writing recording debts and sins (Col. ii. 14–17). According to the latter, it contains a shadow and type of Christ, and of ‘good things to come,’ that is, of righteousness and life (Heb. x. 1). According to the latter, it shewed Christ typically (Gal. ii. 16); according to the former, it compelled men to flee to Him, through faith in him (Gal. iii. 21–24).

VII. And this is the cause why the Apostle Paul takes away Justification together and at once from the whole law, though for different causes which it is not always necessary to enumerate (Rom. iii. 20, 28; Gal. ii. 16; John v. 24; Psalm cxliii. 2; Rom. 3, 4). But Justification is attributed to faith, not because it is that very righteousness which can be opposed to the rigid and severe judgment of God, though it is pleasing to God; but because, through the judgment of mercy triumphing over justice, it obtains absolution from sins, and is graciously imputed for righteousness (Acts xiii. 39). The cause of this is, not only God who is both just and merciful, but also Christ by his obedience, offering, and intercession according to God through his good pleasure and command. But it may be thus defined, ‘it is a Justification by which a man, who is a sinner, yet a believer, being placed before the throne of grace which is erected in Christ Jesus the Propitiation, is accounted and pronounced by God, the just and merciful Judge, righteous and worthy of the reward of righteousness, not in himself but in Christ, of grace, according to the Gospel, to the praise of the righteousness and grace of God, and to the salvation of the justified person himself’ (Rom. iii. 24–26; 3, 4, 5, 10, 11).

VIII. It belongs to these two forms of Justification, when considered in union and in opposition. **FIRST.** To be so adverse as to render it impossible for both of them at once to meet together in one subject. For he who is justified by the law, neither is capable nor requires to be justified by faith (Rom. iv. 14, 15); and it is evident that the man who is justified by faith could not have been justified by the law (xi. 6). Thus the law previously excludes faith by the cause, and faith excludes the law by the consequence of

conclusion. **SECONDLY.** They cannot [*componi*] be reconciled with each other, either by an unconfused union, or by admixture. For they are perfect simple forms, and separated in an individual point, so that by the addition of a single atom, a transition is made from the one to the other (Rom. iv. 4, 5; ix. 30-32). **THIRDLY.** Because a man must be justified by the one or the other of them, otherwise he will fall from righteousness and therefore from life (Rom. x. 3-6, Gal. iii. 10; James ii. 10). Because the gospel is the last revelation; 'for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith;' and, after this, no other revelation must be expected (Heb. i. 1).

IX. From the premises thus laid down according to the Scriptures, we conclude, that Justification, when used for the act of a Judge, is either purely the imputation of righteousness through mercy from the throne of grace in Christ the propitiation [*factam*] made to a sinner, but who is a believer (Rom. i. 16, 17; Gal. iii. 6, 7); or that man is justified before God, of debt, according to the rigor of justice without any forgiveness (Rom. 3, 4). Because the Papists deny the latter, they ought to concede the former. And this is such a truth, that, how high soever may be the endowments of any one of the Saints in faith, hope and charity, and however numerous and excellent the works of faith, hope and charity may be which he has performed, he will receive no sentence of Justification from God the Judge, unless He quit the tribunal of his severe Justice and ascend the throne of grace, and from it pronounce a sentence of absolution in his favour, and unless the Lord of his Mercy and Pity graciously account for righteousness the whole of that good with which the saint appears before Him. For, woe to a life of the utmost innocency, if it be judged without mercy (Psalm xxxii. 1, 2, 5, 6; cxliii. 2; 1 John i. 7-10; 1 Cor. iv. 4). This is a confession which even the Papists seem to make when they assert, that the works of the Saints cannot stand before the judgment of God unless they be sprinkled with the blood of Christ.

X. Hence we likewise deduce: That if the righteousness by which we are justified before God, the Judge, can be called formal, or that by which we are formally justified, (for the latter is Bellarmine's phraseology), then the formal righteousness, and that by which we are formally justified, can on no account be called 'inherent;' but that, according to the phrase of the Apostle, it may in an accommodated sense be denominated [*imputativam*] 'imputed,'

- as either being that which is righteousness in God's gracious account, since it does not merit this name according to the rigor of justice or of the law,
- or as being the righteousness of another, that is, of Christ, which is made ours by God's gracious imputation.

Nor is there any reason why they should be so abhorrent from the use of this word, 'imputed,' since the apostle employs the same word eleven times in the fourth chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, where the seat of this point or argument lies, and since the efficacy to salvation of God's gracious estimation is the same, as that of His *severe* and *rigid* estimation would be if man had perfectly fulfilled the law without any transgression (2 Cor. v. 19, 21).

XI. And though Bellarmine,

- by confounding the word ‘Justification,’
- by distinguishing faith into [*formatam et informem*] that which is formed and unformed,
- by making a difference between the works of the law, and those performed by renewed persons through the virtue of the Holy Spirit,
- and by not ascribing a reward even to these works, unless because it has been promised gratuitously, and promised to those who are already placed in a state of grace and of the adoption of sons, by which he confesses they have likewise a right to the heavenly inheritance,
- by granting besides, that the reward itself exceeds [*dignitatem*] the worthiness of the work,
- and by bringing down to a rigid examination the whole life of the man who is to be judged,

though by these methods Bellarmine endeavours to explain the sentiments of the Romish Church so as to make them appear in unison with those of the apostle (or, at least that they may not openly clash with those of St Paul); yet,

- since the Church of Rome asserts, that the good works of the Saints fully satisfy the law of God according to the state of this life, and really merit eternal life; that when we suffer for sins by rendering satisfaction, we are made conformable to Christ Jesus who gave satisfaction for sins; and that the works of the Saints, prayer, fasting, alms-giving, and others, are satisfactory [to Divine Justice] for temporal punishment, indeed for every punishment, and, what is more, for guilt itself, and are thus expiatory for sins;
- since she declares that the sacrifice of the Mass is a propitiation for the sins and punishments both of the living and the dead;
- and since she says that the works of some men are super-erogatory, and extols them so much as to affirm that they are useful to others for salvation;
- since these are the assertions of the Church of Rome,

we declare that her doctrine stands directly opposed to that of the apostle.

20 Disputation XX

ON CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

Respondent: ENGELBERT SIBELIUS

I. LIBERTY, generally, is a state according to which every one is [*sui juris*] at his own disposal, and not bound to another person. Bondage or slavery is opposed to it, according to which a man is not his own master, but is [*obnoxius*] subject to another, either to do what he commands, to omit what he forbids, or to endure what he inflicts. Christian Liberty is so called chiefly from Christ the Author, who procured it; it has received this appellation also from its subjects, because it belongs to Christians, that is, to believers in Christ. But it pre-supposes servitude; because Christ was not necessary for any, except for ‘those who, through fear of death, were all their life-time subject to bondage’ (Heb. ii. 15).

II. Christian Liberty is that state of the fullness of grace and truth in which believers are placed by God through Christ, and are sealed by the Holy Spirit. It consists partly of a deliverance from both the real and the economic bondage of sin and the law, and partly of adoption into the right of the sons of God, and of the mission of the Spirit of the Son into their hearts. Its end is the praise of the glorious grace of God in Christ, and the eternal salvation of believers.

III. The Efficient Cause of Christian Liberty is God the Father, who offers it (Col. i. 12, 13); the Son, who, as Mediator, confers it (John viii. 36; Gal. v. 1); and the Holy Spirit, who inwardly seals it (2 Cor. iii. 17, 18). The Internal Cause is the grace of God, and his love for man in Christ Jesus (Luke i. 78). The External Cause is the ransom, or the price of redemption, and the satisfaction, which Christ has paid (Rom. v. 6–21; vii. 2, 3). The Sealing and Preserving Cause is the Holy Spirit, who is both the earnest and the witness in the hearts of believers (Rom. viii. 15, 16; Ephes. i. 13, 14). The Instrument is two-fold. One on the part of God, who exhibits this liberty; the other on the part of man, who receives it.

1. On the part of God, the instrument is the saving doctrine concerning the mercy of God in Christ, which is therefore called ‘the ministry of reconciliation’ (2 Cor. v. 19).
2. On the part of man, it is faith in Christ (John i. 12; Rom. v. 2; Gal. iii. 26).

The Matter about which it is exercised is not only sin, and the law ‘which is the strength of sin;’ but also the power or privilege of the sons of God, and the Spirit of Christ.

IV. The Form consists in deliverance from the spiritual bondage of sin and the law, both real and economical, in the donation of the right to be the sons of God (Col. i. 13), and in the sending forth of the Holy Spirit into the hearts of believers (Gal. iv. 6). Its Subjects are all believers, who are [*exempti*] freed from the tyranny of sin and of the law, and received by God on account of Christ as sons, through the grace of adoption (Gal. iii. 26). The chief End is the praise of the glorious grace of God (Ephes. i. 14); the subordinate End is the salvation of believers (Rom. vi. 22). The Effects or Fruits are two: The first serves for consolation (Heb. vi. 18–20). The other, for admonition, that ‘being made free from sin, we may become the servants of righteousness’ (Rom. vi. 18–22; 1 Pet. ii. 16).

V. But because this Liberty is opposed to the bondage which preceded it, we must on this account treat in the first place about that bondage, that [*ratio*] the design of this liberty may be the more easily rendered evident. We must know, that the first man was created free by God; but that, having abused his liberty, he lost it, and was made the slave of him to whom he yielded obedience, that is, to sin, both as it respects the guilt of condemnation and its dominion; which is real bondage and consummate misery. To this succeeded the economical bondage, [or that of the dispensation of Moses], which God introduced by the repetition of the Moral Law, and by the imposition of the Ceremonial. The bondage under the Moral Law was its rigid [*exactio*] demands, by which man, being reduced to despair of fulfilling it, might acknowledge the tyranny of sin [*dominantis*] which reigned or held dominion over him. The bondage under the Ceremonial Law was its [*obsignatio*] testifying to condemnation; by which man might be convinced of guilt, and thus [*per hanc et illam*] through both these kinds of bondage might flee to Christ, who could deliver him from the guilt of sin and from its dominion.

VI. Let us now see how believers are delivered from this bondage by Christian liberty. We will restrict this consideration to the church of the New Testament, to which the whole of this liberty belongs, omitting the believers under the Old Testament. Though to these likewise belonged, through the promise of the Blessed Seed and through faith in Him (Gen. iii. 15; xv. 6), a deliverance from real bondage, the privilege of the sons of God, and the Spirit of adoption, which was intermixed with the spirit of economical bondage. (Gal. iv. 1–3).

VII. We circumscribe Christian liberty within four ranks or degrees.

- The FIRST degree consists in a freedom from the guilt and condemnation of sin, which has been expiated by the blood of Christ, by faith in which we obtain remission of sins, and justification from those things from which we could not be absolved by the law of Moses.
- The SECOND degree consists in the deliverance from the dominion and tyranny of indwelling sin; because its power is mortified and weakened by the Spirit of Christ dwelling in us, that it may no longer have dominion over those who are under grace (Rom. vi. 14).

But both these degrees of Christian Liberty have their origin in this — that sin was condemned in the flesh of Christ, and it therefore does not possess the power either to condemn or to command (Rom. viii. 3).

- **VIII.** We place the THIRD degree in the attempering of that rigor by which God demanded the observance of the Moral Law in the primeval state, and could afterwards have demanded it, if it had been his pleasure still to act towards men in the same manner. Indeed, God did actually demand it, but in an economical way, from the people of the Old Testament; of which he gave manifest indications in that terrific legislation on Mount Sinai (Exod. xx. 18; Gal. iv. 24, 25). ‘But we are come unto Mount Sion, and to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant,’ whose ‘yoke is easy and his burden light’ (Isa. ii. 3; Micah iv. 2; Heb. xii. 18–24; Matt. xi. 30); because Christ has broken the yoke of exaction, and it has been the good pleasure of God to treat with man according to clemency in the compact of the New Testament.
- **IX.** We place the FOURTH degree in a freedom from the economical bondage of the ceremonial law, which had a fourfold respect under the Old Testament.
 1. For it was the seal of condemnation, and the hand-writing, or bond of our debt (Gal. iii. 21; Heb. x. 3, 4).
 2. It was a symbol and token, by which the Jews might be distinguished from all other nations till the advent of Christ (Gen. xvii. 13, 14).
 3. It was a typical shadowing forth of Christ, and a prefiguration of his benefits (Heb. ix. 9, 10; x. 1).
 4. Lastly, it resembled a sentinel or guard, a schoolmaster and tutor, by whom the church might be safely kept, in its state of infancy, under the elements of the world, in hopes of the promised and approaching Messiah, and might be led to faith in Him, and be conducted to Him, as St Paul teaches at the conclusion of the third chapter of his Epistle to the Galatians, and at the commencement of the fourth.

X. The FIRST of these Respects of the Ceremonial Law must have been removed, after the condemnation of sin was taken away, of which it was the seal. But we have already shewn in the seventh Thesis, that this condemnation has been abolished by Christ. The consequence, therefore is, that it has also obtained its end or purpose; as St Paul teaches us in Col. ii. 14, where he says, Christ has blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross.’ He sprinkled it over with his own blood and obliterated it. For the SECOND also of these respects, a place can no longer be found, since the Gentiles, ‘who were formerly far off, have been made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself, of twain, ONE NEW MAN, so making peace,’ etc. (Ephes. ii. 13–15). The THIRD respect consisted of types and shadows which prefigured Christ with his benefits. This can on no account continue after the body or substance itself has been already displayed (Col. ii. 17). And, lastly, the FOURTH respect, since the advent of Christ, is useless. For when the heir has arrived at the age of maturity, he no longer requires a governor, tutor and schoolmaster, but is himself capable of managing his inheritance, of being his own adviser, and of consulting his own judgment in the things to be possessed. Thus, after the church has passed through the years of infancy, and has entered on the age of maturity in

Christ, it is no longer held under the Mosaic worship, under the beggarly elements of this world,' but is subject to the guidance of the Spirit of Christ (Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 4–7).

Grievous, therefore, is the error of the Pharisees and the Ebionites, in which they maintained, that the observance of the ceremonial law must be joined to the gospel, even by those Christians who had previously been Gentiles.

XI. To this FOURTH degree of Christian Liberty we add, the free use and exercise of things indifferent. Yet it has been the will of God, that this liberty should be circumscribed by two laws, that of Charity and that of Faith (Rom. xiv. 5, 14; 13), thus consulting his own glory and the salvation of his church. The Law of Faith prescribes that you be rightly instructed concerning the legitimate use of things indifferent; and sufficiently confirmed [or 'fully persuaded in your own mind']. The Law of Charity commands you to procure the edification of your neighbour, whether he be a weak brother or one who is confirmed. You have examples in Romans 14; 1 Cor. 8; 9; x 27–33; Acts xvi. 3. It is a part of the same law, that you should abide by [*ritibus*] the ceremonies which are received in the church, lest by an outrageous and unseasonable change you produce a schism in the church, or be the cause of much trouble.

1. Those persons, therefore, err greatly who, in abstaining from this liberty, prefer their own private advantage and happiness to the edification of their neighbour.
2. They err still more grievously who abuse this liberty to satiate the lusts of the flesh (Gal. v. 13), or by an unseasonable zeal to despise and offend their weak brethren (Rom. xiv. 3, 10).
3. But those err the most grievously of all who either affix the observance of necessity to things indifferent, or suppose those things to be indifferent which are by no means such.

XII. To these, perhaps not without profit, we shall add a FIFTH degree of liberty, that is, an immunity from the judicial laws of the Jewish courts. On this subject we must hold, that the political laws of Moses contain,

1. The political common law of nature.
2. A particular law suited to the Jewish nation.

The common law of nature embraces the universal notions of justice, equity and honesty. The particular law, as it was peculiar to the Jewish nation, was so far defined by certain determinations, according to the persons for whose benefit it was confirmed, according to the affairs and transactions concerning which it was confirmed, and the circumstances with which it was confirmed. Hence a judgment ought to be formed of the immutability and mutability of these laws. Whatever has been appointed for the general good, according to the universal principles of nature and the common [*ratio*] design of the moral law, either by commanding or forbidding, by rewarding or punishing, it is immutable. Therefore, to such a thing Christian Liberty does not extend itself. What portion soever of the particular law has a particular respect, it is changeable. Christians, therefore, are not bound by these laws, so far as they are determined by a particular law after the manner of the Jewish Commonwealth, that is, of particular persons, actions, and of a particular

end or good. But with regard to those portions of these laws which are of a mixed kind, we must distinguish in them that which is moral from that which is political. Whatever is moral, is binding, and remains either by common reason or by analogy. Whatever is political, is not binding with regard to particular determinations.

