



Monergism

**THE ANATOMY OF
ARMINIANISM**

The Opening of the Controversies Lately
Handled in the Low Countries, Concerning the
Doctrine of Providence, of Predestination, of
the Death of Christ, of Nature and Grace

Pierre Du Moulin



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Low Countries, Concerning the Doctrine of Providence, of
Predestination, of the Death of CHRIST, of Nature and GRACE.

BY PIERRE DU MOULIN, Pastor of the Church at Paris.

Carefully translated out of the original Latin Copy.

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at the sign of the Star under Saint Peter's Church in Cornhill, and in
Pope's Head Alley. 1620.

TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFUL Sir Henry Mildmay,

Knight, Master of His Majesty's Jewels, and Sir Henry Row, Knight:
All Health, Prosperity, and Happiness.

RIGHT WORSHIPFUL: It is not a new fashion, for those who publish any Books, whether of greater or lesser worth, to present them to some worthy Personages, for patronage, which, however it may be superfluous and unfit at times, and for some Books, yet it cannot but be very requisite and fitting in this case, both in respect of the Author and of his work: For the Author, by nation, is a stranger, and the work doubtless shall meet with many enemies: And therefore, however they are both of very great worth, they will both need good support and defence. As their necessity in a foreign region requires this, so their great worthiness and pious intention demand it as a duty, from all good men: for in this work, the scrupulous doubts, or rather, the subtle and querulous questions and disputes of over-witty and audacious men, in very weighty points of Faith, are exquisitely discussed and resolved, undoubtedly pacifying many unsettled and unquiet minds in the Church of Christ, who are more inclined to inquire into deep mysteries than to believe them.

Now, since I myself am utterly obscure, and indeed entirely unqualified for such a task, yet the lot has fallen to me to send this translation into the world; I had almost let it go forth without any special regard, to receive such treatment as the world usually offers to strangers. However, recalling your Worship's great courtesy and affability, I thought that these writings should not be unwelcome to you. Besides, having a strong desire to testify the love and much respect I hold for you, I believed that I could not do it better than by dedicating your Worship to such a learned and holy treatise, which aims to uphold Religion and Truth. Just as one of your names is honoured, and that most deservedly, by a famous and lasting Monument of love for Learning, Religion, and Truth; so I am confident that, through your patronage of this Book, your Honorable reputation shall be enhanced; for this, and for all other blessings to be abundantly conferred upon you, I pray to Almighty God. I beseech your Worships to pardon my boldness and to accept the goodwill of the one who shall ever remain most humbly

At your Worship's command.

TO THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS AND MOST POTENT LORDS,

the Lords, the States General of the United Provinces of the Low Countries.

Innumerable are the benefits (most renowned and most mighty Lords) that have happened to your Provinces by the goodness of God and are supplied to you, as it were by the immediate providence of God. These are great things: that your Commonwealth, flourishing with riches, enlarged with territories, potent by sea and land, famous

in the arts both of war and peace, has so beaten back the force of a most mighty enemy that you have always waged war on your enemies' ground, and your cities, in the midst of the heat of the wars, enjoyed halcyon days of peace. All of which are done by the authority of your most Honourable Senate and by the conduct of the Prince of Orange; of whose praises it is better to be silent than to speak but little. Even those who envy your good successes do yet admire your virtue. Finally, your Commonwealth has had such a Senate and such Princes as God gives whenever He will advance poor and afflicted estates to the highest top of power and glory.

But among the other benefits of God, this is most eminent: that when the bottomless pit casts out that thick smoke, which covers almost the whole world in a thick mist of ignorance, amongst you the Sun of Truth clearly shines in his pure orb and has scattered the darkness of ignorance. Hence it has come to pass that your country, together with civil bondage, has shaken off the yoke laid upon your consciences.

Satan, in order to hinder the course of these prosperous affairs, has for many years tried outward forces, from which enterprise being driven, he has betaken himself to crafty subtleties and to internal dissensions, having found men who, desiring novelty under the pretence of piety, have torn the bowels of their own country and church. Pitiful was the sight of your Provinces: the enemy of our salvation brandished amongst you the firebrand of deadly dissension: a tumultuous tragedy was acted on the Theatre of Belgium, your adversaries beholding it with much pleasure: finally, we saw your Commonwealth shaking, and your state almost desperate, had not God, appearing beyond all expectation, turned away this imminent destruction by timely and seasonable remedies, using to that purpose your Authority, Wisdom, and prudent Constancy. With how great patience you have endured these turbulent wits, with how great vigilancy you have prevented this spreading contagion, if no man should speak of it, yet the greatness of the disease and your state restored again to safety would

abundantly witness. In this enterprise, the virtue of the most famous Prince of Orange has manifestly appeared, in whom we have a singular proof of what very great industry can perform with the greatest fortitude, who has added to so many warlike acts the praise of civil prudence. By this deed (most Honourable Lords), you have obtained more praise by restoring than by enlarging the Commonwealth, for this internal pestilence has, in a few years, brought more damage than foreign wars were able to bring in many ages. Of which your virtue, all the Orthodox Churches throughout Europe do reap great fruit, because the sparks of this flame did already fly to them, and the judgments of many among foreign nations did waver concerning these controversies. For in the questions of Providence and Predestination, that opinion is wont to be most acceptable among the common people, which measures the counsels of God by the counsels of men and puts upon God human affections.

But among other things which were prudently and happily done by you, the convocation of the Synod of Dordt has obtained the chief place. Then which Synod for many ages past there has been none more famous, more holy, nor more profitable to the Church. Whereunto that you might call most choice men from diverse parts, you spared neither cost nor labor; wherein all things were done so orderly and gravely that it has drawn the people into admiration, and has stayed those that were staggering, and has so troubled headstrong and obstinate persons only with the sight thereof, that they which before did seem to be desirous of the conflict, and greedily to call for the encounter, have by contrary practices, (whether fear struck them, or their conscience affrighted them) begun to shun the hearing of the cause, to hate the light, and to work delays. To so excellent a thing, both other Princes did exhort you, and especially the most renowned Prince James, King of Great Britain, who has always been most earnest and forward to drive away the errors of all innovators; who as he is rightly styled the Defender of the Faith, so he has his eyes vigilant on all sides, carefully watching lest Christian faith should anywhere receive any damage.

And I who, to so holy a work, could not bring my travel, have at least brought my desires. It cannot be expressed how earnestly I desired to be present at that reverend Synod, to which the Churches of France appointed me, with some of my brethren. What were the impediments which hindered my determined journey, I need not rehearse; yet being absent, I performed what I could; For I sent to the Synod my opinion of the five points of the Controversies which are hindered in Belgium, having strengthened it with places and proofs out of the holy Scripture. And when many men, and the same good men, and of great authority and wisdom amongst you, had exhorted me that I would write somewhat upon these controversies, I not unwillingly obeyed; which I have done, not so much in hope of effecting what I would, as being ashamed to refuse them, and desirous of making trial: For I had rather that godly and learned men should find in me want of prudence, than accuse me of negligence. Therefore I have printed my Schedules and papers, and have reviewed those things which I had meditated upon these questions, which I have uttered in a plain and untrimmed style, that as it were in a lean spare body, the force of the truth might clearly appear. And I have endeavored to bring light to this darkness, in which the most quick-sighted do often grope at the way.

I am not ignorant how dangerous a thing it is to undergo the hazard of so many judgments; how many there that are ambitiously sour, and proudly disdainful; how few there are that take and understand these things; how fewer that are taken by them; how hard it is to contend with wily and witty men; who even when they themselves are caught, do so speak as if they had caught others; and who in a desperate cause do so carry themselves, as if they were touched with commiseration: who undo again the things that have been begun by themselves, and do of purpose infold their meanings, fearing to be understood; like lizards, who out of the open field do run into bushes. Nor am I ignorant how hard a thing it is for a man that is employed, whose mind is troubled with other cares and business, to write punctually and exactly concerning those things whereunto the most free studies are scarce sufficient, nor men at greatest leisure.

But your humanity and wisdom have moved and stirred me up, to be bold to attempt it: For you know, that in great and hard enterprises, the endeavor is laudable, even when success is wanting. Nor have I doubted to consecrate these my labours to you, that the work done for the defense of that cause, which you happily maintain, might manifest itself in your name: I shall seem to myself not to have lost my labour, though I get no praise, if I obtain pardon: Or if by my example, I shall stir up any to perform something more perfectly, whereby the truth may stand unshaken against these innovators, which do naughtily abuse their wits, and are of a wicked and unhappy audacity.

In the meanwhile, in your wisdom, you shall observe from what beginnings, to how great increases this pestilence has come, and how, under a show of the liberty of prophesying, the reins are let loose to wanton wits, which cover licentiousness under the name of liberty. For while (as it were for the exercise and show of wit) men dispute about those foundations of faith, of which heretofore there was no strife amongst us, the most holy and most certain things began to be called into doubt, and their scholastic skirmishing forthwith burst out into a serious and earnest fight. For when this liberty (as it falls out) had passed from the Schools into the holy Pulpits, and so into the Streets, Taverns, and Barbershops, the whole Country was changed into a certain sea, boiling with tumults: Whence hatred has been bred in the people, and piety is turned into contention, and obedience towards Magistrates is more slack: to which evils, when the ambition of some men, affecting novelties, had joined itself, which stirred up this fire with wind and fuel laid to it, this flame in a short time has unmeasurably increased: But by the goodness of God, and by your authority and prudent vigilancy (most illustrious Lords) the flame of so great a fire is abated, liberty is recovered, the Commonwealth is settled, the University purged, and truth, which in many places dared scarcely open the mouth, or else was disturbed by contrary clamours, broke through the obstacles, and (as it is in the striking of flints) it shone more clear by the very conflict; yea truly, by it there have appeared no obscure increases of

piety in the people; by it there is greater concourse to hear the word of God, and greater attention. For God (such is his goodness) does use vices themselves to stir up virtues which grow slothful in idleness; For zeal and piety being provoked do increase, even as the fire of the Smiths furnace decaying, is set on fire by water poured on. Also they that have learned by experience, what snares Satan does lay for them that are asleep and unwary, are stirred up to keep watch for the time to come.

There yet remain some relics of this disease, neither is the malice of the Factions quite assuaged; but there is hope that the sides of this wound will in a short space close together again, and men's minds will be reconciled. So that it may be unlawful in your University (from whence this contagion crept into the whole Country) hereafter to teach any doctrine differing from the truth, and to call into doubt those things which are piously and prudently determined out of God's word in your sacred Synod; and that hereafter no man be admitted to the sacred Ministry, whose faith is not tried, and his consent with his brethren known; and that the authority be restored to Synods, and their use be made more frequent: that the evils that are breeding may be prevented at their beginnings, as when the stinging Scorpion is bruised presently upon the wound. Also it has been wisely provided by you that these things hereafter be not published among the common sort, that the people be not taught so much to dispute, as to live: and that they accustom themselves to fight with their own vices, and not with other men's opinions. For it is a most hard, and a very profitable combat which every godly man makes with himself. On the contrary side, when strife is sown by strife, and not the truth but the victory is sought, first charity and then truth is lost among the contenders.

And especially diligence is to be used, lest peace and riches bring forgetfulness of the Cross of Christ: and lest the people unmindful of the benefits of God, should at length draw upon them his judgments. There are not wanting examples of people to whom when religion had brought forth riches and prosperity, a while after the same riches

and prosperity choked religion, and with a shameful parricide killed their Mother. So much the more care, therefore, is to be had, that the ears of your people may always ring with those instructions whereby the memory of the calamities driven from them may be refreshed, and their minds might tremble with a godly fear, when they foresee afar off the dangers to come, and Satan lying in wait for them.

To which thing, it is no light instigation, that by these late tumults, you have tried that the peace of the commonwealth consists in the integrity of Religion. Neither can the purity of true Religion (which is maintained by you) be violated without also shaking the pillars on which your commonwealth stands and by which the authority of your supreme Magistracy is sustained. These two are so closely bound together by a mutual bond that one cannot be overthrown without the other falling down. Your authority was attacked through the side of Religion, and in the foundations of the Church, the foundations of the commonwealth were undermined. Your power, therefore, will be sound and safe when obedience due to princes is seen as a part of piety, and when the Pastors of the Church train up the people to obey you through the word of God. On the other hand, the Church will flourish when Princes act as her nurturing fathers and understand that they are appointed by God to govern the commonwealth in such a way that God's reign may be established through them, and Religion may be carefully nurtured under the shelter of their civil power.

This, you do diligently and successfully, most Illustrious Lords. It cannot be overstated how much your people are indebted to you, and they will continue to owe you more. Certainly, all good people in the Christian world greet your prosperous success and admire your wisdom. They earnestly pray to God to preserve you long for the sake of the Church and the commonwealth, for He has used you to preserve both the Church and the commonwealth. May He continue to govern you by His spirit and protect you with His providence so that all your efforts may achieve their desired ends. May you have a well-governed commonwealth, a state in safety, domestic harmony,

abundant wealth, strong armies, frequent victories, a people obedient to your command. Who can doubt whether they should call you Lords or Fathers?