Therefore, we disapprove of the ridiculous imitation adopted by Monetarius and Carolastadius, who obliged Christian magistrates to the necessity of observing the peculiar forensic laws of Moses in their administration of justice.

XIII. The privilege or right of the sons of God, and the sending of the spirit of adoption into the hearts of believers follow this liberty from the bondage of sin and the law, to which is annexed peace of conscience (Rom. viii. 15; Gal. iv. 5, 6). That right consists in their being constituted heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ; and to this privilege belongs not only the blessed immortality of their souls, but likewise the deliverance of their bodies from vanity, and from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God; which also comes under the name of adoption, and is called 'the redemption of our bodies' (Rom. viii. 15–23). Hence, likewise those who shall be 'the children of the resurrection,' are called 'the children of God' (Luke xx. 36). But the Spirit of adoption is sent into the hearts of the sons of God, as being the Spirit of the Son, that He may be the earnest, the seal, and the first-fruits of this inheritance (Gal. iv. 6; 2 Cor. i. 22; Ephes. i. 14); by which we are assured, that, as 'our life is hidden with Christ in God, when Christ shall gloriously appear we shall also be manifested with him in glory' (Col. iii. 4). And thus the liberty of glory, that will endure forever, will succeed to this liberty of grace, which we obtain in this world by Christ Jesus our Lord, through faith in his blood: To whom be praise forever!

In the place of a conclusion it is inquired,

1. *Whether freedom from the bondage of sin, and from economical bondage, be effected by one and the same act, or by two acts? We affirm the former.*
2. *Whether it is lawful to eat those things which are offered in sacrifice to idols? We make a distinction.*

21 Disputation XXI

ON THE ROMAN PONTIFF, AND THE PRINCIPAL TITLES WHICH ARE ATTRIBUTED TO HIM

Respondent: JOHN MARTINIUS

I. For many ages past, all who have had any knowledge of the Pope of Rome, have held no low or moderate sentiments about him, but have entertained exaggerated notions about him and uttered the most lofty and excessive eulogies. This was required by that sublime degree of dignity to which he has been elevated. Yet the things which have been spoken concerning him are so diverse, as well as adverse, as to render it matter of wonder that such various and contrary judgments and eulogies about one and the same person, can be found among men who are Christians, at least so far as their own profession is concerned. For some persons not only [*ornant sed onerant*] adorn, but literally load him with titles the most honourable, when they give him the appellation of *the spouse, the head, the foundation of the Catholic Church, the vicar of God and Christ on earth, the absolute lord of the whole Christian world with regard to spiritual things, in temporal things likewise, so far as they are ordained for spiritual things, and the Prince of Pastors and of Bishops*. Others disparage him with titles quite contrary, such as, *the adulterer and pimp of the Church, the false prophet, the destroyer and subverter of the Church, the enemy of God and the Antichrist, the wicked and perverse servant, who neither discharges the duties of a Bishop, nor is worthy to bear the name*. Uniting ourselves with the band of those who bestow on the Roman Pontiff the epithets last cited, we assert that he is unworthy of the honourable titles which precede them, and that the latter disparaging epithets are attributed to Him through his just deserts: Which we now proceed to prove in a few Theses.

II. The SPOUSE and HUSBAND of the Church Universal is one by [*singularissima*] a most particular unity, otherwise the church would be an adulteress. His properties are these: He has loved the church, has exposed or given himself for her, has purchased her for himself, with his own blood, has formed her of his own flesh and bones by the Spirit of regeneration, hath sanctified and cleansed her by his own blood and by his Spirit, that he might present her holy, unblamable and glorious (Ephes. v. 25–27; Acts xx. 28). He has sealed her for an espoused wife to himself by the earnest of his Spirit, as with a nuptial ring (2 Cor. i. 21, 22; Rom. viii. 9, 15, 16), and imparts to her his own blessings necessary and sufficient for life and salvation (Ephes. v. 23). To Him the church has respect, and asks, expects and receives all good things from Him alone (Acts iv. 12; Rev. xxii. 17). And to Him the apostles [and their successors] are preparing to present her as a chaste virgin to one Husband' (2 Cor. xi. 2). These properties belong to Christ alone: But the Roman

Pontiff is not Christ. Therefore, he is neither the spouse nor the husband of the Church Universal. Nor can any greater [*propinquitas*] affinity be framed between Christ and the Roman Pontiff, even when conducting himself in the best manner, than that which is signified by the word ‘the friend of the bridegroom,’ and ‘the brideman’ (John iii. 29).

III. The HEAD of the church is but one; otherwise the church would be a monster.¹ His properties are these: He is united to the church by the internal bond of the Spirit and of faith (John xvii. 15–17; 1 Cor. vi. 17, 19; Ephes. iii. 17). The church is subject and subordinate to Him (Ephes. v. 24, 25). He perfectly contains within himself all things necessary for the life and salvation of the church. He inspires life, sensation and motion into the church by the efficacy of the Spirit (Gal. ii. 20). He is affected with the evils which afflict the whole church and the members in general and in particular (Heb. iv. 15). He suffers the persecutions and afflictions which are endured by the church, feeling them as much as if they were inflicted on his own body, and He relieves them (Acts ix. 4, 5). In his person the church is raised up together, and seated together in heavenly places in Him (Ephes. ii. 6). And therefore, she has her πολιτευμα, ‘the administration of her public affairs,’ in heaven (Phil. iii. 20). All these properties agree with Christ only. But the Roman Pontiff is not Christ; and therefore, he is neither the Head of the church, nor can any affinity be established between Christ, and the Roman Pontiff, which is not signified in the name of some particular member of the body, or of a duty belonging to some member (Rom. xii. 4–8). And no greater dignity can belong to the Pope of Rome, under Christ the Head, than that which is comprehended under the words, an *apostle, prophet, evangelist, teacher, pastor, bishop*, [one who can exercise] *the power* [of working miracles], *the gift of healing, help and government* (1 Cor. xii. 4, 6–31). All these dignities are ascribed to the members of the body of the church. Therefore, on account of none of them does the title of ‘Head’ appertain to this Pontiff.

IV. The FOUNDATION of the Church Universal is only one, because there is but one house of God and Christ. Its properties are these: It stands by its own power, and does not rest on any extrinsic foundation (1 Tim. iii. 15). The whole house, consisting of two people, the Jews and the Gentiles, is built upon this Foundation, as upon a Chief Corner-stone, and is sustained, by the power implanted in it, against all things which can assail it from without, whether from above or from below, on its sides, on the right hand and on the left; it continues immovable, does not totter, is not sunk or overwhelmed, and does not fall (Heb. iii. 6; Ephes. ii. 20–22; Matt. xvi. 18). This Foundation is the immediate fulcrum or prop and firm support to all the lively stones that are built upon it; ‘they who believe on Him shall not be ashamed;’ but it is a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense to those who do not believe and are disobedient; it dashes them in pieces, and they perish (Isa. xxviii. 16; 1 Pet. ii. 4–6). All these properties, both generally and severally, belong to Christ alone. But the Roman Pontiff is not Christ. Therefore, neither is he the foundation of the church. But the Metonymy, by which the Prophets and Apostles are called ‘the foundations of the church’ (Rev. xxi. 14), and by which the saints are said to be ‘built upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets’ (Ephes. ii. 20), attributes nothing more to them, than their being ‘labourers together with God’ in laying down

¹Extrav. de Major. et Obedientiâ (Tit. 8)

Christ as this Foundation, and in building up the whole house on Him (1 Cor. iii. 5–12). But St Peter was also among these; yet he excelled none of the other Apostles in any prerogative, but was inferior to St Paul, not indeed in power, but in ‘the more abundant labour’ of the latter in building up the church (1 Cor. xv. 10).

V. God’s VICAR-GENERAL, or Universal, is one who administers all things in heaven and on earth in the name, at the command, and by the authority of God. To this individual must necessarily appertain,

1. A POWER, inferior indeed, by reason of the dispensation, to his who appointed him, yet most closely approaching to it, and dependent on no other power than that of God (John v. 22, 26, 27). So that this power may, not undeservedly, be called *autocratorical*, possessing within itself absolute sovereignty, and *pantocratorical*, omnipotent or having power over all things (John xvii. 2, 24).
2. The KNOWLEDGE, as well as the [*potentia*] CAPABILITY necessary to administer all things. It cannot be less than Divine; for it must be extended to all things generally, and to every thing in particular, and this in an immediate manner if we consider the internal efficacy of government (1 Cor. xv. 27; Rev. 2 and 3; Phil. iii. 21; Gal. ii. 20).

And this Vicar of God is only Christ, to whom alone these properties belong. But the Roman Pontiff is not Christ. Therefore, he is not God’s Universal Vicar, not even in the church, because the same [*ratio*] considerations, apply to her as to the whole universe. In the same way, the Universal Vicar of Christ will be one who pleads the cause of Christ, and who, with a Power and Wisdom purely Divine administers all things in His name and by his authority (John i. 6–8, 13–15). And this is the Spirit of Christ, his Advocate, the Spirit of Wisdom and of the Power of God, who, in the name of Christ, appoints apostles, prophets, teachers, and bishops; who leads and governs believers, but who convinces and condemns unbelievers (Acts xx. 28; xiii. 2; Rom. viii. 14). The Roman Pontiff is not that Spirit, nor hath he received the Spirit without measure (Rom. xii. 3). Neither can the Roman Pontiff, even when his conduct is most exemplary, have any other delegated power under Christ, than that which is particular; because he is not endued with the Spirit, except ‘according to the measure of the gift of Christ’ (Ephes. iv. 7). And this is bestowed [on the Pontiff] not with regard to Christ as a Priest, (for that office does not admit of a Vicar, or Substitute), but as he is King and Prophet supreme, and only so far as concerns the external administration of some part of Christ’s kingdom and people, either by doctrine or by government, the internal administration in the mean time remaining entirely vested in Christ, as does also his Spirit (1 Cor. iii. 5–23).

VI. The DOMINION OVER HEAVEN AND EARTH, or over the whole church, (for these cannot be separated), appertains by Divine gift to Him alone who has said, ‘All things are delivered unto me of my Father’ (Matt. xi. 27). ‘All things which the Father hath, are mine’ (John xvii. 10). ‘All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth: Go ye therefore, and teach all nations’ (Matt. xxviii. 18). ‘As thou hast given Him power over all flesh, that He should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given Him’ (John xvii. 2). ‘Whom God hath set at his own right hand in the heavens, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in

that which is to come' (Ephes. i. 21). Who is called the beginning,' or the principle, 'the first-born from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence' (Col. i. 18). In whom the church is 'complete; who is the head of all principality and power' (Col. ii. 10). 'On whose vesture and thigh a name is written KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS' (Rev. xix. 16). Christ alone is thus described. But the Roman Pontiff is not Christ. The distinction of *plenary power, with regard to spiritual, and temporal*, is contrary both to plenitude of power and to the subordination of things spiritual and temporal; and has been fabricated on account of the defect of the capability of which the pontiff is destitute, to subject temporal things to himself, even among those nations over whom he has obtained the power in spiritual matters.

VII. The PRINCE of Bishops, Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, and Teachers, is one (1 Cor. xii. 4, 5, etc.). If it were otherwise, there would be more than a single monarch and dictator in the Church, when only one is requisite in a monarchical state and government; but then *Duumviri*, two governors, would hold the pre-eminence. His properties are these:

- To institute, sanctify, and set apart to the work of the ministry, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, and all bishops in the church (Ephes. iv. 5, 6, 11–13).
- To prescribe to them what they must say and do (Matt. xxviii. 18–20).
- To furnish them with necessary and sufficient gifts (Rom. xii. 3; 2 Cor. iii. 5, 6).
- To be present with them, in the power of his Spirit and grace, while engaged in the discharge of their functions (Matt. xxviii. 20).
- To give efficacy to their ministrations (Mark xvi. 20; 1 Cor. iii. 6).
- To compel them to render an account.
- To make a distinction between the acts and omissions of each; and, according to the different mode of their administrations, to adjudge rewards or punishments (1 Pet. v. 4; Matt. xxv. 19–30).

And these properties belong to Christ alone. But the Roman Pontiff is not Christ. Therefore, he is not the Prince of bishops; but if he have any claim to this office, even when he behaves himself in his best manner, he cannot be called by any other name than that of a Bishop, Pastor, or Teacher, who ought to acknowledge all Bishops as his [*sympresbyteris*] fellow elders, without any disparity of the power which belongs to the essence of the office (1 Pet. v. 1).

VIII.

- Since, therefore, the Roman Pontiff either attributes these most honourable titles of Christ to himself, or willingly suffers them to be ascribed to him;
- and since he evinces no horror at the blasphemy contained in these titles, and gives no tokens of his displeasure at this ascription of them;

it follows, that he puts himself in the place of Christ, and is supremely opposed to Him. There is no excuse in the explanation which is given, that 'the head and foundation is

ministerial, and that he attributes all these things to himself under Christ, as having been elevated by the grace or favour of God and Christ to that dignity.' For the protestation is directly contrary to the fact; and he is so much the more the bitter enemy of God and Christ, as he the more confidently boasts of being defended by the authority of God and Christ. Such conduct is, in fact, under the semblance of friendship to exercise the deepest enmity, and, under the disguised pretext of a minister of light and of righteousness, to promote the interests of the kingdom of darkness and of unrighteousness. On this very account, therefore, we assert that the disparaging epithets which we laid down in our first Thesis, most justly belong to him; and this we now proceed to show by descending to particulars.

IX. First. The name of the ADULTERER AND THE PIMP OF THE CHURCH is his.

1. He is the ADULTERER of the church, both *by the public and mutual profession of each other*;
 - because he calls the [Roman Catholic] Church his 'Spouse,' and she neither disowns the arrogance of this title nor is afraid of the odium [attached to such assumption],
 - and he is the adulterer *in reality*.

For he practices spiritual adultery with the church, and she in return with him. He commands the apocryphal writings to be accounted divine and canonical; the ancient Latin version of the Scriptures, [commonly called] *the Vulgate*, to be every where received as [*authenticâ*] the true original, and under no pretense whatever to be rejected; his own interpretations of the Scriptures to be embraced with the most undoubting faith; and unwritten traditions to be honoured with an affection and reverence equal to that evinced for the written word of God. He enacts and rescinds laws that pertain to faith and morals, and binds them as fetters on consciences. He promises and offers plenary indulgences, and the remission of all sins, through the plenitude of his power. 'He exalteth himself above all that is worshipped,' and [*proponit*] offers himself as some God to be adored with religious worship. In all these acts the church, deceived by his artifices, complies with his wishes. He is, therefore, the ADULTERER of the church.

2. But he is also the PIMP or PANDER of the church, because he acts towards her as the author, persuader, impelling exciter and procurer of various spiritual adulteries committed, or to be hereafter committed, with different husbands,
 - with angels, Mary and other deceased saints,
 - with images of God, of Christ, of the Holy Ghost, of the cross, of angels, of Mary, and of Saints;
 - with the bread in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper;

and with other inanimate objects.

X. To him likewise belongs the name of THE FALSE PROPHET, whom the Scripture calls ‘the tail,’ in opposition to ‘the head’ (Isa. ix. 15); and this, whether it be received in a general acceptation, or in a particular sense and restricted to a certain and determinate person.

1. In its *general* meaning, whether it signifies him who teaches falsehood without arrogating to himself the name of a Prophet, or him who falsely boasts of being a prophet, the latter of which seems to be the proper signification of the word (2 Pet. ii. 1; Acts xiii. 6).