One who greatly honors your most illustrious Lordships, PIERRE DU MOULIN

Chapter 1

How soberly we are to deal with this argument.

If in any other argument, especially in this which we are to discuss, that rule of Saint Paul is to be followed: that no man should be wiser than he ought, but rather wise with moderation. God has veiled the secrets of His wisdom in great mist, and it is a sin to rush into it, for while we delve into His Majesty, we may be overwhelmed by His glory. It is better to understand things that are safe than things that are lofty and to obey God's commandments rather than pry into His counsels. This curiosity has been the undoing of humanity. Adam, in his desire to be like God in knowing good and evil, lost the good and learned evil to his detriment, being punished. Heresies have sprung from this, as people, carried away by the itching of their own wit, venture beyond the bounds of God's word. These troubles that Satan has stirred up in this age (which is as full of disputes as it is lacking in piety) have resulted from it, as men, by their wicked intellect and rash presumption, have dared to call God to account and prescribe laws to Him, greatly afflicting the most flourishing Churches of the Low Countries. Therefore, it is most prudent to follow God as our guide, to understand as much as He has revealed to us in His word, and to remain silent where God Himself does not speak. But we must be very careful not to uphold God's wisdom and providence to the

detriment of His justice. Likewise, we should avoid defending His justice at the expense of His providence. God should not be considered unjust if He does something that does not fully align with the rules we have devised in our own minds. These two things must be diligently avoided as two fatal and perilous rocks. However, it is far worse to label God as unjust than to set limits on His providence. For it is less perilous to depict God as a disinterested observer of sin than to believe that He is the author and instigator of sin. There is no greater harm than to attribute the cause of human wickedness to God. This leads to men breaking free from their restraints and committing all kinds of excess, believing that God is the patron and author of their wickedness.

To curb curiosity and to inspire a reverent fear in our minds, it is highly beneficial to consider our own insignificance when compared to the divine majesty. If any of us were to accidentally crush an ant under our foot, no one would accuse us of injustice, even though the ant has not wronged us, has not given us life, has destroyed another's work which cannot be restored by man, and there exists a finite, certain proportion between us and the ant. But man has gravely offended God, and yet God has given life to man, and there is no proportion between God and man, only an infinite difference, as vast as that between the finite and the infinite. If God were to crush those sinful men, whom He has the power to save, and if, in His patience, He makes them vessels of His anger to display His glory, should anyone argue with God, or find His goodness lacking, or accuse His justice?

Chapter 2

That we are not therefore altogether to abstain from the doctrine of Providence and Predestination, although some abuse it to curiosity and impiety. And whereto it is profitable.

There are some who, weary of the controversies arising from the doctrine of Providence and Predestination, believe that it is safest for the peace of the Church and the tranquility of conscience not to engage in these questions or speak of them to the people. They argue that such discussions lead to doubts, scruples, and the shaking of the faith of the weak. Instead, they say, teach the people what God commands us to do and instill in them the doctrine of good works, leaving the mysteries of Election and Reprobation to God.

Indeed, this argument may sound virtuous but lacks truth. Those who make this argument, while appearing to seek piety and harmony, secretly accuse Christ and His Apostles of imprudence and indiscretion because these figures frequently emphasized the doctrine of Election in the New Testament. They are, in effect, complicit in the removal of a portion of God's Word by urging pastors to withhold the complete Gospel doctrine from the people. While they feign modesty in their willful ignorance, they impose limitations on God Himself.

Furthermore, without this doctrine, we cannot give due honor to God or establish our faith. Through the Doctrine of Predestination, we grasp the immeasurable extent of God's goodness and love toward us—He loved and chose us before the foundation of the world. All the light and grace God bestows upon us is recognized as flowing from this eternal love. Human merit crumbles before this doctrine, and the illusion of free will in matters of salvation fades away. Confidence in our salvation wavers unless it is upheld by God's unchanging decree, not by human free will. This doctrine also brings great comfort in times of sorrow and eases bitterness, as we understand that all things, even the most grievous, work together for the good of those called by God's purpose. There is no greater motivation for good works than acknowledging the eternal love with which God, in

Christ, loved us before all time. Ultimately, this doctrine teaches us to examine ourselves and our consciences, to seek and kindle the evidence of our election within us, knowing that our own efforts and care should promote God's choice, and that the path to heaven cannot be reached through impenitence and unbelief.

Therefore, with Scripture as our guide, this doctrine may be profitably taught, provided we maintain a balance between feigned ignorance and reckless curiosity and exercise moderation. We must avoid what is unlawful while not abstaining from what is lawful.

In this endeavour, we deal with individuals who err on both sides, leaning toward either extreme. For instance, Arminius delves into the mysteries of God with a scrupulous curiosity, dissecting the doctrine of Election. Yet, paradoxically, he diminishes the entire doctrine of Election, suggesting that if it were unknown, God's love and grace would remain undiminished towards us. "Those who deny this election," he says, "deny what is true, without injuring the grace or mercy of God."

Chapter 3

What the providence of God is. How far it extends. That God is not the author of sin. What permission is. And what blinding and hardening is.

I. Providence is a divine virtue, the governing force behind all things, by which God has foreknown and preordained from eternity both the ends of all things and the means leading to those ends.

II. Since all things are present to God, there is nothing He has not foreseen from eternity. However, whether He has made a distinct

decree for each and every event is debatable. It does not seem likely that God has decreed from eternity how many ears of corn shall grow in the Neapolitan field or any other, or how many shreds hang from a beggar's torn coat or blanket. These things neither have regard for good nor evil, nor do they enhance the glory of God or the protection of the world. Therefore, Thomas Aquinas is of the opinion that, by God's decree, the number of men is determined but not the number of gnats or worms. Not that these small things escape God's knowledge, or that God cannot extend His providence to them, but it does not appear fitting to His profound wisdom to decree anything that adds nothing to His glory or the protection of the universe. Undoubtedly, God has foreknown all things from eternity, even the smallest ones. However, He has only preordained and decreed those things that contain some element of goodness, thereby making the glory of God more illustrious or the world more perfect.

III. The will of God cannot be resisted. Romans 9:20 states, "But who are you, O man, to answer back to God? Will what is molded say to its molder, 'Why have you made me like this?'" God Himself affirms this in Isaiah 46:10, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose." Saint Paul also confirms this in Ephesians 1, stating, "In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will." Arminius, however, disagrees with this notion. In his book against Perkins, on page 60, he posits that God may thwart the specific end He has set for Himself. On page 198, he suggests that God's antecedent will may be resisted. Whether this is true, we shall examine later.

IV. God is by no means the author or instigator of sin. Psalm 5:5 says, "The boastful shall not stand before your eyes; you hate all evildoers." Psalm 45:7-8 states, "You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness. Therefore God, your God, has anointed you with the oil of gladness beyond your companions." God is not merely just; He is justice itself. It is as impossible for justice itself to sin or be the source of sin as it is for whiteness to blacken a wall or heat to make

one could. God not only does what is just, but what is just is defined by what God does. The notion that some propose, suggesting that God, although He compels men to sin, does not sin Himself because there is no sin where there is no law and God is bound by no laws, must be utterly rejected. I confess that God is not subject to any law, yet it is certain that He can do nothing contrary to His own nature. God cannot lie because He is truth itself. God cannot sin because He is perfect righteousness itself. These assertions that sin is committed either through God's procurement or encouragement must be entirely eradicated from theology.

V. Man, by his own fault, has brought destruction upon himself, and the fall of man cannot be attributed to God. "Thy destruction, O Israel, is from thyself; but in me is thy help" (Hosea 13:9-10). Just as in the generation of an infant, the sun and man's actions work together, yet if a deformity is born, it is not attributed to the sun but to man. This happens because the monstrous result occurs due to a defect in the organs or the improper disposition of the matter, causing a deviation from the usual course of the universal agent. Similarly, in human actions, God and man's will coexist, but if any evil is present in the action, it should not be attributed to God but to the disposition of man's will.

VI. Nevertheless, the Scripture sometimes employs expressions that may give occasion to the profane to attribute sins to God as if they were committed by His will and instigation. For instance, the sons of Jacob, out of envy, sold their brother Joseph. Regarding this event, Joseph himself says, "You indeed thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to save much people alive," which might suggest that God was the author of this act. Scripture also speaks of the sons of Samuel not obeying their father's admonitions, asserting that God wanted to put them to death (1 Samuel 2:25). In 1 Kings 22, a malignant spirit offers to deceive the prophets, and God allows it, saying, "You shall deceive and also prevail. Go forth and do so." When Shimei cursed David with foul imprecations in 2 Samuel 16,

David accepted it as though it happened by God's instigation, saying, "Let him curse, for the Lord hath said unto him, 'Curse David.'"

David faced severe calamities as a consequence of his adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of Uriah. His son Absalom rebelled against him, driving David from his kingdom and openly abusing his wives. Nathan, sent to David by God, explained that these events had occurred in this way: "You did it secretly, but I will do this thing before all Israel" (2 Samuel 12). Satan afflicted Job, and the Chaldeans stole his possessions. In response, Job, a servant of God, said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" (Job 1:21). In Acts 4, Saint Peter stated, "Against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles and the people of Israel, were gathered together to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." Saint Paul, in Romans 1, spoke of people who worshipped idols and were given over to wickedness, stating that God gave them up to vile and wicked affections, allowing them to commit these heinous acts. God Himself attested in Exodus 10 and Romans 9 that He hardened Pharaoh's heart. Lastly, the sixth chapter of Isaiah contains the chilling words of God: "Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes: lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and convert and be healed."

To prevent profane individuals from misusing these passages to justify their intemperance and to counteract the hardened hearts of those who might attribute their condition to God, it is necessary to provide explanations that can clarify this issue and reveal the truth hidden in this darkness.

VII. First and foremost, we must caution that a middle path be maintained between two extremes. One extreme attributes sin to God, making Him its author, while the other suggests that things happen without God's willingness, knowledge, or attention, as if He sits in a watchtower waiting for random events based on chance or

human whims. Those who wish to acknowledge God's providence without impugning His justice and without assigning sins to Him should avoid both extremes and not invoke ignorance or neglect in God's actions to defend His justice.

VIII. Firstly, it must be acknowledged that sin does not occur without God's permission. The term "permitting" should not trouble anyone as if it diminishes God's care and providence, considering that Saint Paul himself used this word in Acts 14, where he said to the people of Lycaonia, "God in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways," signifying that God allowed sin. To permit sin is not to hinder it when it can be hindered. Therefore, there are various means of permitting sin, just as there are means of preventing it. God hinders sin in two ways: through His justice by commanding, forbidding, admonishing, threatening, and promising, and through His power by taking away the ability or removing the occasion for sin, or by the efficacy of His spirit, changing and inclining our wills towards piety when they are inclined towards sin. The former is a moral hindrance, while the latter is a natural or even a supernatural one. Based on these means of hindering sin, there are also diverse means of permitting it. God permits sin either by loosening the constraints of the Law and granting freedom to sin or by not removing the ability to sin, which could prevent individuals from committing the act. God never permits sin in the former manner, but He does permit it in the latter manner, where He does not hinder individuals from attempting to sin and does not provide a certain measure of His grace that could prevent sin.

IX. This permission is a deliberate act of God's will because it is voluntary. God does nothing unknowingly or unwillingly; therefore, God permits sin because He wills to permit it. He would not have permitted it if it were not good for it to be permitted. Without evil, we would not know what is good, just as we would not comprehend the concept of light without darkness. Without sin, His justice (which punishes) and His mercy (which pardons) would remain unknown, as would His wisdom (which extracts good from evil) and His infinite

love (which led Him to send His son into the world to die for us). Not that God requires our wickedness to glorify Himself, but because otherwise, man could not attain the ultimate happiness for which he was created. God cannot be perfectly known or loved unless His justice and mercy are understood. Thus, by man's very fall, God has paved the way for man to attain a more perfect condition. While it might be wished that man had not sinned in the case of many individual persons who perish, the greater good, which is the primary consideration, would not have been achieved had God used His power to prevent sin.

X. Furthermore, even though God permits devils and humans to sin, He does not release them entirely from His providential control. While they may stray from the path of righteousness, they remain within the boundaries of His providence, preventing them from harming those whom God loves. Although human wills have become corrupt, God's governance, to which human wills are subject, has not diminished, regardless of how resistant they are to His commandments. Even when driven by the spirit of rebellion, they gnash their teeth against His rule, they are still encompassed by the limits of His providence.