- For, FIRST, he partly introduced into the church many false dogmas; and partly those which were introduced when such a great mystery of iniquity was finished, he defends, maintains and propagates. Of this kind, the dogmas concerning the insufficiency of the scriptures without traditions, to prove and confirm ever necessary truth, and to confute all errors; that it is of the last necessity unto salvation for every human creature to be under subjection to the Roman Pontiff; that the bread in the Lord’s Supper is transubstantiated, or changed in substance, into the body of Christ; that in the Mass Christ is daily offered by the Priest as a propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the living and of the dead; that man is justified before God, partly by faith, and partly by works; that there is a Purgatory, into which the souls of those enter who are not yet sufficiently purified, and that they are released from it by prayers, [*suffragiis*] intercessions, watchings, alms-deeds, indulgences, etc.
- In the SECOND sense, this epithet is due to him, because he says that he is a prophet, who, on account of the perpetual assistance of the Holy Spirit, which is [*affixam*] attached to that Chair, cannot possibly err in things which pertain to faith and morals.

2. But it also belongs to him in the *restricted* meaning of the word; because the Roman pontiff is ‘the false prophet who works miracles before the beast (Rev. xix. 20), ‘out of whose mouth comes out three unclean spirits like frogs’ (xvi. 13), and who is not improperly understood to be ‘the tail of the great red dragon, that drew the third part of the stars of heaven’ (xii. 4).

XI. He is also deservedly called THE DESTROYER AND SUBVERTER OF THE CHURCH. For since the superstructure of the church ‘is built by the faith of the doctrine of the Apostles and Prophets, which rests on Jesus Christ himself, the Chief Corner-stone,’ since it likewise increases more and more through the obedience of faith in the right worship of the Deity and in the pursuit after holiness; and since it is built up in the Lord, being fitly framed together into one body through the bond of peace and concord (Ephes. ii. 20, 21; iv. 3; 2 Pet. ii. 5, 6); the Roman Pontiff demonstrates himself to be, in a four-fold manner, the subverter of this edifice:

- FIRST, *By perverting the faith.* This he effects,
 1. By adding the books of the apocrypha and unwritten traditions to the prophetic and apostolical scriptures.

2. By joining himself, as another foundation, with Christ who is the only Foundation.
 3. By mixing numerous false dogmas with those which are true.
 4. By taking away some things that are true, or corrupting them by false interpretations.
- SECONDLY, *By adulterating* [sinceritatem] *the integrity of Divine worship*. This he does,
 1. By an addition to the Persons who alone, according to God and his command, are to be objects of worship.
 2. By the introduction of a method which is expressly forbidden by God.
 3. By introducing vain, ridiculous and old wives' superstitions.
 4. By the institution of various peculiar societies of devotees, separate fraternities, and newly fabricated religious orders of Francis, Dominic, etc.
 - THIRDLY, *By vitiating* [integritatem] *the purity or soundness of holiness and morals*. This he accomplishes chiefly by the following acts:
 1. By inventing easy methods of obtaining remission of sins and plenary indulgences.
 2. By [*indigitando*] declaring certain precepts in the name of councils.
 3. By absolving many persons from the obligation of their duties.
 4. By binding men to [the performance of] those things, which no one whatever is capable of understanding or accomplishing.
 5. By bringing into the Christian world the worst examples of all wickedness.
 - FOURTHLY, *By breaking the bond of concord and unity*. This he effects chiefly by these acts and artifices,
 1. When he arrogates to himself a power over others, which by no right belongs to him.
 2. When he obtrudes many false dogmas to be believed as true, and unnecessary things as absolutely necessary.
 3. By excommunications and senseless fulminations, by which he madly rages against those who have not deserved such treatment, and who are not subject to his diocese.
 4. When he excites dissensions between princes, republics and magistrates and their subjects; or when he foments, increases and perpetuates such dissensions, after they have been raised in other quarters.

XII. It is demonstrable by the most evident arguments that the name of ANTICHRIST and of THE ADVERSARY OF GOD belongs to him. For the apostle ascribes the second of these epithets to him when he calls him ‘the man of sin, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called GOD, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God’ (2 Thess. ii. 3–8). It was he who should arise out of the ruins of the Roman empire, and should occupy its vacant digaity. These expressions, we assert, must be understood, and can be understood, solely respecting the Roman Pontiff. But the name of ‘THE ANTICHRIST’ belongs to him pre-eminently,

- whether the particle $\alpha\nu\tau\iota$ signifies *opposition*,
- or *the substitution of one thing for another*;

not indeed such a substitution as is lawfully and legitimately made by Him who has the power of placing things in subordination, but it signifies one by which any man is substituted, either by himself or by another person through force and fraud. For he is both a rival to Christ, and his adversary, when he boasts of himself as the spouse, the head, and the foundation of the church, endowed with plenitude of power; and yet he professes himself to be the vicegerent of Christ, and to perform his functions on earth, for the sake of his own private advantage, but to the manifest injury of the church of Christ. He has, however, considered it necessary to employ the name of Christ as a pretext, that under this sacred name he may obtain that reverence for himself among Christians, which he would be unable to procure if he were openly to profess himself to be either the Christ, or the adversary of Christ.

XIII. Although the Roman Pontiff calls himself ‘the servant of the servants of God,’ yet we further assert that he is by way of eminence, THAT WICKED AND PERVERSE SERVANT, who, when he saw that his Lord delayed his coming, ‘began to smite his fellow-servants’ (Matt. xxiv. 49). For the Roman Pontiff has usurped domination and tyranny, not only over his fellow-servants, the Bishops of the church of God, but likewise over Emperors and Kings themselves, whose authority and dignity he had himself previously acknowledged. To acquire this domination for himself, and still further to augment and establish it, he has employed all kinds of Satanic instruments — sophistical hypocrisy, lies, equivocations, perfidy, perjury, violence, poison, and armed forces — so that he may most justly be said to have succeeded that formidable Beast which ‘was like unto a leopard, a bear and a lion,’ and by which the Roman empire [*significatum*] was prefigured — and to have ‘had power to give life unto the image of the Beast, and to cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast, should be killed.’

XIV. Lastly, though from all these remarks it will readily appear that the Roman Pontiff is unworthy of the name of *Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Pastor, Teacher*, and of *Universal Bishop* (1 Cor. iii. 5; xii. 28; Ephes. iv. 11); yet, by this single argument, which is deduced from their peculiar attributes and duties, the very same satisfactory conclusions may be rendered evident to all who search the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament, and especially the epistles of St Paul to Timothy and Titus (1 Tim. 3; Tit. 1). Nor will this evasion avail any thing, ‘that whatever a man does through another who is his vicar or

substitute, he seems to do it himself;’ for it is Christ alone who makes use of the vicarious aid of these persons as ministers; and the duties which they perform, are such as ought to be discharged by those who are distinguished by those titles (Gal. i. 7–9). Therefore, that rightly appertains to the Roman Pontiff which God threatens through the prophet Zechariah, that he will raise up a foolish shepherd, and an idol shepherd, who shall devote no attention to the sheep, but who ‘shall eat the flesh of the fat, and tear their claws in pieces’ (Zech. xi. 15–17). God grant that the church, being delivered from the frauds and tyranny of Antichrist, may obtain shepherds that may feed her in truth, charity and prudence, to the salvation of the sheep themselves, and to the glory of the chief Shepherd. AMEN.

COROLLARIES

1. It is a part of religious wisdom to separate the Court of Rome from the church, in which the Pontiff sits.
2. The Roman Pontiff, even when conducting himself with the greatest propriety, must not be acknowledged by any human or positive right as the head of the church, or the Universal Bishop; and such acknowledgment of him has hitherto contributed, and does in its very nature contribute, not so much to preserve unity in the church, and to restrain the license of thinking, speaking and teaching differently on the chief articles of religion, as to take away necessary liberty, and that which is agreeable to the word of God, and to introduce a real tyranny.

22 Disputation XXII

THE CASE OF ALL THE PROTESTANT OR REFORMED CHURCHES, WITH RESPECT TO
THEIR ALLEGED SECESSION

Respondent: JAMES CUSINE

We ASSERT that the Reformed Churches have not seceded from the Church of Rome; and that they have acted properly in refusing to hold and profess a communion of faith and of divine worship with her.

I. I feel disposed to prove, in few words, for the glory of God, for the tranquillity of weak consciences, and for the direction of erring minds — that those congregations who take upon themselves the title of ‘REFORMED OR PROTESTANT CHURCHES,’ have not made a secession from the Church of Rome, and that they have acted aright, that is, wisely, piously, justly, and moderately, in refusing to hold and profess communion of faith and worship with the Romish Church.

II. By the term, ‘the Church of Rome,’ we understand,

- not that congregation of men, who, confined within the walls of the city of Rome, profess the Christian faith, (although this is the only proper interpretation of that term);
- not the Court of Rome, which consists of the Pope and of the Cardinals united with him;
- not the representative church, assembled together in council, and having the Roman Pontiff as President,
- nor the Pope of Rome himself, who, under the cover of that title, extols and makes merchandise of his power.

But by ‘the church of Rome’ we understand a congregation of Christian, which was formerly dispersed through nearly the whole of Europe, but which is now become more contracted, and in which the Roman Pontiff sits,

- either as the head of the church under Christ, but placed above a General Council,
- or as the principal Bishop inferior to a General Council, the inspector and guardian of the whole church.

This congregation professes, according to the Canons contained in the Council of Trent, that it believes in God and Christ, and performs acts of worship to them; and it approves of those Canons,

- either because they were composed by the Council of Trent, which could not err
- or because it thinks that they are agreeable to the Holy Scriptures and to the doctrine of the Ancient Fathers, without any regard to that Council.

III. We call ‘Reformed Churches’ those congregations professing the Christian Faith which disavow every species of Presidency whatever, assumed by the Roman Pontiff, and profess to believe in and to perform acts of worship to God and Christ, according to the Canons which each of them has comprised in its own Confession or Catechism; and they approve of such Canons, therefore, only because they consider them to be agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, though they yield to the Primitive Church and the Ancient Fathers severally their proper places, but always in subordination to the Scriptures.

IV. It cannot be said, that every church makes a secession, which separates from another, neither does the church that is *in any manner whatever* severed from another, to which it had been united; but a church is said to make a secession from another church to which it was formerly united, *when it first and willingly makes a separation in that matter about which they were previously at unity.* On this account it is necessary, that these four conditions concur together in the church which can justly be said to have made a secession. One of them is a *prerequisite*, as if necessarily precedent; the other three are *requisites*, as if natural to the secession and grounded upon it.

- The FIRST is that *it was formerly in union with the other*; to which must be added, an explanation of the matter in which this union consists.
- The SECOND is, that *a separation has been effected*, and indeed in that thing about which it was formerly at unity with the other.
- The THIRD is, that *it was the first to make the secession.*
- And the FOURTH is, that *it voluntarily seceded.*

The whole of these conditions will come under our diligent consideration in the disputation on the present controversy about the dissension between the Church of Rome and Reformed Churches.

V. But the explanation of another matter must be given, prior to the discussion of this question according to the circumstances now premised; and this is, ‘In what generally, do the union and the separation of churches consist?’ So far as they are the churches of God and of Christ, their UNION consists in the following particulars: they have one God and Father, one Lord Jesus Christ, one faith, (or one doctrine of faith), one hope of their calling, (that is, an inheritance which has been promised and for which they hope), one baptism (Ephes. iv. 3–6), one bread and wine (1 Cor. x. 16, 17), and have been joined together in one Spirit with God and Christ, by the bond of faith and charity (Ephes. iv. 15; Phil. ii. 2). That is, that by agreement of faith according to truth, and by concord of the

will according to charity, they may be one among themselves. This is in no other manner, than as many members of the same body are one among themselves, because all of them have been united with their head, from which, by the bond of the Spirit, life, sensation and motion are derived to each (Rom. xii. 4; 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13; Ephes. i. 22); and as many children in the same family are one among themselves, because all of them are connected with their parents by the bond of consanguinity and love (1 Cor. xiv. 33; Rev. ii. 23). For all particular churches, whether in amplitude they be greater or less, are large or small members of that great body which is called ‘the Catholic Church;’ and in this great family, which is called ‘the house of God,’ they are all sisters, according to that passage in *Solomon’s Song*, ‘We have a little sister’ (viii. 8). No church on earth is the mother of any other church (Gal. iv. 26), not even that church from which proceeded the teachers who founded other churches (Acts viii. 1, 4; xiii. 1, 2). For no church on earth is the whole body, that is united to Christ the Head (Heb. xii. 22, 23).

VI. From this description of union among churches, and by an explanation made through similar things according to the Scriptures, it is evident, that, for the purpose of binding churches together, the intervention of two means is necessary. The FIRST is, *the bond itself by which they are united.* The SECOND is, *God and Christ,* with whom being *immediately* united, they are *mediately* further united with each other. For the first and *immediate* relation is between each particular church and Christ. The second and *mediate* is between a particular church and another of its own kindred (1 Cor. xii. 12, 13; Ephes. iv. 3; Rom. xii. 5; John xvii. 21; Ephes. ii. 11 13; iv. 16). From these a two-fold order may be laid down, according to which this conjunction may be considered.

1. ONE is, — if it take its commencement from Christ, and if that bond intervene, which, issuing from Him, proceeds to every church and [*adunat*, makes it one], unites it with Him. Where
 - a) Christ must be constituted the Head and the very Centre of union.
 - b) The Spirit, which, issuing from Christ, proceeds hither and thither (Ephes. ii. 18; v. 23; Rom. viii. 9).
 - c) The church of Corinth, at Rome, at Philippi, etc., each of which is united to Christ, by the Spirit that goes forth from Him and proceeds towards the churches, and that abides in them (1 John iii. 24; iv. 13).
2. The OTHER order is, — if it take its commencement from the churches, and if that bond intervene which, issuing from them, proceeds to Christ, and binds them to Him. Where
 - a) must be placed the churches of Corinth, of Rome, of Philippi, etc.
 - b) Then may be laid down the faith proceeding from each of them.
 - c) Christ, to whom the faith of all these churches tends and connects each of them with Him (1 John ii. 24; Ephes. iii. 17).

Because the bond of charity is mutual, it proceeds from Christ to each church, and from every church to Christ (Ephes. v. 25). It does not, however, remain there, but goes on to each kindred church; yet so that every church loves her sister church in Christ and for his

sake, otherwise it is a confederacy without Christ, or rather against Christ (1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2, 19).

VII. From the relation of this Union, must be estimated the SEPARATION which is opposed to it, and which cannot be made or explained except by an analysis and resolution of their uniting together. Every particular church therefore must be separated from God and Christ before it can be separated from the church which is allied to it and of the same body (Ephes. ii. 10, 19–22); and the bond of faith and charity must be broken before any church can be separated from God and Christ, and thus from any other church (Rom. xi. 17–24). But since the Spirit of Christ, the faith by which we believe, and charity, are invisible things which belong to the very inward union and communion of Christ and the churches, it is impossible for men to form any estimate or judgment from them, respecting the union or separation of churches. On this account it is necessary, that certain external things, [*incurrentia in sensus*] which are objects of the senses, and which by a certain analogy answer to those inward things, should be placed before men, that we may be able to form a judgment concerning the union of the churches with Christ and among each other, and about their opposite separation. Those external things are the word, and the visible signs annexed to the word, by which Christ has communication with his church; the profession of faith and of worship, and the exercise of charity by outward works, by which each church testifies its individual union and communion with Christ and with any other church (Isa. xxx. 21; Rom. x. 15, 17, 10, 13; John xiii. 35). To this is opposed its separation, consisting in this, that Christ ‘removes its candlestick out of his place,’ and the churches vary among themselves in the profession of the faith, omit the requisite duties of charity, and evince and practice hatred towards each other (Rev. ii. 5; 2 Chron. xiii. 8, 2, 10).