XI. The primary faculties of the soul are two: the Understanding, by which man knows, and the Will, by which he motivates himself. Through understanding, we acquire knowledge or remain unlearned; through the will, we become either good or evil. In the understanding, we affirm or deny; in the will, we desire or refuse. God does not implant wicked desires in the mind, but He often shrouds the mind in darkness and, in His just judgment, blinds the understanding. He confuses the rebels and intoxicates them with the spirit of slumber. In this manner, God takes away the light of knowledge when man abuses it to defy God and indulge in sinful freedom. However, once God has removed this light, the erring will stumbles and commits grave offenses. Hardness of heart naturally follows this blindness of the mind. Saint John associates these two, stating that "God hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts"

(John 12:40). In this way, later sins become the punishment for earlier sins, as Saint Augustine extensively teaches in his fifth book against Julian. By the very same means by which man becomes more wicked through his later sins, he also becomes more wretched. It is not that sin is sent by God as a punishment, but rather that God uses the sin, which is not from Him, as a form of punishment. This doctrine of mere and indifferent permission is therefore invalidated, as a judge does not punish through indifferent permission but through decreeing or judging based on justice.

XII. The provision and furnishing of external means of salvation, such as the word and sacraments, also contribute to this hardening of the heart. Unless God moves the heart with the powerful grace of His Spirit, human wickedness is further stirred up by these external aids. Casting off this burdensome yoke, man follows destructive paths and plunges himself into greater ruin. This fulfills what is said in Psalm 81: "I gave them up to their own heart's lusts, that they might walk in their own counsels." Yet, to understand that this hardness of heart emanates from man himself, the Scripture does not only attribute the hardening of Pharaoh's heart to God but also mentions that Pharaoh himself hardened his own heart (Exodus 8:15). Similarly, in Romans 1, Saint Paul's statement should be understood not as God infusing reprobate minds and vile affections into the wicked but as God, having extinguished His light, allowing these vile affections to dominate them. This is also explained by Thomas Aquinas (*Summa Theologica*, Lib. 2, Quest. 79, Art. 1).

XIII. Moreover, there are two categories of individuals with hardened hearts. Besides the hardness of heart common to all reprobates, which leaves man to himself and causes him to continually worsen, there are those of high wickedness, whom God delivers to Satan with a special and extraordinary vengeance. Examples include Pharaoh, Saul, and Judas.

XIV. Every positive being depends on God as the primary and principal entity. The creature cannot move itself without God's

assistance and sustenance. "For in him we live, and move, and have our being" (Acts 17). God not only works through influence in the creatures or assists them with a general power and influence but also provides His specific assistance, sustaining and directing various actions. The outcomes of various actions show that they are not random but are intended by God. For instance, Proverbs 16:33 states, "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord."

XV. Although God provides His influence in human actions through His concurrence, sustaining the agent, directing the actions, setting limits to them, ordering events, and drawing good from evil, it should not be concluded that God instigates evil actions or forced Eve to eat from the forbidden tree. To clarify this assertion, we state that God not only works through the creature but also works with the creature. Both God and the creature are concurrent causes of a single effect, and together, they are the complete cause of any action. If the creature acts voluntarily, it can, by its own concurrence, corrupt the action in which God is involved and direct it toward evil. In such cases, the entire fault remains with the creature. God does not eliminate the creature's free contribution of its own power while effectively infusing into the creature. If a man sins in a human action, God's concurrence is natural, whereas the creature's concurrence is moral. The whole blame lies with the creature, as the creature's moral choices lead to deformity in an action. If there is deformity in the action, it is naturally good since it is from God. However, it becomes morally evil due to the involvement of the creature. The action itself is distinct from the deformity of the action, which is the formal sin. While God concurs with man in the action itself, He does not concur in the sin.

XVI. God cannot be blamed for cooperating with the creature, knowing that it will misuse His cooperation and assistance for sinning. Man's vice cannot limit the extent of God's power, dissolve the eternal laws that govern the entire natural order, or nullify the inherent necessity whereby the creature cannot move itself without

God's assistance. Just as the soul, aware that the body may misuse its capacity for movement, does not withhold its driving force or refrain from moving the body, God's power remains undiminished in natural matters, and His influence does not cease because in moral matters, man's will disobeys God's law. In fact, God cannot demand obedience from the creature unless He sustains it and imparts the power to self-motion.

XVII. Similar to how the sun is not the cause of darkness, even though darkness inevitably follows its absence, God, being the epitome of justice, is not the cause of sin. Instead, disordered affections, mental blindness, and the depravity of the will inevitably follow the rejection of God's grace. This is the intention of those who assert that God is not the efficient cause of sin but rather the deficient cause. However, it would be preferable for people to avoid using this kind of language.

XVIII. Although wicked individuals act freely and of their own accord when they sin, with God neither enticing nor compelling them, it is certain that the consequences that ensue are directed and governed by God's providence. Just as the course of running water, naturally inclined downward, can be diverted by a channel guided by the diligence of the one directing it, so even though wicked individuals are naturally inclined toward sin due to their own disposition, God's providence and secret counsel incline them to commit one sin rather than another. This serves the execution of God's judgments, whether to punish someone's wickedness, test the faith of the godly, or rouse their diligence. Solomon used a similar analogy, saying in Proverbs 21, "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will." As Saint Peter mentioned in Acts 4, the wicked do what God's hand and purpose have predetermined to occur. This is why God says in Isaiah 5 that He will summon distant nations to lay waste to Judea. In chapter 10, He calls Assyria the rod of His wrath. When Jeroboam sought rebellion against Solomon, the prophet Ahijah, sent by God, declared the outcome. God did not implant this rebellion into

Jeroboam's heart; it had already been conceived. Instead, He hardened Jeroboam's already evil mind to embark on this wicked attempt, intending to use him as an instrument to punish Solomon and Rehoboam's sins.

In this way, just as leeches applied to a sick person's body, while they satisfy their own hunger, carry out the physician's purpose, wicked individuals, when they rage against the righteous, inadvertently advance God's plan. This was explained by Isaiah in chapter ten, where God stated that He had decreed to use the King of Assyria to punish Israel's hypocrisy, even though this was not in the king's mind, motivated only by ambition and greed. God utilised the wickedness of Joseph's brothers to prevent famine among His people and Judas' betrayal for the death of Christ and our redemption. Similarly, He exploited Augustus Caesar's ambition in ordering the entire Empire to be taxed, thus bringing Mary from Galilee to Bethlehem for the prophesied birth of Jesus. Those who resist God's command unwittingly aid His providence, acting like rowers pushing the boat in the direction they want to go. By the folly of men, God accomplishes His wise purposes, using unjust individuals to execute His justice, as if someone were to strike a straight blow with a crooked staff.

XIX. Whenever God, letting loose the reins to Satan, permits him to tempt anyone, Satan may indeed entice the appetite by presenting objects or disturb the imagination through changes in the body's humors, but he cannot compel the will. Otherwise, it would not be the person but Satan himself sinning. In such a case, God could not justly punish a person for a sin to which they were coerced by an external cause, against their own inclination.

XX. However, because God, when seeking to avenge the rebellion of His enemies or punish the sins of His own people, sometimes uses Satan as His instrument, Holy Scripture attributes the same event to both God and Satan. For instance, in 1 Samuel 16, the evil spirit troubling Saul is said to be from God. In 1 Chronicles 21, it is said

that Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of the people, yet in 2 Samuel 24, the same event is attributed to God. In this context, God acts as a just judge, and Satan serves as an instigator of wickedness.

By understanding these principles, one can approach the writings of Saint Augustine more readily. There are passages in his works that may perplex sensitive readers unless they are interpreted appropriately. For example, in his book "On Grace and Free Will," Chapter 20, he says, "What wise man can understand how the Lord said to this man, 'Curse David'? For He did not bid him, by commanding him, to gain praise through obedience. Instead, because God inclined his will, which was inherently evil due to his own vices, towards this sin by His just and hidden judgment, it is said that the Lord bid him." In Chapter 22 of the same work, he asserts, "God works in the hearts of people to incline their wills wherever He pleases, either towards good things out of His own mercy or towards evil things according to their deserts." In his arguments against Julian the Pelagian in Book 5, Chapter 3, Augustine contends that those who are given over to their own desires are driven into sins by divine power. Thomas Aquinas also teaches similar concepts in his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, specifically in Chapter 9.

Chapter 4.

Of the will of God.

I. The will in man is called the rational appetite, whereby man, of his own accord and with knowledge, moves himself to obtain good, whether it is truly good or only appears good in the opinion of man.

However, sometimes the will is not referred to the faculty by which we will, but to the act of willing or desiring. Sometimes it is also referred to the thing itself that we will, just as Saint Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 4 that the will of God is our sanctification.

II. Will, in God, is not a rational appetite because God is not capable of any appetite, let alone reason. Nevertheless, the will of God is the act of willing by which He either commands, appoints, or decrees.

III. The will of God can be understood in two ways: one is His decree, and the other is His commandment. God's decree pertains to His providence, while His commandment pertains to His justice. Through His decree, He arranges and disposes the events of things, while through His commandment, He governs our actions. By the former, all creatures, even the Devils themselves, obey; by the latter, only the faithful, albeit not perfectly.

IV. Faithful individuals are considered just not because they obey God's decree but because they are obedient to His commandment. For example, a wicked son who wishes for the death of his sick father sins against God's will, even if his wicked intent aligns with God's decree. Conversely, a son who prays for the health of his sick father obeys God's will, even if, by God's decree, his death is certain. God forbids murder, yet He decreed that the Jews would kill Christ, and in this act, they sinned against God while fulfilling His decree (Acts 2:23). Vorstius himself acknowledges that God did not want His people to be sent away by Pharaoh so soon because God had decreed not to change Pharaoh's heart to obedience. Concerning the commandment, there is no doubt that God commanded Pharaoh to release the people promptly, as indicated by the many plagues inflicted upon him for disobedience. By emphasizing these two wills, Vorstius does not attribute hypocrisy or fraudulent dissimulation to God, as he falsely accuses us of doing.

V. The Scriptures sometimes intermingle these two wills, using them interchangeably. When Christ, in John 6, states that He descended

from Heaven not to do His own will but the will of Him who sent Him, He certainly understands both of these wills. Christ, through His actions, fulfilled all righteousness and executed God's decree. Thus, either of these wills is referred to as the purpose of God (Isaiah 46:10, Luke 7:30, Acts 20:27).

VI. This decree of God is properly called the will of God in itself. The law of God is not so properly referred to as His will, for the law is more of a document or lesson than His will. It serves as a declaration through which God makes known to man how to please Him rather than what He has absolutely ordained to happen. Only of the will of God, properly termed, can it be said that Psalm 115: "God does whatever He wills" is true.

VII. The promises and threats of God are even more improperly described as the will of God since they neither command nor decree anything absolutely. They are declarations through which God discloses what will occur depending on whether man obeys the law or believes the Gospel.

Perhaps some argue that the promises and threats of God are His conditional decree, dependent on the condition being fulfilled according to man's pleasure. However, this cannot be truly said. If it were so, this decree would not be certain according to the will of God, even if the outcome were foreseen by Him. Nothing can be more absurd than to suggest that God decrees something with a condition He knows will never be fulfilled at the very moment He decrees it. When a master tells a servant that if he does something, he will receive a reward, it implies that the reward will be given when the condition is met. However, God wills nothing that He did not will from eternity. While God promises life under the condition of obedience, He decrees nothing under such a doubtful condition. He does not elect Peter if he believes, but He elects him to faith for his salvation. God was not merely willing to spare the Ninevites if they repented, but He also granted them repentance by which they turned.

VIII. Those who claim that God's decree is His secret will and His commandment is His revealed will seem to me to speak thoughtlessly. Many things about God's decrees are made known to us, not only those revealed through events, but also many other things that God has taught us through His Word will come to pass, such as the coming of Christ and the resurrection.

IX. Thomas and the Schoolmen distinguish between the will of God "voluntas beneplaciti" (the will of good pleasure) and "voluntas signi" (the will of sign), referring to His signified and revealed will. These distinctions often overlap, as many aspects of God's will of good pleasure are signified to us. Furthermore, the term "beneplaciti" or "good pleasure" in Greek often implies love and goodwill, as seen in Luke 2:14, where it says, "On earth peace, goodwill toward men." Also, Ephesians 1:5 and 9 use the term in a similar context. However, God's decree extends to His judgments and the punishment of the wicked.

X. Those who pit these two wills against each other and claim they are in conflict do so unjustly. If God were to compel a person to do things He has forbidden or hinder someone who is striving to obey His law, it would imply contradictory desires within God and resistance to His own will. However, His decree does not oppose His command when He requires things of man that exceed human ability and does not grant man the capability to fulfil what is commanded. Man himself is the cause of his own weakness and inability, and God is not obligated to restore the powers lost due to man's fault. Just as a debtor does not owe less because he has squandered his wealth, a creditor is not unjust in demanding repayment from a bankrupt individual because he views him not as a destitute person but as a debtor.

Arminius, in his argument against Perkins, is mistaken when he states that someone who withholds necessary help for an act of faith desires that person not to believe. Certainly, someone who does not give money to a pauper who has fallen into poverty due to his own

actions does not wish for his continued destitution, nor does he take pleasure in his poverty. His additional claim is also flawed. Just as it cannot be asserted that God wants a creature to live while denying the means of its preservation, it cannot be said that God desires a particular action to be performed by someone while withholding the necessary concurrence and assistance for that action. Arminius dwells on these points and similar arguments, but he does so inadequately. He employs an analogy that lacks resemblance. No one is obligated to their very existence, and God cannot demand of someone who does not exist that they come into being. However, obedience to God is a natural obligation for man. Therefore, God can rightfully demand from man what he owes, yet He is not obliged to provide him with the ability to obey and fulfil His commands. In this context, I would prefer to state that God did not decree to bestow grace upon an individual for their conversion and belief rather than asserting that God decreed that the person should remain an unbeliever and impenitent. The term "decreeing" is better suited to describe what God determined to do rather than what He determined not to do.

XI. Furthermore, under the term obedience, I also include faith in Christ. This is because faith in Christ is a form of obedience required by the law, which commands that we love God with all our heart and strength. Consequently, it prescribes obedience to God and belief in His Word, whatever that Word may command. Hence, when we reject the Gospel's teachings through unbelief, we not only act contrary to faith but also transgress the law through disobedience. Therefore, although faith in Christ was not explicitly commanded by the law, and Adam was not obligated to believe in Christ before his fall, it is evident that God, in commanding assent and reverence for His Gospel, demands the love prescribed by the law and naturally owed to Him, that is, to Christ.

All the points discussed thus far aim to show that there is no distinction between these two wills of God. We should consult Saint Augustine's "Enchiridion to Laurentius," Chapter 101, where he

explains how God's will can be fulfilled by those who do not carry out God's will and emphasizes that nothing happens outside of God's will if it goes against His will.

Chapter 5

Of the Antecedent and Consequent will of God.

Damascen, in his second Book of Orthodox faith, Chapter 29, presents two wills of God: one called "Antecedent" (or prior), and the other "Consequent." Arminius has adopted this distinction, making it a key element of his Doctrine. Whenever he is pressed by our side, he retreats into this den, much like a lizard seeking refuge in thickets.

I. Arminius explains that the Antecedent will of God is that by which God wills something for the rational creature before any of its actions or before any act of that creature. Conversely, the Consequent will is that by which He wills something for the rational creature after one or many acts of the creature. To clarify this distinction, he provides examples. He says, "God, by His Antecedent will, would establish and confirm forever the kingdom of Saul; by His Consequent will, He would remove him from his kingdom and replace him with a better man. Christ, by His Antecedent will, would gather the Jews as a hen gathers her chickens; but by His Consequent will, He would scatter them throughout all the nations. By His Antecedent will, they are invited to the marriage feast; which, by His Consequent will, they are declared unworthy of," as seen in Matthew 22. "By His Antecedent will, the man without the wedding garment was invited; by His Consequent will, he was cast out. By His Antecedent will, the talents are given; by His Consequent will, the talent is taken from the servant."

II. These two wills are termed the Antecedent and Consequent wills of God, not because one necessarily precedes the other in chronological order – for in this sense, the distinction could be accepted, as there is a certain order among God's purposes. For instance, His will to create man precedes His will to provide for or clothe him. However, Damascen and Arminius refer to them as the Antecedent and Consequent wills of God because they are concerned with the relationship between God's will and the actions of man's will. The Antecedent will goes before the act of man's will, while the Consequent will follows it and depends upon it. Arminius clearly outlines this in his previously provided definitions.

III. Arminius distinguishes between these two wills of God by asserting that the Antecedent will of God can be resisted, whereas the Consequent will cannot. He contends that God can be thwarted in His Antecedent will and fall short of His intended goal. In his view, God does not always achieve what He intends, and sometimes He is disappointed in achieving a specific end He set for Himself. He believes that God is prepared to do things that He knows from eternity He will not do. This leads to the situation where God has prepared Himself in vain, and by His Consequent will, which is eternal, certain, and unchangeable, He has decreed to harden those reprobates whom, by His Antecedent will, He is prepared to soften and convert. Thus, God is prepared to do that which He has decreed not to do.

IV. According to Arminius, man's will comes into play between these two wills of God. This causes God to revoke His Antecedent will, which is the better one. Driven from His intended goal, He turns to something different than what He initially intended. Vorstius even goes so far as to assert that God will not do some things afterward that He had promised and even sworn to do.

V. If any doctrine is disrespectful to God, it is this one. It accuses God of folly, ascribing to Him human emotions and attributing to Him wishes that have no power or strength. It portrays God as saying, "I

truly desire to save you, but you hinder Me from doing what I desire. I would if you would. Therefore, since I am frustrated in My intent by you, I will change My purpose and, with My will now inclined differently, I have decided to destroy you forever." Clearly, this Antecedent will of God is not a will but a desire and wish that God only obtains through entreaty and, to the extent possible, by human goodwill. Arminius frequently refers to this will as a desire and natural affection. These sectarians often cite passages like Psalms 81:14 and Isaiah 48:18, where God is depicted as one who wishes and desires, and is disappointed in His wish, as if they were spoken literally. In reality, these passages use anthropomorphic language, describing God in human terms.

VI. Furthermore, it is grievous to be deprived of one's desires and natural affections, which is inconsistent with the nature of God, who should not be deceived unless He willingly chooses to be. If God is perfectly good, indeed the very essence of goodness, then His affections and natural desires (if He has any) must be of the highest sanctity, justice, and perfection. Therefore, fulfilling His natural affection and allowing God to achieve His desired end should be our utmost wish. Consequently, we should grieve for God's sake when He is deprived of the best possible outcome, and He could have obtained His desired goal if only humanity would allow it. Consider the extent to which these innovators misguide themselves and how they dishonour God. This leads to Vorstius' impious and wicked statements, claiming that something unexpected and bitterly distasteful happens to God, causing Him great grief, albeit improperly expressed, stemming not from His Antecedent but from His Consequent will, after trying all things in vain. Such statements unquestionably lower God below the status of a human. If such a situation were to occur among humans, where someone's efforts were in vain and they were deceived after trying everything, it would be seen as a sign of imprudence, weakness, or unbelief. Consequently, we should lament God's situation, where He has performed the task so poorly in the face of unsuccessful efforts.

VII. It is also absurd and impious to assert that God, to whom all things have not only been foreseen but also provided for since eternity, should intend something that He knew from eternity would not come to pass and set a goal for Himself that He knew He would not achieve. It's as if someone were aiming at a target that does not exist and never will. If God has known from eternity that a person will be damned, then His eternal wish for that person to be saved is in vain. He has known from eternity that He will not fulfill His natural desire and His Antecedent will.

VIII. What is even more perplexing is that this introduces resistance between these two wills of God, with the latter correcting the former. Because of this Antecedent will, it is said that God desires to do something that He is certain He will not do from eternity. God is imagined to do something reluctantly and against His initial intention because of human will coming in between. This results in God abandoning the better goal, as if He should, upon second thought, attain some secondary good. Arminius does not hide this view, stating, "God seriously desires that all men should be saved, but, compelled by the stubborn and incorrigible malice of some men, He wills them to lose their salvation." However, God does nothing reluctantly, nor can He be compelled by man to change His will.

IX. If these weak affections and ineffectual desires, which God is disappointed in due to human will, are attributed to God, it is beyond doubt that God created man in a state of indecision, foreseeing with grief the fall of man and knowing that He created a creature that would inevitably perish. Nevertheless, He did not refrain from His creation because His decree to create man could not be annulled. In this way, God bound Himself in circumstances from which He could not free Himself.

X. It is also unacceptable for the will of God to remain uncertain until the condition, on which God Antecedently wills something, is either fulfilled or broken. Although the general affection of God towards all men is not made dependent on human will, according to Arminius,

the outcome remains uncertain until God, through His Consequent will, has decreed to save this or that individual. Arminius makes this Consequent will in God dependent on human free will and places it after faith and the right use of grace. Consequently, Vorstius, a sharp-witted but audacious man, dares to suggest that the will of God is, in some sense, mutable, and that some part of God's decree can be changed.

XI. Even though all the counsels of God are eternal and immutable, and God cannot be said to will anything anew that He has not willed from eternity, a close examination of this Consequent will of God reveals that it follows His Antecedent will not only in order but also in time. It is impossible for God to desire to save all men and damn some at the same time. The Antecedent will of God must necessarily cease, as if erased and erased by His Consequent will before there can be room for His Consequent will.

XII. When the Apostle in Romans 9 affirms that the will of God cannot be resisted, this distinction creates a will of God that can be resisted, and its execution can be hindered by man.

XIII. And here, if anywhere, we may see how inconsistent the Arminians are. They argue that in the ninth chapter of Romans, it speaks of the Antecedent will of God, by which God will have mercy upon some (as they say), that is, upon those who believe, and not of His Consequent will, by which He has precisely and absolutely determined to have mercy on this or that person. Yet, they contradict themselves by saying that this Antecedent will may be resisted when, in the same place, Saint Paul declares, "Who can resist His will?" So either let Arminius deny that the Antecedent will of God is truly a will and rather call it a wish, desire, or affection, or if he contends it is a will, let him admit that it cannot be resisted.

To illustrate this point, Saint Augustine states excellently in *Enchiridion*, Chapter 95, "Our God in heaven does whatever He wills, both in heaven and on earth." This statement is not true if God has

willed some things but has not done them. It is even more unworthy of Him to not do them because the will of man has hindered the Almighty from doing what He willed.

XIV. Arminius does indeed acknowledge that God does not lack the power to fulfill His Antecedent will, by which He earnestly desires all men to be saved. However, he argues that it is not true that God will accomplish what He wishes and earnestly desires by any means He is able, but only by means that are suitable and appropriate. He says, "The Father wishes and earnestly desires that His Son would obey man, but He does not forcibly compel His Son to obedience." He further states, "The analogy of a merchant who desires his goods to be safe but throws them into the sea fits well." According to Arminius, God earnestly desires that all men should be saved but, due to the stubborn and incorrigible malice of some men, He wills them to lose their salvation. Even though God earnestly wills and intends the salvation of all individuals, He will not exert His omnipotence to avoid forcing human free will.

In response, these analogies do not hold. They are clear dissimilarities. Arminius uses examples of men who cannot achieve their wishes except through means that are unsuitable and of those who are often disappointed in their intentions. However, with God, there are always just and suitable means by which He can achieve His intentions, and He cannot be thwarted in His purpose. You argue that if God were to use His omnipotence to convert a person, He would compel that person's free will. I disagree. He can bend the will without coercion, so that it follows willingly. He changed Esau's mind suddenly in Genesis 33 and Saul's mind in 1 Samuel 19:23, both without constraint. He also changed the minds of the Egyptians in Psalm 105:25 and kings in Proverbs 21:1. If God can make such changes in the wills of wicked men without impinging on their free will, how much more can He do so in good and faithful individuals? God changed the heart of the thief on the Cross without constraint, and He does the same for all who receive a new heart from Him, taking away their stony hearts and giving them hearts of flesh, as

stated in Ezekiel 36:26. This transformation is akin to a spiritual resurrection, as described in Ephesians 2:5, where God raises those who were dead in sin. Arminius himself seems to believe that the understanding is irresistibly enlightened by God and that God irresistibly gives the power to believe the Gospel to all to whom it is preached. He also believes that God draws their affections. However, when the mind has fully embraced this conviction, and the affections stir up the will, it is impossible for the will not to move itself, whether directed by the instructed mind or motivated by the appetite, as these are the only incentives for the will. The followers of Arminius' school also assert that the elect are drawn by God through effective and powerful grace, the effect of which is certain because God draws them at an appropriate and suitable time and manner, knowing that they will infallibly follow Him when called. Yet the Arminians do not mean by this that any force is imposed on the will of man but rather that it is powerfully influenced by moral and persuasive means, causing it to follow willingly. The example of the thief on the Cross is particularly instructive, as his heart changed so suddenly in a time of adversity, even when the faith of the Apostles themselves was wavering. This serves as a clear demonstration of the efficacy of the Holy Spirit on those who are called by God's purpose, as stated in Romans 8:28. More will be discussed about the efficacy of calling in its proper place.

XV. Hence, it becomes evident how Arminius has put inordinate effort into defending free will. A much more certain and straightforward path was available to him, through which God could demonstrate His power in the conversion of man without diminishing our liberty. While defending free will, he should not have opposed the wisdom and perfection of God, frustrating God's own end and natural desire, wishing for things He knows He will not obtain, and setting an end for Himself that will never be achieved.

XVI. In the meantime, a discerning reader will easily understand the absurdity of the analogy of the merchant making a loss and casting his goods into the sea with his own hands. Arminius not only

explicitly claims that God is compelled to do something He had not intended (for the merchant did not intend this either but did it willingly), but he also insinuates that God, driven from a better end He had set for Himself, turns to another end less desirable. Whether these statements are made by prudent individuals as an affront to God or by the unwise due to ignorance, they strike pious minds with horror.