VIII. But the churches of God and Christ, even those which were instituted by Prophets and Apostles, may decline by degrees, and sometimes do decline, from the truth of the faith, from the integrity of divine worship, and from their first love (2 Cor. xi. 3; Gal. i. 6; Rev. ii. 4),

- either by adding to the doctrines of faith, to that which is the object of worship, and to the modes and rites with which it is worshipped;
- or by taking away or by perverting the right [*sensum*] meaning of faith, by not considering in a lawful manner that which is worshipped, and by changing the legitimate mode of worship into another form:

And yet they are still acknowledged, by God and Christ, as God’s churches and people, even at the very time when they worship Jehovah in calves, when they pay divine honours both to Jehovah and to Baal, when they offer to Moloch through the fire the children whom they had borne and reared for Jehovah (Jer. ii. 11–13; 2 Kings xvi. 3; 1 Kings xviii. 21; Ezek. xvi. 20), and when they suffer legal ceremonies to be appended to the faith of Christ, and the resurrection to be called in question (Gal. iii. 1–3; 6; 1 Cor. xv.). Even under these circumstances they are acknowledged as the churches and the people of God, according to external communion by the word and the sacramental signs or tokens, because God does not yet remove the candlestick out of its place, or send them a bill of

divorcement (Rev. ii. 5; Isa. i. 1). Hence it arises that the Union between such churches, as have something still left of God and Christ and something of the spirit of lies and idolatry, is two-fold: THE ONE, in regard to those things which they have yet remaining from the first institution which was made by the prophets and apostles: THE OTHER, with respect to those things which have been afterwards introduced by false teachers and false prophets, and especially by that notorious false prophet, ‘the man of sin, the son of perdition.’ For though ‘their word eats as doth a canker’ (2 Tim. ii. 17), yet the goodness and grace of God have prevented it from consuming [*integram*] the whole pure doctrine of the Christian faith. On the other side, its corresponding SEPARATION is as fully opposed to this last mentioned union, as the former union is opposed to its separation. When therefore the discourse turns on the separation of churches, we ought diligently to consider what thing it is about which the separation has been made.

IX. These things having been thus affirmatively premised, let us now come to the hypothesis of our question, according to the conditions which we said must necessarily be ascribed to the church that may justly be said to have made a secession from another. With regard to the FIRST, which we have said was required as necessarily precedent, we own, that the churches which are now distinguished by the title of ‘the Reformed,’ were, prior to that Reformation, one with the Church of Rome, and had with her communion of faith and of worship, and of the offices of charity; nay, that they constituted a part of that church, as she has been defined in the second Thesis of this Disputation. But we distinctly and expressly add two particulars.

1. That this union and communion is as that between equals, collaterals, sisters and members (Sol. Song viii. 8; 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13, 17); and not as the union which subsists between inferiors and a superior, between sons and their mother, between members and their head: that is, as they speak in the Schools of Philosophy, the relation between them was that of *equiparancy*, in which one of the things related is not more the foundation than the other, and therefore the obligation on both sides is equal; yet the Roman Pontiff, seated in the Chair which he calls *apostolical*, and which he says is at Rome, affirms the church of Rome to be the mother and head of the rest of the churches.
2. That this union and communion is partly according to those things which belong to God and Christ, and partly according to those things which appertain to the defection or ‘falling away’ predicted by the apostle as about to come: for ‘the son of perdition’ is said to be ‘sitting in the temple of God’ (2 Thess. ii. 2–4).

As far therefore as the doctrine of the true faith sounded in these churches, and as far as God and Christ were worshipped, and the offices of charity were legitimately exercised, so far were they ONE CHURCH of Christ, who patiently bore with them and invited them to repentance (Rev. ii. 20, 21). But as far as the faith has been interpolated with various additions and distorted interpretations, and as far as the Divine worship has been depraved by different idolatries and superstitions, and the tokens of benevolence have been exhibited in [*communicatione*] partaking of the parts offered to idols, so far has the union been according to the spirit of defection and the communion of iniquity (Rev. ii. 14, 20).

X. With regard to what belongs to the separation of the Reformed Churches from that of Rome, we must discuss it in two ways; because, as we have already seen (Thesis VIII), the separation of churches is usually made both with respect to faith and worship, and with respect to charity. These separations are considered to be thus far distinguished, by the churches themselves; so that the church which is separated in reference to faith and worship, is called *heretical* and *idolatrous*; and that which is separated in reference to charity, is called *schismatical*. The first part of the question therefore will be this: ‘Have the churches which are now called *the Reformed*, made a secession with regard to faith and worship?’ Respect being had to the SECOND condition (Thesis IV), we reply, We confess that a secession has been made with regard to faith and worship. For the fact itself testifies, that they differ [from the church of Rome] in many doctrines relating to faith, and that they differ in divine worship. But the Reformed deny, that they differ from the Romish church according to those articles of faith which she yet holds through apostolical tradition, or according to [that part of] worship which, being divinely prescribed, the church of Rome yet uses. Of this, proof is afforded in the following brief manner.

1. For, [*praeteram quod*] in addition to her laying down the word of God as the only rule of the truth, she professes to approve, in the true and correct sense, of the Articles of Belief contained in *the Apostles’ Creed*, as those articles have been explained by the first four General Councils; she likewise professes to esteem as certain and ratified those things which the Ancient Church decreed against Pelagius.
2. Because she worships God and Christ in spirit and truth, by that method, and with those rites, which have been prescribed in the word of God. She, therefore, confesses that the separation has been made in those things which the Church of Rome holds, not as she is the *Church of Christ*, but as she is the *Romish and Popish Church*; but that the union remains in those things of Christ which she still retains.

XI. With regard to the THIRD condition (Thesis IV), the Reformed Churches deny, that they were the first to make the secession. That this may be properly understood, since a separation consists in a variation of faith and worship, they say that the commencement of such variation may be dated from two periods.

1. Either from the time nearest to the Apostles, nay at a period which came within the age of the Apostles, when the mystery $\alpha\nu\omicron\mu\iota\alpha\varsigma$, that is. of iniquity, or rather, (if leave may be granted to invent a word still more significant), when ‘the mystery of *lawlessness* began to work,’ which mystery was subsequently revealed, and which lawlessness was afterwards openly produced by ‘that man of sin, the son of perdition,’ who is on this very account called $\alpha\nu\omicron\mu\omicron\varsigma$, ‘that wicked,’ or ‘that lawless one,’ and is said to be ‘revealed’ (2 Thess. ii. 3–8). The Reformed say, that the personage thus described is the Roman Pontiff.
 2. Or the commencement of this variation may be dated from the days of Wickliffe, Huss, Luther, Melancthon, Zuinglius, OEcolampadius, Bucer and Calvin, when many congregations of men in various parts of Europe began, at first secretly, but afterwards openly, to recede from the Roman Pontiff.
- The Reformed say, that the commencement of the detection and secession must be dated from the former of these two periods; and they confess and lament, that

they were themselves, in conjunction with the modern church of Rome, guilty of a defection from [*sinceritate*] the purity of the Apostolic and the Roman faith, which the Apostle Paul commended in the ancient church of Rome that existed in his days.

- The Papists say that the commencement of the defection and secession must be dated from the latter period, [the days of Huss, Luther, etc], and affirm that they are not to be accounted guilty of any defection.

XII. This is the hinge of the entire controversy. Here, therefore, we must make our stand. If the Reformed Churches place the beginning of the defection at the true point, then their separation from the modern church of Rome is not a secession from the church of Christ, but it is the termination and completion of a separation formerly made, and merely a return and conversion to the true and pure faith, and to the sincere worship of God, that is, a return to God and Christ, and to the primitive and truly apostolical church, nay to the ancient church of Rome itself. But, on the other hand, if the beginning of the defection be correctly placed by the Papists, then the Reformed churches have really made a secession from the Romish church, and indeed from that church which still continues in the purity of the Christian Religion. But the difference consists principally in this,

- that the Romish church is said to have added falsehoods to the truth,
- and the Reformed churches are said, by the opposite party, to have detracted from the truth:

This controversy, therefore, is of such a nature, that the burden of proof lies with the church of Rome as affirming, that those things of her own which she has added are true. Yet the Reformed churches will not decline the province of proof, if the Romish church will permit the matter to be discussed and decided from the pure Scriptures alone. Because the church of Rome does not consent to this, but produces another unwritten word of God, she thus again imposes on herself the necessity of proving, not only [*quod sit aliquod*] that there is some unwritten word of God, but also that what she produces is the real word of God.

XIII. Lastly, the Reformed churches say, what is contained in the Fourth condition (Thesis IV), that they did not secede voluntarily, that is, they did not secede at their own instigation, motion, or choice, but with lingering sorrow and regret; and they ascribe *the cause* [of this secession] to God, and throw *the blame* of it upon the church of Rome herself, or first on the court of Rome and the Pontiff, and then on the Romish church so far as she listens to the Pontiff and the court of Rome, and is ready to perform any services for them.

1. They attribute *the cause* of this secession to God; because He has commanded his people to depart out of Babylon, the mother of fornications, and to keep themselves from idols (Rev. xviii. 4; 1 John v. 21).
2. They throw *the blame* of it on the COURT or CHURCH OF ROME, which in three ways drove away the Protestant Churches from her communion.

- a) By her mixture of deadly poison in the cup of religion (Rev. xvii. 4), from which she administered those dogmas that relate to faith and to the worship of God. This mixture was accompanied by a double command: *The First*, a prohibitive command, that no person should draw any of the waters of the saviour from the pure fountains of Israel: *The Second*, a preceptive, that all men should drink out of this her cup of abominations (Rev. xiii. 15–17).
- b) By excommunication and anathemas: By the former she excluded from her communion as many persons as refused to drink the deadly poison out of the cup which she had filled with this mixture. By the latter, she devoted them to all kinds of curses and execrations, and exposed them for plunder and destruction to the maddening fury of her own satellites.
- c) Not only by instituting tyranny and various persecutions, but also by exercising them against those who were unwilling to defile their consciences by that shameful abomination (Rev. xvii. 6).

But with what lingering sorrow and regret they have departed, or, rather, have suffered themselves to be driven away, they say, they have declared by three most manifest tokens:

1. By serious admonitions proposed both verbally and in writing, in which they have shewn the necessity of the Reformation, and the method and means of it to be a Free Ecclesiastical Council.
2. By prayers and supplications, which they have employed in earnest intreaties for such an assembly, for this purpose at least — that a serious and general inquiry should be made, Whether some kind of abuses and of corruption had not crept into the church, and Whether they might not be corrected wherever they were discovered.
3. By the continued patience with which they have endured every description of tyranny, that has been exercised against them.

After all this, the only result has been that the existing corruptions and abuses are confirmed and fully established by the plenary authority of the Pope and of the Court of Rome.

XIV. We have hitherto discussed this separation *in reference to faith and worship* (Thesis X). But the Reformed churches say, that they have by no means made a separation from the church of Rome *in reference to charity*. They invoke Christ as a witness in their consciences to the truth of this their declaration, and they think they have hitherto given sufficient proofs of it.

1. By the exposition of their doctrine to the whole world, both verbally and by their writings, which disclose from the word of God the errors of the Romish church, and solicitously invite to conversion, the people who remain in error.
2. By the prayers and groans with which they do not cease to importune the Divine Majesty to deliver his miserable people from the deception and tyranny of Antichrist, and firmly to subject them to his Son, Jesus Christ.
3. By the friendly and mild behaviour which they use towards the adherents of the Popish Religion, even in many of those places in which they have, themselves, the

supremacy, while they neither employ force against their consciences, nor drive them by menaces to the profession of another faith or to the exercise of a different worship, but permit them, privately, at least, to offer that [*fidem*] fealty and worship to God of which they mentally approve.

Protestants use only the spiritual sword, that, after all heresy and idolatry have been destroyed, men, being saved, even in this life, with regard to their bodies, may be eternally saved to the day of the Lord. The prevention of the public assemblies of the Roman Catholics, and the compelling of them by pecuniary mulct or fines to hear the sermons of the Reformed, may be managed in such a manner as will enable the latter to prove these to be offices of true charity. The Reformed also say, that those things of which the Papists complain, as being perpetrated with too much severity, and even with cruelty, against themselves and their children, were brought upon them either through the tumultuous and licentious conduct of the military, of which deeds they have themselves most commonly been the authors, partly by their demerits, and partly by their previous example; or they were brought upon them on account of crimes which they committed against the State or Commonwealth, and not on account of religion. We conclude, therefore, that neither with respect to faith and worship, nor with respect to charity, have the Reformed Churches made a secession from that of Rome, *so far as the Romish church retains any thing which is Christ's*; but they rejoice and glory in the separation, so far as she is averse from Christ.

XV. The second part of our proposition remains now to be considered, which stands thus: 'The Reformed Churches have acted properly in refusing to hold and profess a communion of faith and of Divine worship with the Church of Rome.' This may indeed be generally collected from the preceding arguments; but it must be here more specially deduced, that it may evidently appear in what things the corruption of faith and of divine worship principally consists in the church of Rome, according to the judgment of the Reformed Churches. The causes of this their refusal are three:

1. The various heresies.
2. The multifarious idolatry, and
3. The immense Tyranny, which has been approved and exercised by the church of Rome.

FIRST. We will treat of Heresies, but with much brevity; because it would be a work of too much prolixity to enumerate all. The First, and one which does not dash with any single article, but which is directly opposed to the very principle of faith, is this, in which it is maintained, 'That there is another word of God beside that which is recorded in the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments, and is of the same force and necessity with it, for the establishment of truth and the refutation of error.' To this is added 'that the word of God must be understood according to the sense of our holy mother, the Church,' that is, of the Church of Rome. But this sense is that which the Romish church has explained, and will hereafter explain, by her old Vulgate Latin translation, by her Confessions, Catechisms and Canons, in a way the best accommodated, for the time being, to the existing necessity or prevailing opinion. This is the first foundation of the kingdom of Antichrist, directly opposed to the first foundation of the kingdom of Christ, which is the immovable truth and perfection of the doctrine comprised, first, in the prophetic writings, and then, in those of the Apostles.

XVI. To this we next add another heresy, which is also adverse to the principle of faith. By it the Roman pontiff is constituted the Prince, the Head, the Husband, the Universal Bishop and Shepherd of the whole church on earth: a personage who possesses, in the cabinet of his breast, all the knowledge of truth; and who has the perpetual assistance of the Holy Spirit, so that he cannot err in prescribing those things which concern faith and divine worship — that ‘spiritual man who judgeth all men and all things, yet he himself is judged of no man’ (1 Cor. ii. 15), to whom all the faithful in Christ must, from the necessity of salvation, be subject, and to whose decrees and commands, no less than to those of God and Christ himself, every Christian must assent and yield obedience, with simple faith and blind submission. This is the second foundation of the kingdom of Antichrist, directly opposed to the second foundation of the kingdom of Christ, which God laid down when he constituted Christ his Son, the King, the Husband, the Head, the Chief Shepherd, and the sole Master of his church.

XVII. Particular heresies, and such as contravene some article of faith, have reference either to the Grace of God which has been bestowed upon us in Christ, or to our Duty to God and Christ. Those which relate to GRACE are opposed either to Christ himself and his offices, to the benefits, or to the sealing tokens of grace.

1. *To Christ himself* are opposed the transubstantiation of bread and wine into his Body and Blood, with which is connected the presence of the same person in many places.
2. *To the Priestly Office of Christ* with respect to his OBLATION, is opposed, in the first place, the Sacrifice of the Mass, which is erected on the same dogma of Transubstantiation, and in which lies an accumulation of heresies,
 - a) That the body and blood of our Lord are said to be there offered for a sacrifice,
 - b) To be truly and properly propitiatory,
 - c) And yet to be bloodless, for the sins, punishments, and satisfactions not only of the living, but likewise of the dead.

United with this, or standing as a foundation to it, are a Purgatory, and whatever is dependent upon it,
 - d) In the Sacrifice of the Mass, the body and blood of our Lord are also said to be daily offered, ten, or a hundred, or a thousand times,
 - e) By a Priest, himself a sinful man,
 - f) Who by his prayers procures for it, from God, the grace of acceptance.

Heresies are likewise opposed to the *Priestly Office of Christ* with respect to his INTERCESSION, when Mary, Angels, and deceased Saints are constituted mediators and intercessors, who can obtain something important, not only by their prayers, but also by their merits.

The Roman Catholics sin against *the Kingly Office of Christ*, when they believe these intercessors of theirs to be the dispensers and donors of blessings.