XVII. However, the most serious problem with this distinction of God's will into Antecedent and Consequent is that, according to it, man's will takes precedence over God's election. According to Arminius, God, through His Antecedent will, desires to save all men and give them the power to believe in Christ. But through His Consequent will, He elects or reprobates individuals based on His foreknowledge of their faith or unbelief. This is a dangerous doctrine where human election depends on human will, faith is presented as the cause and not the result of election, and man chooses and applies himself to God before being chosen by God. This leads to the inflation of human pride and the undermining of faith and confidence. If our election is dependent on something so unstable, what certainty can there be in our salvation? However, these topics will be discussed in more detail in their appropriate places. For now, let us examine the examples that Arminius uses to support this double will of God.

XVIII. Arminius argues that God, through His Antecedent will, intended to establish the throne of Saul forever but, through His Consequent will, He intended to overthrow it, citing 1 Samuel 13:13. However, this interpretation is incorrect. Samuel does not say that God intended to establish the kingdom of Saul but rather that God had established his kingdom forever. There is a significant difference between these statements. If God had established it, it would have been His will to do so. But because He did not establish it, it is certain that it was not His will to establish it.

XIX. The other example Arminius provides is similarly flawed. He claims that Christ, through His Antecedent will, wanted to gather the Jews like a hen gathering her chickens, but through His Consequent will, He intended to scatter them among all nations, citing Matthew 22:37. However, this interpretation distorts the true meaning of the passage. Christ is addressing Jerusalem and saying that He wanted to gather His children together, but Jerusalem resisted with all its power. Here, Jerusalem represents the priests, Levites, scribes, and the ruler of the people, who most vehemently opposed Christ. The children of Jerusalem, on the other hand, represent the people. Christ says that He wanted to gather these children, and there is no doubt that He gathered many of them, even though the rulers were unwilling. This passage, therefore, does not support the Antecedent will that these individuals claim was not fulfilled when, in fact, it was fulfilled as God saw fit. Moreover, the phrase "how often would I" in this context does not refer to the Antecedent will, which is God's decree. Instead, it simply means to invite and command. Saint Augustine also interprets it this way, stating that Jerusalem would not have wanted her children to be gathered by Him, but even against her will, He gathered those children He Himself chose.

XX. The other examples are not worthy of extended discussion. According to his Antecedent will, he says, those who were called to the wedding were declared unworthy by his Consequent will. By his Antecedent will, he invited the man without the wedding garment, but by his Consequent will, he cast him out. By his Antecedent will, the Gospel was offered to the Jews, but by his Consequent will, it was taken away. In all these instances, the will of God, by which people are called, is nothing more than a command and an invitation, not a decree established by His Antecedent will, which is later revoked by His Consequent will.

XXI. We should not overly scrutinize why God calls those whom He knows will not follow. The obvious purpose of God in doing this is to demand from people what they owe. To delve further into God's intentions is to subject God to scrutiny and delve into His secrets.

XXII. It should not be overlooked that Arminius contends that God equally desires to save all people through His Antecedent will. However, when it comes to the implementation and execution of that will, He does things contrary to that will. He preaches the Gospel to very wicked individuals, such as the people of Capernaum, and denies that favour to those who are less wicked, like the people of Tyre and Sidon. He allows many wild and unresponsive people, with their barbaric cruelty, to remain in darkness. But why? Because, he claims, their ancestors rejected the Gospel. What a ridiculous reason! Should He who equally desires the salvation of all be hindered by such a minor impediment, which is contrary to His justice, as will be explained later? Although Arminius teaches that God, through His Antecedent will, intends to save all individuals, it is evident through experience that God, over many ages, has denied and continues to deny most nations the means without which they cannot be saved, providing only those means which, on their own, none have ever used correctly.

XXIII. Arminius claims, "But God, being very good by nature, cannot but wish well to all men by His Antecedent and primary will, as they are created after His own image." These words would be spoken rightly and consistently with God's nature if we were born without original sin. However, since the image of God has been nearly erased and replaced by the image of the Devil, there is no reason to believe that God is willing to save all individuals. Holy Scripture teaches that some are saved purely by the grace of God and by election according to His purpose, while the rest are left in their natural damnation, condemned for the sins they commit of their own accord.

XXIV. These statements are not made to reject the distinction of God's will into His Antecedent and Consequent will. We know that among God's decrees, some come before others in order. However, we deny that there are two decrees of God between which man's will intervenes, as if man's will came between the decree to create man and the decree to condemn certain individuals. We also deny that man's will intervenes in such a way between the two decrees of God

that the first or Antecedent decree is annulled by man's will and that God is compelled to abandon the end He had set for Himself and seriously intended. We also deny that in the work of our election, the precise will of God depends on the foreknowledge of any power or action of man's free will or that the Consequent will of God is contingent upon man's will. These matters will be discussed more thoroughly in their appropriate place.

Chapter 6

Of the sin of Adam.

I. God, having created man, illuminated his mind with supernatural light and adorned his will with righteousness and holiness. However, man was mutable, for otherwise, God would have created a God and not a man, as the ability to change is a unique prerogative of God that distinguishes Him from all created beings.

II. Arminius, who has always been dissatisfied with the traditional view (Articul. Perpend. Page 18), is of the opinion that an inclination to sin existed in man before his fall, although it was not as intense and disorderly as it is now. If this is true, it would imply that God instilled in man an inclination to sin, which, being an evil thing, would mean that God was the author of evil and had inclined man towards sin. Such a claim cannot be made without serious wickedness.

III. Adam's sin, which began with gluttony, was the least of his sins. However, the greatest sin was his choice to believe the Serpent over God. Driven by ambition, he desired to be like God in his knowledge of good and evil. By obeying the Serpent, he gave credence to accusations against God. Ultimately, his sin was greater because, in

choosing to eat the apple, he preferred a small thing over God's commandment.

IV. This downfall commenced with the understanding, which Satan clouded with false beliefs and filled with the allure of false goods. When man demonstrated his readiness to accept these persuasions, the darkening of the mind was followed by a wilful distortion of the will and a predisposition of the appetites towards sin.

V. This fall occurred not because God compelled it but allowed it to happen. His omnipotence could have prevented this fall, and His goodness was not tainted by envy. God permitted it because He willed it and because it was good that He should permit it. The supreme good, God, would not have allowed evil unless it was good for evil to enter the world. Through this permission, He provided a means for the manifestation of His glory and opened a path for humanity to reach a more excellent state. Without sin, God's mercy, by which He pardons, and His justice, by which He punishes, would not have been revealed. His infinite love for the church would not have been made known through the sending of Christ into the world to abolish our sins and lead us to heavenly glory. I do not suggest that God needs our wickedness to manifest His glory, but rather that God created man to attain greater perfection than that in which he was initially created. This perfection could not be reached without knowledge of God's justice and mercy, which shine forth from this fall and the remedy prepared for it. In this regard, the words of Saint Augustine in his book "De Correctione et Gratia," Chapter 10, are very apt: "He that created all things very good and foreknew that evil things would arise from those good things knew that it pertained more to His omnipotent goodness to bring forth good things even from evil things than not to allow evil things to be." Similarly, he says in "Enchiridion," Chapter 96.

VI. The Arminians attribute no other cause to this permission than this: God did not want to force man's voluntary liberty or compel his will, and He did not find it suitable to employ His omnipotence in a

matter concerning man's free will. However, they do not delve deeply into this significant matter, nor do they adequately consider the circumstances of Adam's fall. Without diminishing man's liberty, God could have restrained Satan and prevented him from tempting man. He could have forewarned man not to believe the Serpent. He had the power not to present the tree to man, the consumption of which He knew would lead to sin. He could have endowed man with more strength, light, and understanding. He could have provided extraordinary strength at the very moment of temptation. Yet, even through these means, force would not have been imposed upon man's will, nor would his liberty have been violated. Angels are examples of this; God confirms them in goodness without any compulsion. This demonstrates that man's fall occurred not due to God's coercion but through His dispensation. By His providence, He turned an event He had foreknown from eternity to an end He had determined within Himself from eternity.

VII. It should not be claimed that God withdrew His grace from man, as that would have compelled man, akin to how a house inevitably falls when its pillars are removed. Nor should it be asserted that God took away man's free will, as this would have imposed a necessity to sin. Instead, God allowed man to be tempted by Satan and refrained from providing extraordinary help. While man sinned freely, it aligned with what God had foreknown from eternity, and even the creatures themselves, before man's creation, bore witness to this occurrence. Before Adam sinned, God had bestowed healthful properties upon plants to fend off diseases. He had already clothed sheep with fleeces and created cattle for the benefit of man, serving as remedies for human frailty. These creations would have been in vain had man remained in his original state.

VIII. Now, whether the processes of digestion and excretion, the need for rest after labour, the enjoyment of the marital bed, the growth in stature, and having flesh susceptible to wounds and burns (all of which man was subject to before his fall), whether these are characteristics that can perpetually coexist with a perfectly blessed

creature, or whether they silently testify to the condition of man to come, I leave it to the judgment of wise individuals.

IX. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that Adam, without any extraordinary assistance, had the strength to resist Satan. It is not credible that God gave a law to man when he was first created, without giving him the power to fulfil it. However, in the context of God's foreknowledge, the fall of man was certain. The act of the will can be certain and predetermined before God, while the liberty of man's will remains untouched and intact. Just as it is undeniable that the torturers had the power and ability to break Christ's bones, yet in the perspective of God's foreknowledge and providence, it was impossible for them to be broken. Man's will can voluntarily determine itself to something certain, and yet do that which the knowledge of God has foreknown or His providence has ordained.

X. These principles must be firmly held to ensure that the fault of man is not transferred to God. Although God brings good out of the fall of Adam, He never commits evil to achieve a good outcome. We must not assume that God would compel man to sin, even if His glory were to be manifested through it. God's glory should not be advanced at the expense of His justice. In an inscrutable and ineffable manner, God arranges and governs the course of events in such a way that inevitably those things happen which He condemns and disapproves of, and divine providence maintains a balance between injustice and negligence. Those who claim that God decreed Adam's sin because He had determined to send Christ to remedy Adam's sin are misconstruing the nature of things. God decreed to send Christ because Adam was destined to sin. Man did not sin so that Christ could abolish sin; rather, Christ came to abolish sin.

There is nothing mentioned here that should trouble sensitive ears or implicate God in sin. If anyone fails to grasp or accept this, it is better to blame their own dullness than to accuse God's justice and to refrain from what is lawful rather than attempt what is unlawful.

Chapter 7

That all mankind is infected with Original sin.

I. Sin is either Original or Actual: I use the accustomed words for clarity of speech; for if one were to be precise, they should abstain from these terms since it is certain that Original sin is in action and therefore is actual. However, usage has led to calling that sin actual, which is committed in action or deed, and that which we inherit from birth, the hereditary stain transmitted to us by our parents, is called original.

II. Saint Paul addresses Original sin in the fifth and seventh chapters of Romans. In the fifth chapter, he discusses how it passes on to all mankind, and in the seventh chapter, he explains how it persists in someone whose mind is perfectly aligned with the law of God.

III. The Scripture cries out and experience bears witness that no one is free from this stain. "Whatsoever is born of the flesh is flesh," says Christ in John 3. Here, Christ plainly teaches that all human beings are tainted with Original sin when He states that being born again and renewed is necessary. Ephesians 2:3 declares, "We are by nature the children of wrath." Job 14 asks, "Who can bring forth a clean thing out of an unclean?" David, despite being adorned with singular privileges and blessed abundantly, acknowledges himself to be tainted with this universal contagion in Psalm 51. He does not accuse his father or reproach his mother, but he confesses his own defilement. He attributes the cause of his sin to this original condition, lamenting his own predicament in this shared destiny. Circumcision symbolized this truth, serving as an external reminder to the Church that there was something in man from birth that

needed to be cut away and removed. Baptism serves the same purpose, signifying our cleansing in the blood of Christ, which washes away our natural impurity.

IV. Original sin affects not only the descendants of pagans, infidels, or unfaithful Christians but also the offspring of the pious and faithful. In the same way that a circumcised man can beget an uncircumcised child and a thoroughly purified grain of wheat sown in the earth will produce wheat with chaff, so Adam, justified through his faith in the promise of his seed that would crush the serpent's head, gave birth to Cain, inheriting his natural wickedness rather than his faith or repentance. Piety is not a hereditary trait passed on to one's heirs; holiness is not inherent in our nature but comes from grace. Men become holy and good through regeneration, not through generation. Aristotle, in Book 2 of his *Physics*, teaches that artificial forms (such as the form of a statue or image) are not produced through generation but only natural forms. Therefore, in the children of the most righteous man, we can observe, as soon as they begin to speak, tendencies towards craftiness and lying, a disposition for revenge, stubbornness when admonished, pride, and vain pursuits of glory. Moreover, the great honour they attach to their toys and dolls are no obscure indications of their predisposition towards idolatry. Just as puppets are the idols of infants, idols are the toys of those who have grown up. Therefore, when a man has children with wicked manners, he should recognize his image in them. When he has virtuous children, he should marvel at the work of God in them. For these are the ones of whom Saint John says, in Chapter 1, that they are "born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

V. The second Canon of the Milevitan Council explicitly addresses this matter. It pleases us that whoever denies the Baptism of newborns or claims that although they are Baptized for the remission of their sins, they do not inherit original sin from Adam, which is to be washed away by the laver of regeneration; it follows that the form

of Baptism in them is to be regarded as false, not true, and subject to an Anathema.

VI. Christ alone was free from this blemish; He did not inherit Original sin from His Mother. Saint Paul indeed states in Romans 5:10 that all men sinned in Adam, and there is no doubt that Christ was in Adam as one of his descendants. However, the Apostle's statement does not apply to Christ because the person of Christ was not in Adam; only His human nature was. He is not descended from Adam as the active principle or the propagating source; rather, He took the substance, which, through the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, was freed from the common contamination.

VII. If you were to ask me whether Original sin is removed by Baptism or whether this stain still remains in those who are regenerated by the Holy Ghost, the answer is readily found in Scripture and confirmed by experience, which is so certain that there is no room for doubt. David was circumcised and abundantly endowed with the gifts of the Holy Ghost, yet he confessed that he was not free from this stain but was polluted by it, just like everyone else. Saint Paul, in Romans 7, speaking on behalf of all those in whose minds the law of God is faithfully inscribed, acknowledges that sin dwells in him, which he calls the law of sin because it incites him to sin. We witness infants dying as soon as they are baptised, and death, as the Apostle attests in Romans 6, is the wages of sin. I ask, for what sin do these baptised infants die? Is it for actual sin? But they have committed none; therefore, it is for Original sin. Hence, it is evident that Original sin remains after Baptism, in which sin is forgiven in terms of guilt but persists in its effects, as Saint Augustine elaborates in his first book against Julian, concerning Marriage and concupiscence, Chapters 25 and 26. The concupiscence of the flesh (he says) is forgiven in Baptism, not so that it ceases to exist entirely but so that it is not imputed as sin.

VIII. Since the regenerate subsequently sin, from where do these sins come if not from their inner corruption? If that corruption were

removed, then the effects that flow solely from it would also be eradicated.

IX. What do we make of the fact that even the best individuals beget children tainted with this blemish, thus requiring Baptism? If parents who beget children were without Original sin, how could they pass this defect on to their offspring, giving their children something they themselves do not possess?

X. Therefore, you may argue that marriage is evil because it results in the birth of children tainted by Original sin and the propagation of sin, which should be uprooted at its source. I reply that marriage is more ancient than sin and was instituted by God Himself. The sin that affects it does not change the fact that marriage is naturally a good thing, just as food and drink are good and desirable even though they sustain the lives of wicked individuals. Additionally, marriage produces children for God and serves to fill the ranks of the Elect. Furthermore, faithful couples join in prayer, encourage each other in good works, help each other control their passions, and offer support in times of temptation. It's worth noting that even among wicked individuals, God's grace can lead to the birth of good and godly children, just as God sends timely rain on seeds that were stolen and sown by a thief.

Chapter 8

What Original sin is, and whether it be truly and properly sin.

I. Original sin is the corruption of man's nature, contracted and inherited from the very moment of birth, passed down from Adam to all of mankind. It consists of the absence or lack of original righteousness and a predisposition towards evil.

II. Original sin encompasses both the absence or lack of original righteousness and the inclination towards evil. Just as sickness is not solely the absence of health but also an ailment affecting the body due to an imbalance in humors, this hereditary stain is not merely the absence of righteousness but also a leaning towards unrighteousness.

III. The latter arises from the former. When the soul, tainted by original sin, ceases to be good, it inevitably becomes evil. Since the soul is guided by the will, which cannot remain idle, and with holiness and righteousness lost, it naturally turns towards the opposite.

IV. This corruption results in mental blindness, moral waywardness, turmoil in the appetites, the loss of supernatural gifts, and the corruption of those that are natural.

V. While it is true that in Adam, the mind was first tainted by error before the will was infected with waywardness, the corruption of the will is more severe, and the stain is fouler because our moral disposition is determined not by our understanding but by our will. Every evil deed is an act of the will, making the commission of wickedness a greater sin than ignorance of the truth.

VI. The guilt or liability to punishment cannot be included in the definition of Original sin, as it is its consequence.

VII. Lombard, Thomas, and other scholastics who assert that original sin is concupiscence do not fully grasp the nature of concupiscence. Original sin infects all the faculties of the rational soul, whereas concupiscence pertains to the will and appetite alone. Furthermore, concupiscence is in violation of a single commandment of the Law, whereas Original sin is contrary to the entire Law. It does not cause people to sin more against the second table of the law than against the first. Moreover, concupiscence is explicitly forbidden by a specific law, while it is questionable whether Original sin can be said to be

forbidden by the law. God does not command that we should be born without sin, for that would require speaking to humans before their birth. Thus, it is absurd to think that the law commands an already born person to be born without sin or to be begotten when they are already grown. The law does not issue such commands but instead presupposes original righteousness, addressing humans in the state they were in before the fall, and demanding that prior debt and natural obedience. It is evident, therefore, that Original sin is condemned by the law but not expressly forbidden.

VIII. Despite the clear references to this sin in Scripture, as well as the ample testimony of human experience, there have been those who denied its existence and refused to acknowledge that humanity, from its original ancestor, was tainted by sin. Cyrillus of Jerusalem or whoever is the author of the Catechisms attributed to him, stated, "You do not sin by generation; you commit adultery by choice." He further asserted, "We come into the world without sin, but we sin by our own choice."

IX. In the time of Saint Augustine, Pelagius and Celestius denied Original sin. They argued that sin was passed from parents to their offspring solely through example and imitation. They rejected the idea that sin was remitted to infants through Baptism, claiming that they had no sin to begin with. They contended that through Baptism, the kingdom of heaven was opened to them. However, their heresy was rejected long ago and vigorously refuted by Saint Augustine.

X. Saint Jerome, or whoever is the author of the brief commentaries on Saint Paul's Epistles that are included among Saint Jerome's works, appeared to be sympathetic to Pelagian ideas. When interpreting the words of the Apostle Paul in Romans 5, "in whom all have sinned," he restricted the meaning to example and interpreted it as referring to the imitation of Adam's sin.

XI. Saint John Chrysostom seemed to lean towards this error in several of his writings. In his Homily on New Converts, he denied

that Baptism was only for the remission of sins, stating that infants were baptized even though they were not tainted by sin. He argued that Baptism added holiness, righteousness, adoption, and inheritance to them. In his tenth Homily on the Epistle to the Romans, while explaining Saint Paul's words in Romans 5, "By the disobedience of one, many were made sinners," he suggested that it referred to those guilty of punishment and mortal sin, rather than those tainted by the stain of sin.

XII. Lombard, in his second book, distinction 30, letter E, mentioned that some claimed Original sin was not a vice in us but only the guilt of punishment, specifically eternal punishment, which is due to us because of Adam's sin unless we are freed by Christ. The Arminians share a similar opinion, not particularly concerned with whose ideas they mimic as long as it serves to support their error. Arnoldus, following Arminius, argued that Original sin does not involve vice or sin in the proper sense, as nothing is considered sin or vice unless it is committed by free will. In the same vein, he denied that Original sin deserves punishment but asserted that it is a form of punishment. Arminius himself, in response to the ninth question, stated, "It is wrongly said that Original sin makes a person guilty of death."

XIII. Saint Paul's reasoning, then, in the Book of Romans, Chapter 5, verses 13 and 14, falls apart. Speaking of sin that originated from Adam and passed on to his descendants, he first states that sin was in the world until the Law was given. He then substantiates this by referring to the deaths of infants who died before the days of Moses. He states, "Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," referring to infants who had not committed actual sins. He thereby demonstrates that sin was present in these infants because death is the consequence and punishment of sin. Since the death of infants is a result of Original sin, if this Original sin were not truly sin but only a punishment for sin, then the death of infants would be the punishment for a punishment, not for sin. However, claiming that

God punishes punishments and not sins is unseemly, especially for those who profess to uphold God's justice.

XIV. If the original stain in infants is not sin but merely the consequence of sin, then their baptism is in vain. Baptism is not intended to cleanse punishments but to cleanse sins. Those who lack the filth of sin are washed in vain. Why is it necessary for people to be born again? Because they are spiritually dead in sin. Where does the inclination to wrongdoing, by which humans are naturally inclined to evil, come from? From sin. And what is this sin if not actual sin?

XV. But you argue that it is not sin unless it is voluntary. I acknowledge this when referring to actual sins. However, if we are discussing the natural stain and blemish, it is not necessary for this natural blemish to be procured by everyone's own will; it is sufficient that it is contrary to the Law. This aligns with Saint John's definition of sin as the transgression of the Law (`< in non-Latin alphabet >`). It cannot be doubted that that which incites a person to rebel against the Law is contrary to it. Although Original sin has not yet incited the infant to commit actual sin, it is predisposed to do so, just as a snake that has not yet bitten anyone with its venomous bite still carries an innate poison and a natural disposition to harm. Original sin can also be deemed voluntary because through it, we sin voluntarily. Furthermore, we sinned in Adam, and thus in him, we were willing participants in this corruption. Ultimately, it is wiser to believe Saint Paul, who teaches us that sin is present in infants, than these individuals who perplex themselves with their own arguments.

XVI. Since the Arminians assert that through Christ's death, all of humanity is reconciled to God, and forgiveness of sins is obtained for all people, we must ask: For what sins are infants punished? Why do they endure bodily torments and suffer from the assaults of demons? Is it for Adam's sin? The Arminians claim that it is forgiven. Is it for some actual sin? They have committed none. Therefore, the only remaining explanation is that they are punished for Original sin

unless we are willing to accuse God of injustice, as one who torments the innocent and those who are not guilty of any sin.

Chapter 9

How the sin of Adam may belong to his posterity, and how many ways it may pass to his offspring. And first, the imputation, and whether the sins of the Grandfather and great-Grandfathers are imputed to their posterity.

I. The sin of Adam passes to his posterity by two means: imputation and propagation.

II. The punishments that all people suffer in the name of Adam indicate that Adam's sin is imputed to us. This is what the Apostle teaches in Romans 5:12: "Death passed on all men, by one man, in whom all men sinned," or because all men sinned in him. For Adam's sin was not just personal; he didn't sin as an individual but as the representative of all humanity. In the same way that Christ, on the cross, atoned for us not as a private individual but as the representative of the entire Church. Saint Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:15 says, "If one died for all, all likewise were dead." And in Romans 6, he affirms that we are dead and crucified with Christ. Therefore, if we died in Christ's death and were crucified with him, it is unquestionable that we sinned in Adam. Just as the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, why should not the sin of Adam also be imputed to us? The righteousness of Christ is imputed to us so that the sin of Adam might not be imputed to us.

III. Reason itself consents to this. If Adam received blessings not only for himself but also for his descendants, it is not surprising that when he lost those blessings, he lost them for himself and his

descendants. If someone is severely punished for treason and brought to extreme poverty, his children also lose their nobility. Nothing is more just than for a son to pay his father's debts and to be heirs to both their assets and their debts.

IV. However, there is a significant difference in this analogy. When the debtor has squandered the inheritance and the debt exceeds the assets, the son can renounce the inheritance and leave his father's possessions. But in this case, such renunciation is impossible because guilt, stemming from Adam's sin, is accompanied by natural depravity and contagion, similar to someone born to leprous parents who cannot simply cast off that contagion when they wish.

V. Although these principles are rooted in the word of God and the very essence of justice, they appear to be burdened with significant inconveniences. Firstly, the objection arises from Ezekiel, Chapter 18, verse 20: "The soul that sinneth shall die: The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father." This is in line with God's law, which is found in Deuteronomy 24, and forbids children from being punished for the sins of their parents. So, why do we suffer for another's sin? Why is Adam's sin imputed to us? Is it credible that the one who forgives us our sins would impute someone else's sins to us? Moreover, isn't the punishment greater than the sin? When we sinned in Adam, it was only in potentiality, in power and possibility, yet we are punished in actuality. It seems most cruel that Adam, who sinned in act, is saved, while many are damned for the same sin, even though they sinned in Adam only in power and possibility.

I respond by saying that the passage in Ezekiel should be understood as follows: "The innocent son shall not bear the punishment of his father's sin." When God, in the law, speaks of visiting the iniquity of fathers upon the children, He refers to children who follow in their fathers' footsteps and share in the same fault. However, the sons of Adam cannot be considered innocent, as they not only sinned in Adam as part of the stock and root of mankind but are also born stained with the same corruption and prone to the same sin.