3. Those heresies relating to GRACE oppose themselves to the *Benefits* of Justification and Sanctification.
 - a) *To Justification*, when it is attributed at once to both Faith and Works. The following have the same tendency: ‘The Good Works of Saints fully satisfy the law of God for [*status*] the circumstances of the present life, truly merit life eternal, are a real satisfaction for temporal punishment, for every penalty, for guilt itself, and are an expiation for sins and offenses. Nay, the Good Works of some Saints are so far supererogatory, as, when they perform more than they are bound to do, those [extra] Good Works are meritorious for the salvation of others. Lastly, when men by suffering render satisfaction for sins, they are made conformable to Christ Jesus, who satisfied for sins.’
 - b) They are opposed to *Sanctification*, when they attribute to the natural man without the grace of God, preparatory works, which are grateful to God, and through congruity are meritorious of greater gifts.
4. They are opposed to *the Signs or Tokens of Grace* in several ways: by multiplying them, by contaminating Baptism with various additions, by mutilating the Lord’s Supper of its second part, [the cup], and by changing it into a private Mass.

Those Heresies which infringe upon our DUTY TO GOD AND CHRIST as they principally relate to divine worship, and have idolatry united with them, may be appropriately referred to the Second Cause of the refusal of the Reformed Churches (Thesis XV).

XVIII. The SECOND CAUSE, we have said, is the multifarious idolatry which flourishes in the church of Rome: Both that of the first kind against the First Command, when that which ought not to be worshipped is made the object of worship, adoration, and invocation; And that of the second kind against the Second Command, when the object of worship is worshipped in an image, whether that object ought or ought not to be worshipped.

1. The church of Rome commits idolatry of THE FIRST KIND, with things animate and inanimate.
 - a) *With Animate Things* — with Angels, the virgin Mary, and departed Saints; by founding churches to them; by erecting altars; by instituting certain religious services and rites of worship, and appointing [*collegia*] societies of men and women by whom they may be performed, and the festival days on which they may be observed; by invoking them in their necessities; by offering to them gifts and sacrifices; by making them preside [as tutelary beings] over provinces, cities, villages, streets, and houses, also over the dispensing of certain gifts, the healing of diseases, and the removal as well as the infliction of evils; and, lastly, by swearing by their name. She also commits idolatry with the Roman Pontiff himself; by ascribing to him those titles, powers, and acts which belong to Christ alone; and by asking of him those things which belong to Christ and his Spirit.
 - b) *With Inanimate Things* — with the cross and the bread of our Lord, and with the relics of Saints, whether such relics be real, or false and fictitious.

2. Idolatry of THE SECOND KIND is when the Papists worship God, Christ, Angels, the virgin Mary and the rest of the Saints in an image; and when they pay to such images honour and worship by adorning them with fine garments, gold, silver and jewels; by assigning them more elevated situations in churches and placing them upon the altars; by parading them on their shoulders through the streets; by uncovering their heads to them; by kissing them; by kneeling to them, and lastly, by invoking them, or at least by addressing invocations to them, as the Power or Deity who is there more immediately present.

We assert that the distinction

- of worship into λατρία, *supreme religious adoration*, and δουλεία *inferior worship*, and υπερδουλεία *an intermediate adoration between LATRIA and DULIA*,
- of power, into that which is *superior*, and that which is *subordinate*, or *ministerial*,
- [*imaginationis*] of the representation of any thing, into that by which any thing is performed to some kind of an image and a carved shape as unto God and Christ, and that by which it is performed to an image but not as unto God and Christ;

these distinctions, and the dogma of transubstantiation, we assert to be mere figments, which are either not understood by the greatest portion of the worshipers, or about which they do not think when they are in the act of worship; and to contain protestations which are directly contrary to facts.

This Second Cause is, of itself, quite sufficient to prove our Thesis.

XIX. The THIRD CAUSE is the tyranny which the Church of Rome has usurped and exercised against those who could not conscientiously assent to these heresies and approve these idolatries; and which that church will continue to exercise so long as she listens to the Roman Pontiff and his Court. The Reformed Churches very properly refuse to profess communion of faith and worship with that of Rome, because they are afraid to involve or entangle themselves in the guilt of such great wickedness, lest they should bring down upon their heads the blood of so many thousands of the Saints and of the faithful Martyrs of Christ, who have borne testimony to the word of the Lord, ‘and have washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb’ (Rev. vii. 14). For, beside the fact that such a profession would convey a sufficiently open approbation of that persecution, (especially if they did not previously deliver a protestation against it, which, however, the Roman Pontiff would never admit), even the Papistical doctrine itself, with the assent of the people, establishes the punishment, by the secular arm, of those whom the Church of Rome accounts as heretics; so that those who, on other points, are adherents to the doctrine of Popery, if they are not zealous in their conduct against heretics, are slandered as *men governed by policy*, *lukewarm creatures*, and even receive the infamous name of atheists. I wish all Kings, Princes, and Commonwealths, seriously to consider this, that, on this point at least, they may protest that they have seceded from the communion of the Pontiff and of the Court of Rome. Besides, this exercise of tyranny is, in itself, equal to an evident token, that the Roman Pontiff is that wicked servant who says in his heart, ‘My Lord delayeth his coming,’ and begins to eat and drink, and to be drunken, and to beat his fellow-servants (Luke xii. 45).

23 Disputation XXIII

ON IDOLATRY

Respondent: JAPHET VIGERIUS

I. It always has been, and is now, the chief design of diabolical perverseness, — that even the Devil himself, should be considered and worshipped as a Deity — than which nothing can be more reproachful and insulting to the true God; or that all thought and mention of a Deity being removed, pure Atheism might obtain, and, after conscience was taken away, men might be hurried along into every kind of flagitious wickedness. But since he could not effect this, on account of the notion of a Deity, and indeed of a good one, which is deeply impressed on the minds of men; and since he knew it to be the will of the true God that He should Himself alone be considered and worshipped as God, without any image (Exod. xx. 3–5; Deut. xxxii. 17; 1 Cor. x. 20); the Devil has been trying to persuade men to consider and worship as God some figment of their own brain or some kind of creature, or, at least, to worship the true God in an image. In former days he had great success in these, his attempts; and would to God that in our times they were utterly fruitless! We might then be emboldened to enter on this discussion, merely for the purpose of knowing what Idolatry is, and the description of it which anciently prevailed among Jews and gentiles, without being solicitous to deliver any admonition or caution respecting it. But since, alas, this evil holds domination far and wide in Christendom itself, we will, by Divine aid, briefly treat upon it in these Theses, both for the purpose of knowing what it is, and of giving some cautions and dehortations against it.

II. Commencing, therefore, with the etymology of the word, we say, *Εἰδωλον*, *An Idol*, generally, signifies some representation and image, whether it be conceived only in the mind or framed by the hands, and whether it be that of a thing which never had an existence, or of something which does exist. But, according to Scripture usage, and that of the Sacred Writers, it signifies,

1. An image fashioned for the purpose of representing and honouring a Deity, whether true or false.
2. Every false Divinity,
 - whether it be the pure figment of the human brain,
 - or any thing existing among the creatures of God, and thus *real*, according to its absolute essence, because it is something; but *false* with regard to its relative essence, because it is not a Divinity, which yet it is feigned to be,

and for which it is accounted (Exod. xx. 4; Acts vii. 41; Psalm cxv. 4–8; 1 John v. 21; 1 Cor. viii. 4; 1 Thess. i. 9; Col. iii. 5; Deut. vi. 13; [xiii. 6;] Matt. iv. 10; Deut. v. 6–9).

Λατρευειν (*ido-latry*) signifies, in its general acceptation ‘to render service, or worship,’ ‘to wait upon;’ in Hebrew, **שָׁבַח**: But in the Scriptures, and among Ecclesiastical Writers, it is peculiarly employed about [acts of] religious worship and service; such as these

- to render love, honour, and fear to God
- to repose hope and confidence in Him
- to invoke Him
- to give Him thanks for benefits received
- to obey his commands without exception and
- to swear by his name (Mal. i. 6; Psalm xxxvii. 3; 1, 15; Deut. vi. 13).

III. Idolatry, therefore, according to the etymology of the *word*, is ‘service rendered to an idol;’ but, with regard to *fact*, it is when divine worship is paid to any other than the true God,

- whether that be done by an erroneous judgment of the mind, by which that is esteemed as a God which is no God,
- or it be done solely by the performance of such worship, though he who renders it be aware that the idol is not God, and though he protest that he does not esteem it as a God, since his protestation is contrary to fact (Isa. xlii. 8; Gal. iv. 8; Exod. xxxii. 4, 5).

In proof of this, *the belly*, *avarice*, and *idolatry*, are severally said to be the god of some people, and covetous men are called ‘idolaters’ (Phil. iii. 19; Col. iii. 5; Ephes. v. 5). But so far is that opinion or knowledge (by which he does not esteem the idol as a god) from acquitting him of idolatry, who adores, invokes, and kneels to it, that [*quia*] from the very circumstance of his thus invoking, adoring, and kneeling to an idol, he may rather be said to esteem that as a god, which, according to his own opinion, he does not consider to be a god (1 Cor. x. 19, 20). This is to say to the wood, with one portion of which he has kindled the fire of his hearth and of his oven, and from another has fashioned to himself a god, ‘Deliver me; for thou art my god’ (Isa. xlv. 15, 17), and to a stone, ‘Thou hast begotten me’ (Jer. ii. 27).

IV. Idolatry is also of two kinds. THE FIRST is, when that which is not God is accounted and worshipped as God (Exod. xx. 3–5). THE SECOND is, when that which is either truly or falsely accounted for God is fashioned into a corporeal image, and is worshipped in an image, or [*ad*] according to an image. The former of these is prohibited in the First Commandment: ‘Thou shalt not have other gods,’ or ‘another god, before me,’ or ‘beside me.’ The latter, in the Second Command, ‘Thou shalt not make unto thyself any likeness; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them’ (Exod. xx. 3–5; 1 Cor. x. 7). From this, it appears, that idolatry may also be considered in another view, and in three

different ways. The FIRST Mode is, when the true God is worshipped in an image. The SECOND is, when a false god is worshipped. The THIRD, which partakes of both, is when a false god is worshipped in an image. The First mode is [*levior*] of a more venial description than the Second, according to that passage, ‘And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing, for Ahab to walk in the sins of Jeroboam,’ who had worshipped Jehovah in calves, and had taught others to do the same, ‘that he went and served Baal, and bowed himself down before him’ (1 Kings xvi. 31). The Third mode is the worst of all; for it consists of a double falsehood,

- of a feigned divinity, to whom such worship does not belong,
- and of an assimilated divinity, when of THE ONE to whom it is an assimilation, it is not a likeness (Isa. xl. 19, 20; Jer. x. 14).

Varro has observed that, by the last of these modes, all fear of God has been taken away, and error has been added to mortals.

V. In the prohibition, that the children of Israel should have no God except Jehovah, the Scriptures employ three words to express ‘another God.’ The First is אֱלֹהִים (Exod. xx. 3): The Second, אֱלֹהִים אֲחֵרִים: and the Third, אֱלֹהִים זָרִים (Psalm lxxxi. 9). The First signifies, generally, ‘any other god;’ the Second, ‘a strange god; and the Third, ‘a strange and foreign god.’ But though these words are not so opposed to each other, as not occasionally to coincide, and to be indiscriminately used about a god that is not the TRUE ONE; yet, from a collation of them as they are used in the Scriptures, it is easy to collect that ‘another god’ may be conceived under a three-fold difference; for they were either invented by their first worshippers; or they were received from their ancestors, or they were taken from other nations (Deut. xxxi. 16, 17). The last of these occurs,

1. Either by some necessity, of which David complains, when he says, ‘They have driven me out this day from abiding in the inheritance of Jehovah, saying, *Go, serve other gods* (1 Sam. xxvi. 19).
2. Or by persuasion; as the heart of Solomon was inclined by his wives to worship other gods (1 Kings xi. 4. 5).
3. Or by the mere choice of the will; as Amaziah took the gods of the children of Seir, after he had come from the slaughter of the Edomites (2 Chron. xxv. 14).

In these degrees the Scriptures present to us a difference between a greater and a less offense. For since Jeroboam is frequently accused of having made Israel to sin and of increasing the crime of idolatry (1 Kings xii. 30; xiv. 16); and since the Children of Israel are often said to have ‘provoked God to jealousy with strange gods, whom they knew not and whom their fathers did not fear’ (Deut. xxxii. 16), it appears that the invention or fabrication of a new god is a more grievous crime, than the adoration of ‘another god’ whom they received from their ancestry. And since it greatly contributes to the dishonour and reproach of Jehovah, to take the gods of foreign nations as objects of worship, by which, those gods plainly seem to be preferred to Jehovah, and the religion of those nations, to the law of Jehovah, this crime, therefore, is, of all others, by far the most grievous (Jer. ii. 11, 13).

VI. In the prescription of the Second Command, that nothing which is esteemed as a god be worshipped in an image, the Scriptures most solicitously guard against the possibility of the human mind finding out any evasion or lurking place. For, with regard to *the Matter*, they forbade images to be made of gold and silver, the most precious of the metals, and therefore, of any metal whatever, or of wood or stone (Exod. xx. 23; Isa. xlv. 12, 13; Jer. ii. 27). It prohibits every *Form*,

- whether the image represent a living creature, any thing in the heavens, the sun, the moon, or the stars;
- any thing on the earth or under the earth, a man, a quadruped, a flying creature, a fish or a serpent,
- or a thing that has no existence, but by the madness and vanity of the human brain is compounded of different shapes, such as a monster, the upper parts of which are human, and the lower parts those of an ox; or one whose upper parts are those of an ox, and the lower, those of a man; or one, the higher parts of which are those of a beautiful woman, and the lower those of a fish, terminating in a tail.

It prohibits every mode of making them, whether they be formed by fusion, by sculpture, or by painting (Jer. x. 3, 9, 14; Ezek. viii. 10, 11); because it says universally, ‘Thou shalt not make unto thee any likeness.’ And it adds a reason which excludes generally every kind of material and every method of fabrication: ‘For ye saw no manner of similitude, on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire. Take ye, therefore, good heed unto your souls, lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure,’ etc. (Deut. iv. 15–19).

VII. But with regard to the mode of worship, and to the actions pertaining to it, scarcely any thing can be devised or invented, and can be performed to idols, (that is, both to false deities themselves and to the images of false divinities, and to those of the true God), which is not expressly said in the Scriptures to be hateful to God, that no one may have the least pretext for his ignorance. For the Scriptures take away all honour and service from them, whatever may be the manner in which they are performed,

- whether by building temples, high places or groves by erecting altars, and by placing images upon altars;
- or by offering sacrifices, burning incense, by eating that which is offered in sacrifice to idols, by bending the knees to them, by bestowing kisses on them, and by carrying them on their shoulders (Exod. xx. 5; 1 Kings xi. 7; xii. 31–33; 2 Kings xvii. 35; Ezek. viii. 11; Num. xxv. 2; 1 Kings xix. 18; Isa. xlv. 20; Jer. x. 5).

The Scriptures also prohibit men from placing hope and trust in idols, forbid invocation, prayers and thanksgivings to be directed to them, and will not suffer men to fear them and to swear by them; because idols are as unable to save as to inflict injury (Psalm cxv. 8; Jer. v. 7). The Scriptures do not permit men to yield obedience to idols, because a graven image is a teacher of lies and vanity (Jer. ii. 5–8, 20; xi. 8–13); and false gods often require of their worshipers those things from which all nature, created and uncreated, that of God and of man, is most abhorrent (Lev. xviii. 21).

VIII. But, because the human [*ingenium*] mind is both inclined and fitted to excogitate and invent excuses, nay even justifications, for sins, particularly for the sin of idolatry, and because the pretext of a good intention to honour the Deity serves the more readily as a plea for it, [this propensity of mind], on account of conscience not equally accusing a man either for the worship which he offers to a false divinity, or for that which he presents to the true God in an image, as it does for the total omission of worship, and for a sin committed against the rules of equity and goodness which prevail among mankind; our attention will be profitably called to the consideration of what is the judgment of God concerning this matter, by whose judgment we must stand or fall. Let us take our commencement at that species by which the true Deity is worshipped in an image, as Jehovah was in the calf which Aaron fashioned, and in those which were made by Jeroboam (Exod. xxxii. 4; 1 Kings xii. 28). God has manifested this, his judgment, by his word and by his acts.