Secondly, I would like to point out that the passage in Ezekiel does not directly relate to the present matter. Ezekiel is addressing the sins of fathers, which are personal sins, and these fathers do not act on behalf of their children when they sin. Arminius is mistaken in his explanation of why certain unbelievers are reprobated—those who did not reject the Gospel. He claims that they rejected the grace of the Gospel in their parents, grandparents, great-grandparents, and fathers, and thus deserved to be forsaken by God. However, they fail to provide a sound and substantial reason why infants have not sinned against the grace of the Gospel in their parents, to whom the grace of the Gospel was offered and by whom it was refused. After all, in Adam, all his descendants sinned against the Law and thereby deserved punishment and abandonment. The principle of God's covenant remains steadfast: children are included in their parents.

VI. Therefore, let the school and followers of Arminius learn the reasons behind this distinction: why Adam's sin is imputed to his descendants while the sins of other fathers are not imputed to their children. These are the reasons I offer for this difference:

1. The sin of Adam resulted in the loss of our original purity, which was not lost due to the sins of our grandfathers or great-grandfathers.
2. Adam received gifts from God, which he should have conveyed to his posterity. Since he lost these gifts, it is just that his descendants are deprived of them. However, our grandfathers or great-grandfathers received no supernatural gifts from God that could be inherited by their posterity.
3. The sins of my grandfathers and great-grandfathers were personal sins, and they did not, in their sins, represent their posterity in the same way that Adam did. It cannot be said, for example, that Hezekiah or Josiah, who were descendants of David, committed murder in the person of David.

4. I would go even further to say that while Adam committed many sins during his lifetime, only his initial sin is imputed to his descendants. This is because it was through this sin that he violated the covenant made with him as the representative of all mankind.
5. If someone today is deprived of the light of the Gospel because their ancestors refused it a thousand years ago, as Arminius suggests, then one could argue that someone might be effectually called to salvation because their ancestors believed in the Gospel. If we impute the unbelief of the great-grandfather to the great-grandson, why not also impute their faith? However, Arminius himself does not believe that one person's faith can be imputed to another, as he cites from Habakkuk 2 that "the just shall live by his own faith." Nor is Adam's faith, in believing the promise of his seed that would crush the serpent's head, imputed to any of his descendants. Arnoldus seems to agree with this, but I find it hard to believe that other sects hold the same view.
6. Believing that someone is reprobated because their great-grandfathers or fathers rejected the Gospel contradicts the opinion of Saint Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:10, where he states that everyone will receive according to what they have done in their own body, whether it is good or evil, not according to what was done in another's body.
7. The absurdities into which Arminius falls with this view are also worth noting. It is possible that someone's paternal grandfather believed in the Gospel while their maternal grandfather rejected it. Which ancestor's faith or unbelief should God take into account? Furthermore, when the Gospel is offered to a nation or city, it is likely that some of its people had ancestors who were unbelievers and others who were believers. Yet the Gospel is offered to all without distinction. It is also possible that someone

from a line of faithful ancestors may reject the Gospel, while someone from a line of unbelievers may convert.

8. Even if one could be considered an unbeliever due to another's unbelief or for having rejected the Gospel in their ancestors, there is evidence from experience that the worst and most wicked descendants of extremely wicked ancestors have been converted to the faith. As the Apostle says in Romans 5:20, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." The ancient Romans, known for their brutal conquests, and Corinth, notorious for its immoral practices, saw flourishing Christian Churches emerge from their midst, with many of the most unlikely individuals being among the elect.
9. If, at times, posterity is punished for the sins of their ancestors, Arminius should not extend this punishment over so many generations. The law limits the visitation of the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations, and this limitation is due to the fact that a person can scarcely live long enough to see their descendants beyond the third or fourth generation. Children are thus punished in the sight of their fathers to increase their parents' grief, and fathers are punished through the suffering of their children. This suggests that the visitation of the sins of the fathers upon the children should be understood as temporal punishment rather than eternal.

VII. As for the argument that the punishment is greater than the sin because those who sinned in Adam only in potentiality are punished in actuality, the response is straightforward. We sinned in Adam in such a way that the sin was also in us in actuality. We do not merely bear the punishment for another's sin but also for our own. It is not surprising that God pardoned Adam but does not pardon many of his descendants because Adam believed and repented, whereas these individuals reject the offered grace of God and persist in impenitence.

Chapter 10

Of the propagation of the sin of Adam to his posterity, where also of the traduction of the soul, and of sin itself.

We have already mentioned that the sin of Adam is transmitted to his descendants in two ways: through Imputation and Propagation. We have discussed Imputation; now, let's delve into Propagation.

I. It has been abundantly proven that the sin of Adam has contaminated all of humanity with an inherited corruption, and this contagion has widely spread, as we have demonstrated by asserting that every person is conceived and born in sin. Just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all, because all have sinned (Rom. 5).

II. If anyone were to closely examine the nature and circumstances of Adam's sin, they would find that in every individual, a clear reflection of that initial sin is deeply ingrained. In each person, you can observe a curiosity and desire to know things that do not concern them, as well as a distrustful hesitation and doubt concerning the word of God. Just as Adam blamed his wife for his sin, and his wife blamed the serpent, it is natural for every person to try to cover their faults by shifting the blame to others. Likewise, the instinct of fear and trembling in the presence of God, lying, pretending, and a sense of immodesty in nakedness are present in all humans by nature, inherited from that original source. These traits are not something we are taught but are part of our very being. We do not need a teacher for these inclinations; instead, we return to them despite the guidance of our teachers and the restraints of discipline, as nature overcomes instruction.

III. Just as the eggs of the asp are rightly destroyed and newly hatched serpents are justly killed, even though they have not yet harmed anyone, infants are rightfully considered liable and subject to punishment. Even though they have not committed sins in action, they carry within them the contagious malady and a natural inclination towards sin.

IV. However, this raises a challenging question: how is sin transmitted from parents to their offspring, and how do human souls inherit this corruption? Since everything created by God is good, it is neither credible nor likely that God implants Original sin into human souls. How could He punish those souls if He Himself had corrupted them? Moreover, if He created the soul pure and righteous, but it becomes defiled by the body's contamination, other considerable issues arise. Locking a pure and innocent soul within a tainted body, essentially subjecting it to a corrupting prison, does not align with the justice and goodness of God.

V. Furthermore, it should be noted that sin is the corruption of the soul, not of the body. Sin is a spiritual matter, a vice of the will. The body cannot transmit to the soul something it does not possess. Since the body only sins when the soul uses it as an instrument for sinning (Rom. 6:13), it is evident that sin passes from the soul to the body, not the other way around. The sin of Adam itself bears witness to this fact. Adam first sinned in his will before reaching out his hand to the forbidden apple. Calvin recognized this, as in the first chapter of the second book of his "Institutions," he states: "This contagion does not arise from the substance of the flesh or the soul itself. It happens because God decreed that the gifts He had bestowed upon the first man would also be lost by him, both for himself and his descendants."

VI. Here lies a path that is obscure and treacherous, requiring cautious steps. I do not aim to satisfy those who are overly speculative or wickedly astute. I will only present what seems to

accord with the Word of God and reason. To make this path clearer, we must discuss the origin of the soul and its transmission.

VII. Origen, following Plato, believed that all souls were initially created together with the angels and later placed into bodies. He discussed this in "On First Principles," Book 1, Chapter 7. Tertullian asserted that the soul is conveyed with the seed, with the soul of the child derived from the soul of the father. This perspective is not surprising, given that he argued that the soul is the body itself in his work "On the Soul," Chapter 5. Saint Jerome, in his letters to Marcellina and Anapsychia, attested that the majority in the West shared a similar view. Saint Augustine wrote four books on the origin of the soul, in which he left this question undecided and refrained from rash conclusions. His second book of "Retractations," Chapter 56, reveals that he remained in doubt until his death. Nevertheless, in his 157th letter, he debated with Tertullian and leaned more toward the opposing view.

VIII. However, we assert that the rational soul is infused into the embryo rather than coming from outside, as Aristotle proposed in "Generation of Animals," Book 2, Chapter 3. We believe that God forms the soul within the foetus and the rudiment of the human body. This view aligns with the authority of Scripture and is consistent with reason and the nature of the soul itself.

IX. In Numbers 27:16, Moses says to God, "Let the Lord, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation." The Epistle to the Hebrews (Hebrews 12:9) also states, "And if we had fathers of our bodies who corrected us, and we gave them reverence, shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits and live?" It is noteworthy that God is specifically called the "Father of spirits" in a distinct manner, contrasting Him with the fathers of the flesh. If the soul were transmitted through tradition, those who are fathers of the flesh would also be fathers of the spirits. God would not be distinguished by this title if He acted the same way with both the soul and the body.

X. Therefore, Ecclesiastes 12 declares, "The body is dissolved to dust, and the spirit returns to God who gave it." This statement would not be fitting if God gave the spirit in the same manner as the body. Solomon implies, through the phrase "returns to God," that the soul originated from God and returns to its source, which cannot be said of the body.

XI. The conception of Christ in the womb of His mother supports this perspective. Since, according to the flesh, He had no human father, it is evident that His soul was immediately created by God. If it were necessary to have your soul transmitted through your father's seed to be considered a son of Adam, Christ could not be called the Son of Adam or of David.

XII. The argument brought from the beginning of Exodus, stating, "Seventy souls came out of the loins of Jacob," is unconvincing. It is well-known that the Hebrew idiom refers to "souls" as persons.

XIII. Moreover, reason itself aligns with the Word of God:

1. The soul, being something above nature, cannot share a common generation with other natural entities.
2. Due to its immaterial nature, it cannot be brought forth by the power of any material substance.
3. If the soul were generated solely by the body, it could not exist independently of the body.
4. Those who propose that the soul is transmitted by seed find themselves in a perplexing situation. Why should the mother's soul not also be transmitted to the child? If both maternal and paternal souls are transmitted, two souls must necessarily grow together and become intertwined.
5. What becomes of the vast quantity of seed that is lost, whether through nocturnal emissions, wasteful acts, or failed conception within the womb? Are so many human souls lost, suffocated in the womb, or left without a material vessel? It is evident that these lost souls do not belong to the human count.

6. Furthermore, it must be determined whether the entire paternal soul is transmitted, in which case the father would be rendered soulless, or if only a portion of the soul is transmitted, thereby implying divisibility of the soul. The transmission of the entire soul, akin to the kindling of one flame by another, would involve the transformation of the applied matter into the soul.
7. If Aristotle's definition of the soul is accepted (as found in "On the Soul," Book 2, Chapter 1), wherein he defines the soul as the first actuality of a naturally organized body that has life potentially, it is unclear how the rational soul could inform and shape the seed, as the seed lacks organs.

XIV. Nevertheless, it is still valid to assert that man begets man, even though he does not beget the soul or bring forth the soul's existence through the power of the seed. In the act of generation, man provides not only the material substance of the infant but also dispositions and aptitudes to receive that form which confers human existence. As the Scriptures testify to the Virgin Mary as the mother of Christ, despite the extraordinary intervention of the Holy Ghost in His conception, there should be no doubt that in the common course of nature, man begets man, as all natural processes follow ordinary means and rules. Removing these obstacles paves the way for understanding how sin is passed from parents to their children.

XV. In the preceding discussion, I have presented compelling reasons to show that sin does not transfer from the body to the soul. Conversely, it is a great folly to believe that God implanted this inclination to sin in the soul. To assert that original sin was present in the soul due to God's unwillingness or indifference, permitted through mere passivity, is highly offensive. For since original sin is the consequence of Adam's transgression, claiming that this punishment was merely allowed by God and not willed by Him detracts from God's role as a Judge. Judges do not administer punishment through mere allowance but by issuing decrees.

XVI. To elucidate this doctrine, we establish six propositions as the foundations of truth:

First, even if we had not descended from Adam, we would still be justly deprived of supernatural blessings since he received them both in his name and ours, and subsequently lost them due to his own fault. It is analogous to a situation where one among many brothers mismanages and depletes money received in his name and his brothers' names, causing losses for all.

Secondly, God has endowed the soul with faculties such as Understanding, Will, Sense, and Appetite, which are inherently inclined towards things that are evident and known rather than those that are distant and unfamiliar.

Thirdly, without divine and supernatural enlightenment, humans cannot comprehend and cherish supernatural and divine things.

Fourthly, for man to use evident and natural things justly, fittingly, and to the glory of God, some supernatural light must illuminate him.

Fifthly, God has instilled in every person a love for self as a means of self-preservation, which is naturally good. However, this self-love becomes morally good when it aligns with and promotes love for God.

Sixthly, the disposition of the mind often mirrors the temperament of the body.