1. FIRST, by his *Word of declaration*, God has shewn what are his sentiments both concerning the fabrication of an image and the worship offered to it. The FABRICATION, he says, is 'a changing of the glory of the incorruptible God into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass, into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things' (Psalm civ. 20; Rom. i. 23). But the WORSHIP, he says, is offered, not to God, whom they wished to represent by an image, but to the calf itself, and to the image which they had fabricated (1 Kings xii. 32). For these are his words: 'They have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto' (Exod. xxxii. 8). And St Stephen says, 'They made a calf in those days, and offered sacrifice unto the idol' (Acts vii. 41). On this account also he calls them, 'gods of gold and silver,' 'other gods and molten images' (Exod. xxxii. 31; 1 Kings xiv. 9). SECONDLY, *By his Word of threatening*, by which he denounces destruction to those who worshipped the calf that Aaron formed, and to Jeroboam and his posterity (Exod. xxxii. 9, 10; 1 Kings xiv. 10, 11).
2. God has also displayed his judgment about idolatry *by his Acts*. He not only fulfilled this, his word of threatening, by cutting off Jeroboam and his posterity (2 Chron. xiii. 15–20), and by destroying many thousands of the Israelites (Exod. xxxii. 28); but likewise by chastising similar sinners by another horrible punishment, that of blindness, and of being delivered over to a reprobate [*sensum*] mind' (Rom. i. 24–28).

IX. Such, then, is the judgment of God concerning that species of idolatry which is committed with the intention of worshipping that God who is truly God. Let us now see how severe this judgment is against that species in which the intention is to offer worship to that which is not the true God, to another god, to Moloch, Baal, Chemosh, Baal-peor, and to similar false gods, though they were esteemed as gods by their worshipers (Deut. xxix. 17; xxxii. 14–17). Of this, his judgment, God has afforded most convincing indications, both by his word and his acts. In this Word of declaration two things occur, which are most signal indications of this. FIRST is, that he interprets this act as a desertion of God, a defection from the true God, a perfidious dissolution of the conjugal bond by spiritual adultery with another, and a provoking of God himself to jealousy. The SECOND is, that he says this adultery is committed with demons and devils. For these are some of the strains of Moses in his very celebrated song: 'They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not,' etc. (Deut. xxxii. 17). And the Royal Psalmist

sings thus: ‘They sacrificed their sons and their daughters unto devils, unto the idols of Canaan’ (Psalm civ. 37, 38), which they did when they compelled any of their offspring to pass through the fire to Moloch (Lev. xviii. 21). The Apostle Paul [*quibus succinit*] does not spoil this concord when he says, ‘The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God’ (1 Cor. x. 20); whether this signifies, that some demon lay concealed in those images; or that those sacred rites were performed according to the will and prescription of demons,

- either openly, by oracles, responses, and the verses [*vatum*] of prophesying poets,
- or secretly by the institutes or maxims of the world (Arnob. lib. 6; Aug. *de Civ. Del.* lib. 8, 23), that is, of wicked people, of whom Satan is called ‘the prince,’ and among whom he is said to have his throne (1 Pet. iv. 3; 2 Cor. iv. 4; Rev. ii. 13).

The denunciations of punishments for this crime, and the execution of these threats, are described generally throughout the whole of the sacred Scriptures.

X. If the things, thus explained from the Scriptures, be applied to *Λατριάς*, the divine adorations, and to *θρησκείας*, the religious ceremonies or superstitions which are employed in the Popish church; it will clearly appear, that she is guilty of the crime of the two-fold idolatry which has now been described (Thesis IV). Of the FIRST KIND she renders herself guilty, because she presents divine worship to the bread in the Lord’s Supper, to the Virgin Mary, to angels and departed saints, to the relics of Christ’s cross and of the saints, and to things consecrated. Of the SECOND KIND she renders herself guilty, because her members worship, in an image, God, Christ, the cross of Christ, the Virgin Mary, angels and saints. Each of these charges shall be demonstrated; and, we will confirm them in as brief a manner as possible, after having closed up all the evasions, through which [*idolatrae*] the worshipers of idols try to creep out when they are held fast bound.

XI.

1. FIRST. Concerning *the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper*, to which ‘all the faithful in Christ, according to the method always received in the [Roman] Catholic church, present in veneration the worship of *latria*, or supreme adoration, [which is due to the true God]. Nor is this most holy Sacrament to be the less adored because it was instituted by Christ our Lord, that it might be received, as the Council of Trent says (Session xiii. 5), when it frees us from one part of the sacrament. To this we subjoin, in the discharge of another part of the duty we have undertaken: But the worship of *latria* or supreme adoration, cannot be paid to the Sacrament of the Eucharist without idolatry.

- a) It cannot be paid even in the use of the Eucharist, because bread continues to be bread still, with regard to its substance, and it is not transubstantiated or changed into the body of Christ by consecration. For the eucharist would thus cease to be a sacrament, of whose essence it is to consist of an external thing; and the body of Christ would thus begin to exist [*de novo*] anew; for nothing can be changed into that which had no previous existence.

- b) Much less can this worship be paid to the sacrament [*extra usum*] in its abuse. Because, though a legitimate consecration might [be supposed to] have the power of transubstantiating, yet an illegitimate consecration cannot effect a transubstantiation. For all right of consecration depends on the divine institution: but a consecration to adore, and not to receive, is foreign to the design of the institution, and therefore inefficacious (Matt. xxvi. 26; 1 Corinthians x. 16; xi. 25). Therefore, the Roman Catholic Church commits idolatry, as she presents to the sacrament of the eucharist [*cultum*] the service of *latria*, or supreme adoration, which is due to the true God alone.

XII. SECONDLY. In the worship which the papists perform *to the Virgin Mary, angels and departed saints*, we say they commit idolatry in two ways — in reference to the act of adoring them, and to that of invoking them (1 Kings xix. 18; 2 Kings xvii. 11, 16, 35).

- a) *In adoring them*, when they [*venerantur*] do reverence to all and to each of them by altars, masses, festivals or holy days, vigils, fasts, images, candles, offerings, by burning incense, by vows, pilgrimages, and genuflections. All these acts relate to *latria* or supreme adoration, and to divine worship, when presented to the true God according to his will, or to false gods through the superstition of men.
- b) *In invoking them*, when the Papists ‘betake themselves to the prayers, and to the help and assistance, afforded by the Saints,’ as the Council of Trent says (Session XXV), and when they return thanks to them for the benefits which they receive (Lombard. lib. 4, dist. 25).

But they have this recourse to the PRAYERS of angels and saints, as their intercessors, mediators, patrons and advocates, who intercede.

- a) With a pious affection, by which they desire [*vota*] the wishes of those who pray to them, to be fulfilled.
- b) With their glorious and most holy merits, which [*suffragantur*] are presented in favour of those who, with suppliant intreaties, require their prayers.

They have this recourse, also, to the HELP and ASSISTANCE of angels and saints, as to auxiliaries or helpers, preservers and the guardians of grace and glory; that is, the liberal dispensers of all blessings, their deliverers in necessities, whom they also denominate their *life, salvation, safety, hope, defense, refuge, solace*, yea, their *only hope*, and their *safe fortress*. But these are titles which belong to God and Christ alone, as the decorations of the highest excellence, wisdom, benevolence and power; than which nothing can be conceived more illustrious, as is manifest from the Scriptures, in which these titles are read as attributed to God and Christ (Psalm xlvi. 1, 2; xviii. 1, 2; xxxvi. 7, 10; lxii. 2, 3, 6; Isa. xlv. 20; Acts iv. 12); when the supreme honour of invocation and adoration is offered to them by holy men. And though the turpitude of this idolatry be exceedingly foul and disgusting, yet how immensely is it aggravated by rendering the reason which serves as a pretext to them for that deed; than which reason nothing can be imagined to be more injurious to God and Christ.

- a) To GOD, when the Papists say that our Heavenly Father has given half of his kingdom to the Blessed Virgin, the queen of heaven, whom they also denominate ‘the mistress of the world,’ ‘the star of the sea,’ ‘the haven or port of salvation,’ and ‘God’ (Gul. Biel. in Can. Miss. Lect. 80); and when they say that since God has both *justice* and *mercy*, he retains the former of these himself, but has granted the exercise of mercy to his virgin mother, and therefore, that we must appeal from the court of the *Justice* of God to the court of the *Mercy* of his mother.
- b) To CHRIST, nothing can be more injurious than this; because the Papists say that Christ is not only an Advocate, but that he is a judge, and as such, will discuss all things, so that nothing will remain unpunished; and therefore, that God has provided for us a female advocate, who is full of mildness and suavity, and in whom is found nothing that is harsh or unpleasant, who is, also, on this account, called ‘the throne of Christ,’ on which he reposed (Anton. page 4, tit. 15, cap. 14).

XIII. THIRDLY. That the Papists defile themselves with idolatry in paying reverence to the relics of the cross of Christ and of the saints, by performing unto them acts both of adoration and of invocation, is proved, partly from their own confession, and partly from the very exercise of those religious acts which they offer to them.

- a) The Council of Trent publishes *the confession*, when it says (Session XXV), ‘Those persons are to be wholly condemned, who affirm that honour and veneration are not due to the relics of saints; or that those relics, and other sacred monuments, are [*inutiliter*] unprofitably honoured by the faithful; and that resort is vainly made to the sepulchers of saints, for the purpose of obtaining their assistance.’ The next confessor on this subject is ‘the angelical Doctor,’ who is believed to have written all things well concerning Christ. For he says (Sum. p. 3, Qu. xxv), that the adoration of *latria*, or supreme worship, must be given to the cross of Christ on account of the contract [into which it came] with the members of the body of Christ. This is a reason quite sufficient to Antoninus to affirm (Anton. p. 3, tit. 12, cap. 5) that not only is the cross of Christ to be adored, but likewise all things belonging to it — the nails, the spear, the vestments, and even the sacred tabernacles. In accordance with these confessions, the Roman Catholic Church sings, ‘Behold the wood of the Cross! We adore thy cross, O Lord.’
- b) Another method the Papists have of declaring their idolatry *by various acts*
- when they adorn the relics of the cross of Christ and of the saints, with gold, silver, and jewels;
 - when they wrap them in fine lawn napkins and in pieces of silk or velvet;
 - when they carry them about with great pomp, in processions instituted for the purpose of returning thanks and making requests;
 - when they place them on altars;
 - when they suspend before these relics gifts and curses;

- when they present them to be viewed, kissed, and adored by kneeling, and thus themselves adore them;
- when they light wax candles before them, burn incense to them;
- when they consecrate churches and altars by their presence, and consider them as rendered holy;
- when they institute festivals to them; when they celebrate masses to their honour, under this idea, that masses celebrated upon an altar on which relics are placed, become more holy and efficacious;
- when they undertake pilgrimages to them;
- when they carry them about as amulets and preservatives;
- when they put them upon sick people;
- when they sanctify their own napkins or handkerchiefs, their garlands, and other things of the same kind, by touching them with these relics, that they may serve for the same purposes;

because they think that grace and a divine virtue exist in them, which they seek to obtain from them by invocations, and other services performed before them; they use them for driving away and expelling devils and bad spirits; and they do all these things which the Heathen did to the relics of their idolatry. To all these particulars, must be added that most shameful illusion — the multiplication of relics, and the substitution [*alienarum*] of such as belong to other persons than to those whose names they bear. Hence, the origin of that witty saying, ‘The *bodies* of many persons are honoured on earth, whose *souls* are burning in everlasting torments’ (Cal. de relig.).

XIV. The FOURTH specimen, partly of the same idolatry, and partly of a superstition much worse than that of the Heathens, the Papists afford not only *in the dedications and consecrations* of churches, alters, vases, and ornaments which belong to them, such as the cross, the chalice and its covers, linen clothes, the vestments of priests, and of censers; also in the consecration of easter wax candles, holy water, salt, oil for extreme unction, bells, small waxen figures like dolls, each of which they call ‘*Agnus Dei*,’ and of cemeteries or burial grounds, and things of a similar kind, but likewise *in the use of things thus consecrated*, for the Papists pray in these consecrations, that God would furnish or inspire the things now enumerated, with grace, virtue and power to drive away and expel bodily and spiritual evils, and to bestow the contrary blessings; they use them as actually possessed of such grace and virtue; and perform to them religious worship. We will here produce the following few instances of this matter: They have ascribed remission of sins to visitations of churches thus consecrated. They use the following words, among others, in their formularies of consecrations, *on the cross to be consecrated*: ‘Deign, O Lord, to bless this wood of the cross, that it may be a saving remedy to mankind, that it may be the solidity of faith, the advancement of good works, the redemption of souls, and a safeguard against the fierce darts of enemies.’ In the formularies *on holy water*, these words occur: ‘I exorcise or adjure thee, O creature of water, that thou become exorcised water to put to flight all the power of the enemy, to root him out, and to

displant [*valeas*] friendly greetings with his apostate angels,' etc. This is part of the formulary *in the consecration of salt*: 'I exorcise or adjure thee, O creature of salt, that thou be made exorcised salt for the salvation of believers, that thou mayest be healthful soundness of soul and body to those who receive thee,' etc. Also, the following words: 'Deign, O Lord, to bless and sanctify this creature of salt, that it may be, to all who take it, health of mind and body; and that what thing soever shall be sprinkled with it, may be devoid of all filth or uncleanness, and of every attack of spiritual wickedness.' But they attribute to the consecrated small wax figures, which they call '*Agni Dei*,' the virtue of breaking and removing every sin, as the blood of Christ does; and, according to this opinion, they use the same things, reposing their hope and confidence in them, as if they were actually endued with any such power.

2. **XV.** But that the papists commit the second species of idolatry in the worshipping of images (Theses IV, VI, and X), is abundantly proved

- from their own confession,
- the forms of consecration,
- and their daily practice.

- a) *Their own Confession* may be found in the *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*, in which it is affirmed (Session xxv), 'The images of Christ, [*Deiparae*] of the Blessed Virgin, and of other saints, are to be held and retained, especially in churches; and due honour and veneration are to be exhibited to them; so that by the images which we kiss, and before which we uncover our heads, and prostrate ourselves, we adore Christ, and venerate the saints whose likenesses those images bear; this is what was sanctioned by the second Nicene Council.' Let the Acts of that Council be inspected, and it will appear that the adoration and invocation which were established by it, are mere idolatry. To these, let Thomas, and the multitude of their divines, be added, who are of opinion that images must receive the same services of adoration, as those with which the prototypes which they represent are worshipped.
- b) *The Formularies of their consecrations* make a similar declaration; for the image of the Virgin Mary is consecrated in the following form: 'O God, sanctify this image of the Blessed Virgin, that it may bring the help of saving aid to thy faithful people, if thunder and lightning prevail; that hurtful things may be the more speedily expelled; that inundations caused by rains, the commotions of civil wars, or the devastations committed by Pagans, may be repressed and appeased at its presence (1 Kings 8). In the consecration of the image of John the Baptist, the following words occur: 'Let this sacred [*expulsio*] image be the expeller of devils, the invoker of angels, the protector of the faithful, and let its intercession powerfully flourish in this place.'
- c) *In the daily practice of the Papists*, most of those acts, both of adoration and invocation, are performed to images, which we have already mentioned as having been exhibited to the saints themselves; and they usually perform those acts [which they think due] to the saints, to their images, or in their images,

but seldom indeed do they by a pure [mental] glance look up to the saints themselves, being under the influence of this opinion — that the honours [which they thus pay to images] belong to the prototypes themselves, and therefore that the prayers which they address to them will by this means be the more readily and speedily heard and answered.

XVI. The Papists do not indeed deny, that they present this worship, these services, and acts both of adoration and invocation, to the sacrament of the eucharist, to the virgin Mary, to angels and departed saints, to relics and things consecrated, and to these images: at least they are unable to deny this, except by an evident untruth. Yet they excuse themselves under the pretense of certain exceptions and distinctions, which they consider to be of such value and power, as to exempt from idolatry those acts which are performed by themselves with such an intention of mind, but which, when performed by others, are really idolatrous. These exceptions are, **FIRST**. According to the three-fold excellence of *Divine*, *human* and *intermediate*, there is a three-fold honour. And here the distinction is produced of λατρεία ‘latria’ or *Divine worship*, δουλεία ‘dulia’ or *human worship*, and υπερδουλεία ‘hyperdulia’ or *intermediate*, or *between both*. To this may be added what they say, that most of the acts which relate to this worship are analogous. The **SECOND** exception is from the intention of those who offer those religious services. The **THIRD** is in the difference between intercession and bestowing, that is, between the office of Mediator as discharged by the [Popish] saints, and as discharged by Christ Jesus. The **FOURTH** is in the distinction between an image and an idol.

XVII. The **FIRST** subterfuge has three members.

- To *the first* of these we reply,
 1. The Scriptures do not acknowledge any excellence that is called ‘hyperdulia or intermediate,’ or that is different from divine excellence except what is according to the functions, graces and dignities through which some rational creatures, by divine command, preside over others and minister to them
 - *men* as long as they remain in this mortal life
 - and *angels* to the end of the world.

Therefore, no homage paid to a creature is pure from idolatry, except that which is offered to superiors who live in this world, and which is approved by the Scriptures (Psalm lxxxii. 1, 6; John x. 35).
 2. That intermediate excellence, and the worship which is accommodated to it, are rejected by the Scriptures, since they condemn the ‘worship paid to angels’ (Col. ii. 18), and commend Hezekiah for having ‘broken in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made; for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it’ (2 Kings xviii. 4) .
- To the *Second Member* of this subterfuge we reply, the distinction of worship into *latria* and *dulia* is vain in this case; for the apostle claims the worship of *dulia* [which the Papists call an inferior or human adoration] for the true God alone, when he

blames the Gentiles for having ‘done service to those which by nature are no gods’ (Gal. iv. 8). And this word, in its general acceptation, signifies the service which ought to be performed, or which lawfully can be, to those only with whom we have to do according to godliness, and this according to the law which is either common to mutual charity (Gal. v. 13), or that which has a more particular reference to such persons as have constant transactions with each other (Ephes. vi. 5, 6). But with those persons to whom the present discussion relates, (placing the angels as an exception), we have according to godliness no transactions, neither are we bound, by any law, to them for service.

- To the *Third Member* our answer is,
 1. To offer sacrifice, to burn incense, to erect churches and altars, to make vows, to institute festivals, fasts and pilgrimages, [to angels or saints], and to swear by their names, and not *analogical* or relative services, but *univocal* or having one purpose, and such as are due only to the true God.
 2. Though prostration itself is law fitly given to men on account of their analogical similitude to God, yet, when [*religiosa*] it is an act of religion, it is considered as so peculiarly due to God, that the whole of divine worship is designated by it alone (1 Kings xix. 18; Matt. ix. 18). Christ likewise denies prostration to the devil (Matt. iv. 8), and the angel in the Apocalypse refuses it when offered to himself (Rev. xix. 10).

XVIII. The distinct intention of the worshipers, is the SECOND subterfuge that they use to remove from themselves the idolatries of every kind of which they have been accused. In the *First* of these intentions they say, concerning the adoration of the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, that their intention is to honour, not the bread, but the true body of Christ. In the *Second*, that the adoration, even divine adoration itself, which they perform to a creature, is not offered to it as to God; that is, they perform the acts of worship with the design of procuring for the creature such [*opinionis*] esteem and veneration as in reality belongs only to the Divine Majesty. In the *Third*, that by giving honour to a creature, they do not stop there, but that God may be glorified in and through the creature (Greg. de Val. lib. 2, cap. 1 & 3). In the *Fourth*, that they do not honour the image itself, but its prototype. To all these distinctions we reply,

1. The deed is in every case contrary to the intention; and they in reality do the very thing which, in their intention, they profess themselves desirous to avoid.
2. The judgment of God is adverse to their intention; for He does not interpret the deed from the intention, but forms his judgment of the intention from the deed. God himself [*adhibuit*] has exposed an intention that is in accordance with such a deed, although the man who does it puts in his protestation about his contrary intention. This intention is evident from the following passages: ‘They have made them a molten calf and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, these be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt’ (Exod. xxxii. 8). ‘He falleth down unto it and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me, for thou art my god’ (Isa. xliv. 17). ‘They sacrificed unto devils, not to God,’ etc. (Deut. xxxii. 17).

3. We add, if these distinctions possess any validity, neither Jews nor Heathens could at any time have been accused of having committed idolatry; for, by the same distinctions as these, they would be able to justify all their acts of worship, whether offered to a true or to a false deity, to the Supreme God, to inferior divinities, or to an image. For [on these principles] *their* intention never feared the works of their own fingers, but those persons after whose image such works were formed, and to whose names they were consecrated. *Their* intention never honoured angels, demons, or the minor gods, except that such services should redound to the honour of the Supreme Deity (Lactan. Inst. lib. ii cap. 2); it never wished to procure such esteem and veneration for them as belongs solely to the Majesty of God Supreme; and it never worshipped a false deity.

XIX. The THIRD exception has a special tendency to justify the invocation of the Virgin Mary and the saints (Thesis XVI); for the Papists say that they invoke them, not as the prime authors and donors of blessings; nor as Christ, whom God the Father hath constituted the High Priest, and to whom he has given all power in heaven and on earth; but that they invoke them, in truth, as friends, intercessors and donors, yet in subordination to Christ. To this we reply, FIRST, From the premises which they grant, they may themselves be convicted of *idolo-dulia*, or inferior worship offered to idols; for they confess that the invocation which they practice to the Virgin Mary and to saints is the adoration of *dulia*. But they fabricate idols of the Virgin Mary and of Saints before they invoke them by heresy, both by falsely attributing to them the faculty of understanding their prayers, of interceding for sinners, not only feelingly, but also meritoriously, and of granting the things requested, and by presenting to them, as possessed of these qualifications, the worship of invocation; for this is the mode by which an idol is fabricated of a thing that has had a real existence. To this argument strength is added from the circumstance that, although these saints might know the things for which the Papists pray, might intercede for them with a pious feeling, and, as spirits, might bestow what they have requested; yet as they could not bestow them, 'with power' they ought not to be invoked. SECONDLY. By the words, 'insubordination to Christ,' they in reality destroy such a subordination and introduce a collaterally. If this be true, then on that very account they are likewise *idolaters*; because the worship, which God the Father wishes to be given to his Son, is that of *latria*, or divine adoration. For it is the will of the Father, 'that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father' (John v. 23). But subordination is removed, and collaterally is introduced,

1. *Universally*, when all these Saints are said, by their own merits, to intercede for and to obtain blessings, and to dispense the blessings thus obtained, which are two tokens of the eversion of subordination and of the introduction of collaterally.
2. *Specially*, this collaterally exists [from their own showing] between Christ and the Virgin Mary; as is evident,
 - a) *From the names under which they invoke her*, when they denominate her 'the Queen of heaven,' 'the Mistress of the world,' 'our salvation, harbor, defense, refuge and solace,' who is able to command our Redeemer in virtue of her authority as his mother. These expressions place Christ in subordination to her.

- b) But this is likewise evident, *from the cause on account of which they say she ought to be invoked*. As a FEMALE ADVOCATE, because, since Christ is not only a man and an Advocate, but likewise God and a Judge, ‘who will suffer nothing to pass unpunished; the Virgin Mary, as having in her nothing that is harsh and unpleasant, but being all mildness and suavity’ (Thesis XII), ought [*intercedere*] to act as intercessor between him and sinners. And as a FEMALE DISPENSER OF BLESSINGS; because ‘God the Father has given half of his kingdom to her, (that is, to administer his Mercy while he reserves the exercise of Justice to Himself,)’ and has conferred upon her a plenitude of all grace, that out of her fullness all men may receive. This is nothing less than to hurl Christ from his throne, and to exalt the Virgin Mary in his place.

XX. The FOURTH subterfuge is the distinction between an image and an idol. The Papists say, an *Image* is the likeness of something real; an *Idol*, that of something false. When Bellarmine explains this definition, he commits a fallacy; for, in interpreting ‘something false,’ he says, since it is a being, it is not that which it is feigned to be, that is, God. But that the difference which he here makes is a false one, many passages of Scripture prove. The image which Rachael purloined from her father, is called ‘an idol;’ but it was the image of a man (Gen. xxxi. 34). Stephen calls the molten calf ‘an idol,’ and it was made to represent the true God (Acts. vii. 41). The calves of Jeroboam were representations or images of Jehovah, yet they are called ‘idols’ by the Greek and Latin translators (1 Kings xii. 28). Micah’s image is also called ‘an idol’ and yet it was ‘set up’ to Jehovah (Judges xvii. 4; xviii. 31). Among the ‘dumb idols’ unto which, the apostle says, the Corinthians ‘were carried away,’ were statues of men, and probably images of ‘four-footed beasts, of creeping things, and of birds’ (Rom. i. 23). Yet Bellarmine would with difficulty prove that these are things, which have no existence. Wherefore if an idol be that which is nothing, that is, a sound without reality and meaning, this very distinction, which is purely an invention of the human brain, is itself the vainest idol, nay one of the veriest of idols. Such likewise are those distinctions and intentions which have been invented, for the establishment of idols and of the impious and unlawful adoration of idols, by the church of the malignants, by the mother of fornications, who resembles the ‘adulterous woman’ mentioned in Prov. xxx. 20: ‘She eateth and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no harm,’ or ‘I have not wrought iniquity.’

COROLLARY

It can be proved by strong arguments from the Scriptures, that the Roman Pontiff is himself an idol; and that they who esteem him as the personage that he and his followers boastingly depict him to be, and who present to him the honour which he demands, by those very acts shew themselves to be idolaters.

24 Disputation XIV

ON THE INVOCATION OF SAINTS

Respondent: JAMES A. PORT

I. *From the hypothesis of the Papists*, we denominate those persons ‘Saints,’ whom the Roman Pontiff has by his canonization transferred into the [*album*] book of Saints (Bellarm. *de Beat. Sanct.* lib. 1, cap. 8). *From the truth of the matter*, we also call those persons ‘Saints,’ who being sprinkled with the blood of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. i. 2), and [*signati*] sealed with the characters of the Holy Spirit, the Sacred Fountain of all holiness, have been illustrious in this world by the sanctity of their lives, which flows from their spiritual union with Christ; but who, as it regards the body, being now dead, still live in heaven with Christ as it regards the soul (Rev. xiv. 13). Of this description were the Patriarchs of old, the Prophets, the Apostles, the Martyrs, and others like them. *The Invocation of Saints* is that by which men have recourse to their [*suffragium*] intercessions, interest, patronage and assistance, for the sake of imploring, intreating, and obtaining their aid.

II. But the Papists assert, that the Saints are invoked for three reasons:

1. That they may vouchsafe to intercede by their prayers and their suffrages.
2. That, through their merits, and on account of them, they may obtain by their petitions the things which are asked of them.
3. That they may themselves bestow the benefits which are required.

For the Papists have invested departed Saints with these three [*respectus*] qualities;

- that, being nearer to God, they have greater freedom of access to him and to Christ, than the faithful who are yet their survivors in the present life;
- that, by works of supererogation performed in this life, they have obtained by their merits [the privilege] that God shall hear and grant their prayers;
- and that they have been constituted by God the administrators of those blessings which are asked of them:

And thus are they appointed Mediators, both by merit and efficacy, between God, nay between Christ and living believers.

III. Yet upon all these things the Papists have not had the hardihood to erect, as a superstructure, *the necessity of invoking the Saints*: They only say that ‘It is good and useful suppliantly to invoke them;’ and that ‘those persons hold an impious opinion who deny that the saints ought to be invoked’ (*Can. and Dec. Coun. of Trent*, Sess. xxv, cap. 2). But perhaps by these last words, which have an ambiguous meaning, they wished to intimate the existence of this necessity. For not only does he deny that Saints ought to be invoked, who says that it is *not necessary* to invoke them, but likewise he who says that it is *not lawful*: The words, when strictly taken, bear the former signification, that invocation is *not necessary*; but the latter meaning of its *unlawfulness*, when they are understood as opposed to the words which preceded. Even Bellarmine, when he had affixed this title, ‘The Saints ought to be invoked,’ immediately subjoined the following thesis: ‘The Saints are piously and usefully invoked by the living’ (*De Beat. Sanct.* lib. 1, cap. 19). But that most subtle and evasive petty Synod often trifled with ambiguous expressions, being either compelled into such a course on account of the dissensions among its chief members, or else being perversely ingenious on account of its adversaries, whose blows it would not otherwise have been able, with any degree of speciousness, to avoid. We will, therefore, inquire concerning the invocation of Saints, Is it *necessary*? Is it *lawful* and *useful*?

IV. With regard to the FIRST of these questions, we say, (whether the Papists assent to our affirmation or dissent from it), that it is not necessary for believers in the present state of existence to invoke the Saints who [*conversantur*] are engaged with Christ in heaven. And since this necessity is

- either *according to the duty* which surviving believers are bound to perform to the saints who have departed out of this life, and who are living with Christ;
- or *according to the end* for the sake of obtaining which, invocation is laid down as a necessary means;

we affirm that, by neither of these methods is the invocation of Saints necessary.

V.

1. It is not necessary *in reference to the Deity*; because the invocation of Saints has neither been commanded by God, nor is it sanctioned with any promise or threatening, which it would of necessity have been if it had to be performed as a duty by the faithful during their continuance in the world.
2. It is not necessary *in reference to the Means*; because neither the merits nor the intervening administration of the Saints is necessary to solicit and to obtain the blessings which the faithful in the present life make the subject of their prayers; for otherwise, the mediation and administration of Christ either are not sufficient, or they cannot be obtained except through the intercession of departed Saints, both of which are false; and that man who was the first of the Saints to enter heaven, neither required nor employed any Saint as a previous intercessor.

VI. Since, therefore, it is not necessary, that believers now living upon earth should invoke the Saints who reign with Christ, if the Papists take any pleasure in the approval of a good conscience, they ought to employ the utmost circumspection in ascertaining, whether it is not the better course to omit this invocation than to perform it, even though it might be made a subject of disputation whether or not it be lawful, about which we shall afterwards inquire. We affirm that it is preferable to omit all such invocation, and we support this assertion by two arguments,

1. Since ‘whatever is not of faith,’ that is, whatsoever does not proceed from a conscience which is [*certo*] fully persuaded that the thing performed is pleasing to God, ‘is sin;’ and since that may, therefore, be omitted without sin, about which even the smallest doubt may be entertained respecting its lawfulness, since it is found that it is not necessary; it follows from these premises, that it is better to omit than to perform invocation.
2. Since the Papists themselves confess, ‘that the difference between the worship of *latria* and that of *dulia*, or between divine and human adoration, is so great, that the man who presents that of *latria* to any object to which no more than *dulia* is due, is guilty of idolatry;’ and since it is a matter of the greatest difficulty for the common people, [*idiotae*] who are ignorant and illiterate yet full of devotion to the saints, to observe this difference at all times and without any error; there is much danger lest those who invoke Saints should fall into idolatry. This is a reason which also militates against the invocation of Saints, even though it were proved that such invocation is lawful.

VII. The next inquiry is, ‘Is the invocation of Saints lawful and useful?’ Or, as the Council of Trent has expressed it, ‘Is it good and useful to invoke the saints?’ Or, according to Bellarmine’s phraseology, ‘Are the saints piously and usefully invoked?’ (*De Beat. Sanct.* lib. i, cap. 19). We who hold the negative, say, that it is neither pious nor useful to invoke the saints. We prove this assertion, First, *generally*; Secondly, *especially*, according to the particular respects in which the Papists invoke the Saints, and maintain that they may be invoked.

VIII. FIRST. We prove Generally, that it is *not pious*, thus:

- Since no action can, of itself and properly, come under the appellation of piety or godliness, except that which has been prescribed by God, by whose word and institution alone every action is sanctified, otherwise it will be common;
- and since it is certain, that the invocation of Saints has not been commanded by God,
- it follows that such an action cannot be called ‘pious.’

Some action may, however, be called ‘pious’ by a metalepsis, because it has been undertaken for the sake of performing a pious action. But such a case as this does not here occur.

- By the same argument, we demonstrate that it is *not useful*; Because all religious worship, not prescribed by God, is useless (Lev. x. 1), according to the express declaration of God (Isa. xxix. 13), and of Christ: ‘But in vain do they worship me,

teaching for doctrines the commandments of men' (Matt. xv. 9). But the Papists say, that the invocation of Saints is religious worship.

IX. SECONDLY. We prove the same thing, Specially, according to the relations in which the Papists invest the Saints when they invoke them.

1. We say, the Saints cannot be piously and usefully invoked *as the donors of benefits*; because God has not constituted the Saints dispensers of blessings either celestial or terrestrial; for this is the office bestowed on Christ, to whom the angels are under subjection as his servants in this ministration. Besides, if even, in imitation of angels, the Saints did, in this world, perform their subordinate service to Christ at the command of God; yet they ought not on this account to be invoked; for, before this can be done, a full power of dispensing is required, which may distribute blessings as it pleases; but the angels render in this world only a ministerial and instrumental service to Christ, for which reason neither is it lawful to invoke them as the donors of blessings. But the Saints cannot, in imitation of the angels, perform a service to Christ ministerially and instrumentally, unless we assert that they all ascend and descend after the manner of angels. Since, therefore, they possess neither the power nor the capability of bestowing blessings, it follows that they cannot be either piously or usefully invoked as the donors of benefits.
2. **X.** The Saints cannot be piously and usefully invoked *as those who by their own merits have obtained the privilege of being heard and answered by God*; because the Saints have not been able to merit any thing for themselves or for others. For they have accounted it needful to exclaim, with David, 'Our goodness extendeth not to thee' (Psalm xvi. 2). And 'when they had done all those things which were commanded them,' they felt the necessity of confessing, not only with humility but with the greatest truth, 'We are unprofitable servants' (Luke xvii. 10); and truly to intreat God 'to forgive the iniquity of their sins,' and 'not to enter into judgment with his servants' (Psalm xxxii. 5; cxliii. 2). That therefore, which is falsely attributed to the Saints cannot be *piously* alleged as a proof; and that whose sufficiency [*defuit*] was not to be found in the Saints themselves, cannot be *usefully* bestowed on others.
3. **XI.** Lastly, they cannot be piously and usefully invoked *in the capacity of those who, as our friends, unite their prayers with ours, or who intercede before God by their prayers in our behalf*; because the saints in heaven are ignorant of our particular necessities, and of the prayers of the faithful who are dwellers upon earth (Isa. lxii. 16; 1 Kings viii. 36; 2 Kings xxii. 20). For the assertions about *the mirror or glass of the Trinity*, is a very vain fable, and receives its refutation from this very circumstance, — that those angels who always beheld the face of God the Father (Matt. xviii. 20), are said to be ignorant of the day of judgment (Mark xiii. 32). Those assertions about a *divine revelation* [to the Saints and Angels] have a foolish and ridiculous circle; and those about *the explanation which may be given by means of angels, or of the spirits of persons recently deceased*, are equally vain; because the Scriptures make no mention of those tokens or indications, even in a single word: without such mention, we feel scrupulous, in matters of such vast importance, about receiving any thing as true, or about undertaking to do any thing as pious and useful.

XII. We add, finally, that by the invocation of Saints, the Papists are injurious towards Christ, and, therefore, cannot engage in such invocation without sacrilege. They are [*injurious*] unjust to Christ in two ways:

1. Because they communicate to the Saints the office of our Mediator and Advocate, which has been committed by the Father to Christ alone; and the power conferred [on that office] (1 Tim. ii. 5; Rom. viii. 34; 1 John ii. 1). Neither are they excused by what they say about the Saints being subordinate to Christ; for by the circumstance of their alleging the merits of Saints, and of their invoking them as the dispensers of blessings, they destroy this subordination and establish a collaterally.
2. Because they detract greatly from that benevolent affection of Christ towards his people, from his most merciful inclination, and from that most prompt and ready desire to commiserate, which he manifests. These properties are proposed to us in the Scriptures in a manner the most lucid and plain, that, not being terrified with the consideration of our own unworthiness, we may approach, with confidence and freedom, to the throne of grace, ‘that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need’ (Heb. iv. 16).

XIII. When we say that the Saints must not be invoked, we do not take away all veneration from them, as the Papists calumniously assert. For we confess that their memory is to be venerated with a grateful celebration. But we circumscribe our veneration within these bounds: **FIRST.** We commemorate with thanksgiving the eminent gifts which have been conferred on them, and commend them for having faithfully used those gifts in the exercises of faith, hope and charity. **SECONDLY.** As much as in us lies, we imitate their examples, and endeavour to demonstrate, by our works, that the holy conversation which they had in this world is grateful to us who aspire to be like them. **LASTLY.** We congratulate them on the felicity which they enjoy with Christ in the presence of God; and with devotion of soul we earnestly pray for the same felicity for ourselves, while we hope and trust that we shall enjoy it through the all-sufficient intercession of Christ, through which, alone, they also themselves have been made partakers of eternal happiness.

COROLLARY

In the invocation of Saints, do the Papists commit idolatry? We decide in the affirmative.

25 Disputation XXV

ON MAGISTRACY

Respondent: JOHN LE CHANTRE

I. Not feeling much anxiety about the origin and etymology of the word, we say that from the manner in which it is used, it has two meanings: for it either signifies *in the abstract*, the power and the function itself; or, *in the concrete*, the person who is constituted the administrator of this function with power. But, because the abstract consideration is more simple, and [*ponit normam*] lays down the law to the concrete, therefore we will occupy ourselves first and chiefly in the description of it (John xix. 10, 11; Ephes. i. 21; Rom. xiii. 1).

II. We therefore define Magistracy, in the abstract, a Power pre-eminent and administrative, or a Function with a preeminent Power, instituted and preserved by God for this purpose, that men may, in the society of their fellow-men, 'lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all godliness and honesty,' in true piety and righteousness, for their own salvation and to the glory of God (Rom. xiii. 1–3; 1 Tim. ii. 2; 1 Pet. ii. 13; Prov. xxix. 4; Psalm 62; Isa. xlv. 22, 23). For the more extensive explanation of this definition, we will consider the object — the Efficient and the End, which are the *external* causes of this function, and the Matter and the Form, which are the *internal* causes, from which we will derive all the rest.

III. The object of this function is the multitude of man kind, who are sociable animals, and bound to each other by many ties of indigence and communication according both to nature and grace, and who live together in common society. This object, likewise, comprehends *the end for which*, that is, those for whose benefit magistracy has been instituted. Hence, likewise, this power deservedly obtains the name of public authority,' as it is, First, immediately and principally occupied concerning the condition and conduct of all the people and the whole society; but, Secondly, concerning the state and benefit of each member, though it intends, of itself, both the good of the whole, and that of each individual in the entire society (Num. xi. 12; 2 Chron. i. 9, 10; Rom. xii. 4, 5; 1 Cor. xii. 12–27; Ezek. xxxiv. 2).

IV. The Efficient Cause which not only institutes magistracy, but also maintains it, is God himself. In Him must be considered Power purely free and independent, the best Will, and the greatest Capability, as the principles of its institution and preservation.

1. POWER rests on creation, and through that, upon the right of the dominion which God has over all created things, but especially over men (Rom. xiii. 1, 2; John xix. 10, 11; Psalm xxiv. 1; Jeremiah xxvii. 2, 6).
2. The WILL of God, in its institution, is through four kinds of his love:
 - a) His love *of order* among all created things (1 Cor. xiv. 33);
 - b) His love *towards men themselves*, both towards those who are placed in authority, above others, and especially towards those who are put in subjection (2 Cor. ix. 8; 2 Kings xi. 17);
 - c) His love of *obedience to his own law* (Judges ii. 16, 17; 2 Chron. xxxiv. 31, 32);
 - d) His love of *that submission which those who are equals by nature, render to others* who are their superiors, merely through the will or good pleasure of God (Psalm ii. 9, 12).
3. But CAPABILITY, and that of the highest kind, was likewise necessary for this purpose, both on account of [*affectum*] that ambition of being eminent with which men are infected, and on account of the power or capability of an infinite multitude; and it is employed by God through an internal impression upon the hearts of men, of the necessity of this order (1 Sam. x. 26; xi. 7), and through the external defense of it (Josh. i. 5–9).

V. The End of the institution of Magistracy, is the good of the whole, and of each individual of which it is composed, both an *animal* [or natural] good, ‘that they may lead quiet and peaceable lives’ (1 Tim. ii. 2); and a *spiritual* good, that they may live in this world, to God, and may in Heaven enjoy that good, to the glory of God who is its author (Rom. xiii. 4). For since man, according to his two-fold life, (that is, the animal and the spiritual), stands in need of each kind of good (Num. xi. 12, 13), and is, by nature of the image of God, capable of both kinds (Gen. i. 26; Col. iii. 10); since two collateral powers cannot stand (Matt. vi. 24; 1 Cor. xiv. 33), and since animal good is directed to that which is spiritual (Matt. vi. 33), and animal life is subordinate to that which is spiritual (Gal. ii. 20; 1 Cor. xv. 32), it is unlawful to divide those two [*bona*] benefits, and to separate their [*procuracionem*] joint superintendence, either in reality or by the administration of the supreme authority; for, if the animal life and its good become the only objects of solicitude, such an administration is that of cattle. But if human society be brought to such a condition that the spiritual life, only, prevails, then this power [of magistracy] is no longer necessary (1 Cor. xv. 24).

VI. The Matter, of which this administration consists, are the acts necessary to produce that end. These actions, we comprehend in the three following classes:

1. The First is LEGISLATION, under which we also comprise the care of the Moral Law, according to both tables, and the enacting of subordinate laws with respect to places, times and persons, by which laws, provision may be the better made for the observance of that immovable law, and the various societies, being restricted to certain relations, may be the more correctly governed; that is, ecclesiastical, civil,

scholastic and domestic associations (Exod. xviii. 18–20; 2 Chron. xix. 6–8; 2 Kings xiii. 4, 5).

2. The Second contains the vocation to delegated offices or duties, and [*curationem*] the oversight of all actions and things which are necessary to the whole society (Deut. i. 13, 15, 16; Exod. xviii. 21, 22; 1 Pet. ii. 14; 2 Chron. xix. 2, 8–11, Num. xi. 13–17).
3. The Third is either the eradication of all evils out of the society, if they be internal, or [*depulsio*] the warding of them off, if they be external, — even with war, if that be necessary, and the safety of society should require it (Prov. xx. 26, 28; Psalm ci. 8; 1 Tim. ii. 2).

VII. The Form is the power itself, according to which these functions themselves [*administrantur*] are discharged, with an authority that is subject to God alone, and pre-eminently above whatever is human (Rom. xiii. 1; Psalm lxxxii. 1, 6; Lament. iv. 20); for this inspires spirit and life, and gives efficacy to these functions. It is enunciated ‘Power by right of the sword,’ by which the good may be defended, and the bad terrified, restrained and punished, and all men compelled to perform their prescribed duties (Rom. xiii. 4, 5). To this power, as supreme, belongs the authority of demanding, from those under subjection, tribute, custom, and other burdens. These resemble [*nervos*] the sinews, by which the authority and power necessary for these functions, are held together and established (Rom. xiii. 6).

VIII. But though there was no employment for this power before the introduction of sin into the world, because there were then only two human beings, both of whom were comprised in one family; yet we are of opinion, that it would also have had a place in the primitive integrity of mankind, and that it had not its origin from the entrance of sin; for we think this can be proved

- from the nature of man, who is a social animal, and was capable of deviating from his duty
- from the limits of this power
- from the causes which induced God to institute it
- from the natural and moral law itself, and
- from the impression of this power on the hearts of men,

provided any great number of men had been propagated prior to the commission of the first sin (Gen. iii. 6; 1 Tim. ii. 1–iv.; 1 Kings x. 9; Exod. xx. 12–17).

IX. But this power is always the same according to the nature of its function and the prerogative of its authority; and it suffers no variation,

- either from the difference in number of those to whom this power is confided in a monarchy, an aristocracy, or a democracy,

- or from the difference of the manner in which this power is given, whether it be derived immediately from God, or it be obtained by human right and custom through succession, inheritance and election.

Under all these circumstances, it remains the same, unless a limitation, restricted to certain conditions, be added [*illo*] by God, or by those who possess the right of conferring such a power (Josh. xxii. 12; 1 Tim. ii. 2; 1 Pet. ii. 13; Judges 20; 1 Sam. xvi. 12; 2 Sam. 1; 1 Kings xi. 11, 12; xiv. 8–10). And this limitation is equally binding on both parties; nor is it lawful for him who has accepted of this authority, by rescinding the conditions, to assume a greater power to himself, under the pretext that those conditions [*contraveniant*] are opposed to his conscience or to his condition, and that they are even injurious to the society itself.

X. Since the end of this power is the good of the whole, or of the entire [*societas*] association of men, who belong to the same country or state, it follows that the Prince of this state is less than the state itself, and that its benefit is not only to be preferred to his own, but that it is also to be purchased with his detriment, nay, at the expense of life itself (Ezek. xxxiv. 2–4; 1 Sam. xii. 2, 3; viii. 20). Though, in return, every member of the state is bound to defend, with all his powers, yet in a lawful manner, the life, safety and dignity of the Prince, as the father of his country (2 Sam. xvi. 3).

XI. From the circumstance, also, of this power having been instituted by God and restricted within certain laws, we conclude that it is not lawful for him who possesses it, to lift up himself against God, to enact laws contrary to the divine laws, and either to compel the people who are committed to his care to the perpetration of acts which are forbidden by God, or to prevent them from performing such acts as he has commanded. If he acts thus, let him assuredly know, that he must render an account to God, and that the people are bound to obey the Almighty in preference to him (Deut. xvii. 18, 19; 1 Kings xii. 28–30; xiii. 2; 1 Kings xxii. 5). Yet, on this point, the people ought to observe two cautions:

1. To distinguish actions which are to be performed, from burdens which are to be borne.
2. To be perfectly sure that the orders of the Prince are in opposition to the divine commands.

Without a due observance of these cautions, they will, by a precipitate judgment, commit an act of disobedience against the prince, to whom, in that matter, they are able, in an orderly manner, under God, to be obedient.

XII. The Functions which we have described as essential to this Power, are not subject to [*arbitrio*] the arbitrary will of the Prince, whether he may neglect either the whole of them, or one of the three. If he act thus, he renders himself unworthy of the name of ‘Prince;’ and it would be a better course for him to resign the dignity of his office, than to be a trifling loiterer in the discharge of its functions (Psalm lxxxii. 1–8; Ezek. xi. 1–13). But here, also, a two-fold distinction must be used:

1. Between a degree of idleness accruing from the function, and vice coming into it.
2. Between loitering, and hindering these duties from being performed in the Commonwealth;

For the latter of these faults (hindrance) would bring speedy destruction to the society, while the commonwealth can consist with the former, (laziness), provided other persons be permitted to perform those duties.

XIII. We conclude further,

- from the author of the institution
- from the end and the use of the office
- from the functions which pertain to it, and
- from the pre-eminent power itself,

when they are all compared with the nature of Christianity, that a Christian man can, with a good conscience, accept of the office and perform the duties of Magistracy; — nay, that no one is more suitable than he for discharging the duties of this office, — and, which is still more, that no person can legitimately and perfectly fulfill all its duties except a Christian. Yet, by this affirmation, we do not mean to deny that a legitimate Magistracy exists among other nations than those which are Christian (Acts x. 31, 48; Exod. xviii. 20–23).

XIV. Lastly. Because this power is pre eminent, we assert that every soul is subject to it by divine right, whether he be a layman or a clergyman, a deacon, priest, or bishop, an archbishop, cardinal, or Patriarch, or even the Roman Pontiff himself; so that it is the duty of every one to obey the commands of the Magistrate, to acknowledge his tribunal, to await the sentence, and to submit to the punishment which he may award. From such obedience and subjection the Prince himself cannot grant any man immunity and exemption; although in apportioning those burdens which are to be borne, he can yield his prerogative to some persons (Rom. xiii. 1; 1 Pet. ii. 13; v. 1; John xix. 10, 11; Acts xxv. 1, 10; 1 Kings i. 26, 27; Rom. xiii. 5).