XVII. Building upon these foundations, I assert that God creates the souls of humans as inherently good but lacking heavenly gifts and supernatural illumination. This is just because Adam, on behalf of himself and his descendants, lost the gifts that were intended for him and his progeny. Not endowing the mind with supernatural illumination is not equivalent to infusing sin into the soul. To withhold supernatural light from the will is to deprive it of the

knowledge of supernatural goods, restricting its movement only towards present and known things, such as bodily pleasures and riches. Although these are naturally good, they divert the will from aspiring to supernatural things. Consequently, self-love, which is naturally good and necessary, begins to be morally evil when it encroaches upon the love of God. This results in a propensity for evil, present in the disorderly self-love that lacks the guidance of supernatural illumination. By not bestowing this light upon the soul, God does not infuse sin into it. It is akin to removing the sunlight from a traveler's path by introducing darkness, not forcing the traveler to stray but simply removing the means by which the right path is discerned.

XVIII. The body's temperament can exacerbate this inclination. Experience shows that sanguine individuals tend to be passionate and lustful, choleric ones are impulsive and irritable, melancholic individuals are suspicious and steadfast in their malicious intentions, while black and yellow bile provoke the appetite, igniting its desires and passions. Depending on the body's temperament, one may laugh when chastised, while another weeps when struck. The body's humors are not causes but provocations of sin. They do not compel the will but entice it, nor do they imprint sin onto the soul but rather encourage the sinful soul. With many avenues open to sin, they incline the soul in one direction rather than another.

Chapter 11

Whether the power of believing the Gospel is lost by the sin of Adam.

I. It is questioned whether, through the sin of Adam, we have lost the power of believing in the Gospel. Arminius, the ingenious deviser, denies it. To establish his argument that God is obligated to grant every individual the power to believe in Christ and obtain faith, he contends that Adam, before his fall, neither possessed the power nor the necessity to believe in Christ. Therefore, according to him, we could not lose through Adam what Adam himself did not possess. He also asserts that faith was not commanded by the law, and thus Adam was not obligated to believe, as only the law was given to him. He adds that no one can believe unless they are a sinner. Therefore, if Adam did not receive the power to rise again if he fell, he did not receive the power to believe in the Gospel, which enables us to rise from this fall.

II. Since these arguments serve to lay the groundwork for Arminius's impious and ungodly belief that God is bound to bestow the power to believe on all individuals, and that God is ready to grant faith to all if they choose, this question carries significant weight and should not be treated lightly or superficially.

III. We, on the other hand, contend against Arminius that humanity lost, through the sin of Adam, not only their original purity and righteousness but also the power to believe in Christ. Through Adam's fall, we lost the ability to love God and obey Him. Now, faith inherently includes the love of God and represents a certain form of obedience.

IV. Indeed, before his fall, Adam was not obliged to believe in Christ because Christ had not yet been revealed to him, nor was there any need at that time. However, Adam was obligated to believe every

word of God, regardless of when it would be revealed. This obligation also extended to his descendants, but it could not have been passed down if Adam himself had not been subject to it. This is analogous to the Israelites during David's reign; they were not obliged to believe Jeremiah's prophecy of the impending Babylonian captivity because Jeremiah did not exist at that time, and it was unnecessary for them to know about it. Yet, by rejecting Jeremiah's prophecy, they violated the same law by which the people were bound during David's time. It would be foolish to claim that a person who has lost their sight no longer possesses the ability to see a house built four years later or that a person who has become blind due to their own fault has lost the faculty to see ointments or plasters brought to them by a physician several months later. Similarly, Adam possessed the power to believe in Christ before his fall, just as he had the power to aid and comfort the sick and afflicted, even though there was no suffering or sickness before the fall. Adam had the latent power to believe in the Gospel, much like a healthy person has the latent power to use remedies for a disease that might or might not occur. However, his failure to believe in Christ was not due to an inadequacy in the power bestowed upon him by God but because it was unnecessary. Ultimately, since Adam lost the power to believe in the word of God through his unbelief, it follows that he also lost the power to believe in the word that would provide a remedy for this evil.

V. It is futile for Arminius to argue that it is inappropriate to say that Adam had the power to believe when he had no need of it, and that this power was taken away when he began to need it. The power of believing was not lacking in Adam, nor was it forcibly taken from him. Instead, he willingly forfeited it when he lost the ability to obey God. God, out of His grace alone, restores this power to those He chooses, not because we desire it, but because He instills in us the desire to believe.

VI. It is absurd for Arnoldus to claim that Adam did not receive the power to rise if he fell before his fall. The power by which people rise after the fall is not given before the fall, as it is lost due to the fall and

then restored afterward. There is no doubt that Adam possessed the strength to rise again if he had not lost it through his fall. Arnoldus's argument is akin to saying that a person to whom God has given healthy and clear eyes has not received the power to see with those eyes after becoming blind.

VII. Ultimately, all of Adam's descendants are obligated to fulfill the law; this is a natural debt. The law commands us to love God, obey Him, and, therefore, believe in Him when He speaks. Whenever Christ is preached, the Gospel cannot be rejected without disregarding the law as well. However, those to whom Christ was never preached will not be condemned for rejecting Christ, but they will be judged by the law, which bound them to believe in Christ if Christ had been preached to them.

VIII. Arnoldus is mistaken in asserting that the power by which we believe in God is different from the power by which they believe in Christ. He argues that the words of the law and the words of the Gospel are entirely distinct and opposite. This assertion is hasty, for just because white and black are opposites, it does not mean that one faculty is responsible for seeing white and another for seeing black. It is the same mental faculty that comprehends both contraries. Furthermore, it is difficult to see how the Law and the Gospel can be considered contrary, as the Law serves as a tutor to Christ, and the Gospel provides the means by which the Law is fulfilled. There is no discord between the creditor and the surety. Christ did not come to abolish the law but to fulfill it, as stated in Matthew 5:17 and Romans 3:30.

IX. To answer the question of whether the law commands us to believe in Christ, it is necessary to differentiate between two types of obligations imposed by the law. Some obligations are absolute and binding on all people at all times. These include the duty to love God and our neighbor, which Adam knew and was bound to perform even before the fall. However, other obligations are binding when explicitly commanded by God and when the ability to understand

them is granted by God. For example, the Israelites in Egypt were not bound by the law to obey commands such as not gathering manna on the Sabbath, looking at the brazen serpent, or crossing the Jordan until God specifically commanded them. Disobeying these commands, had they been given, would have resulted in just punishment for breaking the law.

XI. Arnoldus incorrectly claims that the discussion here does not pertain to the general power of believing every word of God. In fact, it does, as the power to believe in Christ is encompassed within this general power. Just as the power of sight includes the ability to perceive remedies for blindness, even though those remedies are not immediately present and there is no immediate need for them.

XII. All these considerations point to the fact that the power of believing and embracing the remedies offered by God in the Gospel is lost due to the natural corruption inherited from Adam. Therefore, Arminius is mistaken when he asserts that God is obliged to grant all individuals the ability to believe in Christ, or that He stands ready to provide faith to everyone. God is not obligated to restore what humanity lost through its own fault, nor is He unjust in requiring from individuals what they naturally owe.

XIII. Arminius contradicts himself in this matter and undermines his own arguments. He acknowledges that many nations have been deprived of the light of the Gospel for extended periods, without which faith is impossible, as a punishment for the unbelief of their ancestors. Thus, he admits that God did not grant, nor was He prepared to grant, these nations the power to believe in Christ. Indeed, Arminius, in making this statement, presents the reason why God did not and therefore was not prepared to provide what is essential for faith. Was God prepared to bestow the power to believe on the people of Tyre and Sidon, of whom Christ testified that they would have repented in sackcloth and ashes had they received His word and witnessed His miracles? Did He grant the power of belief to those whose hearts He had hardened by His irresistible will, as

Arminius claims? Could they believe of whom it is written in John 12:39, "Therefore they could not believe, because it is written, he hath blinded their eyes, and hath hardened their hearts"? Did He grant the power of belief to those whom Arminius asserts are called by God through means that are incongruent and ineffective, and by which He knows that individuals will never be converted?

XIV. In this context, Arminius indirectly accuses God of folly. He suggests that God is working against Himself and is prepared to do what He ought not to do by adopting incongruous and ineffective means. In effect, he sets laws for God as though He were a judge. For what else do these words imply: "God is bound to give the power of believing"? It seems as though Arminius binds God by this law, leaving God with no justification for His justice unless Arminius provides the means by which God can avoid the charge of injustice.

XV. Although the impotence and inability to believe are punishments resulting from Adam's sin, it is not unjust to punish someone who, due to this impotence, rejects the Gospel. This is because the same impotence or inability that serves as a punishment is also a fault. I argue this to demonstrate how Arnoldus inappropriately employs examples of punishments that are not faults. Arnoldus asks whether it is fair for a soldier who has been punished with the loss of his eyes for failing to keep watch to be offered a pardon for another offense or be promised something on the condition that he watches more diligently, only to be punished again because, being blind, he could not watch. However, this example is not relevant, as being blind is not a fault, and no one is naturally obligated to see. It is different with our inability to believe. Moreover, a person who is punished with the loss of sight would grieve and bear the loss of light heavily. In contrast, a person does not believe because they choose not to believe, and this impotence is voluntary.

Chapter 12

That God Does Save Those Whom, by His Mere Grace, He Chose Out of Mankind Corrupted and Subject to the Curse. What Predestination Is: Its Components. That Arminius Did Not Understand the Nature of the Predestination Decree and Completely Denied Election.

I. Since sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and all humans, without exception, are born guilty of the curse, it is certain that no one can be delivered from the curse except by God's pure grace and favour. God has revealed this grace to us in Christ, without whom there is no salvation. He took on our human nature to serve as a mediator and link between humanity and God. He endured death to atone for our sins, thereby making reconciliation possible. Through this reconciliation, we are restored to the status and position of God's children.

II. This blessing and saving grace are made known to us through the Gospel, in which the covenant of free grace, with Christ as the mediator and foundation, is presented.

III. The Gospel promises eternal life to those who believe in Christ. Since there is no salvation without Christ, faith is the means by which Christ is apprehended, and it is the path to the salvation reserved exclusively for the faithful. As the Apostle declares, "Without faith, it is impossible to please God." By faith, I do not mean the empty trust that allows individuals to remain in their vices while their consciences are numbed by a hopeful anticipation of God's mercy. Instead, I refer to a living faith that operates through love, as it is written in Galatians 5:6. This faith not only enhances love but also dispels fear.

IV. Man does not possess this faith of his own accord; it is not an act of free will. Instead, it is a gift from God and the result of the Holy Spirit's work. The Holy Spirit powerfully calls and impresses God's

promises, as presented in the Gospel, upon people's hearts and deeply within their consciences.

V. Not all individuals possess this faith, as the Apostle asserts in 2 Thessalonians 3. If that were the case, all people would be converted and saved. Rather, this faith is only granted to those whom Paul describes as being called according to God's purpose, as mentioned in Romans 8:28. These are the individuals whom God, out of His sheer good pleasure, has chosen for salvation.

VI. Faith is given solely by the good pleasure of God, and it is not bestowed upon the worthy but rather makes them worthy once it is given. God does not find people to be inherently good; instead, He transforms them into goodness. God's foreknowledge pertains only to the good that He Himself will bring about, as will be explained more fully later.

VII. This eternal and unchanging decree of God is termed Predestination, which is a component of God's providence. Providence becomes Predestination when it relates to the salvation or condemnation of rational beings and when it arranges and governs the means through which individuals attain salvation. It is beyond doubt that these matters are guided by divine will, and that God, according to His good pleasure, bestows some things on certain individuals while denying them to others. Even if Scripture were silent on this matter, reason itself would argue that it is unlikely for God, who cares for all things, to be negligent in this crucial aspect.

VIII. Although there exists a Predestination among the Angels, as Saint Paul attests when he calls the Angels "elect" in 1 Timothy 5:21, we shall only discuss the predestination of humans, as it is the one that pertains to us.

IX. Predestination is, therefore, the divine decree by which God has, from eternity, determined His actions concerning every individual within the work of our salvation. Or, to phrase it differently,

Predestination is God's decree by which, from the corrupt mass of humanity, He has determined to save certain individuals through Christ and justly punish the rest for their sins.

X. Predestination consists of two parts: election and reprobation, with the first naturally leading to the second. Whenever some are chosen from among many, the rest are necessarily reprobated, and among the chosen, some are preferred over others.

XI. The Scriptures frequently mention election and the elect. As stated in Matthew 20:16, "Many are called, but few are chosen." Ephesians 1:4 mentions, "God hath chosen us in Christ before the foundations of the world were laid." Romans 9:11 notes, "The purpose of God according to election stands not of works, but of Him that calls." Romans 11:5 states, "There is a remnant according to the election of grace." Mark 13:22 warns, "False Christs and false Prophets shall arise, and shall show signs and wonders to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect."

XII. On the contrary, Scripture attests to the existence of reprobation. For instance, in 1 Peter 2:8, it mentions those "who stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed." Similarly, in Jude, verse 4, it speaks of "certain men [who] are crept in, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation." Revelations 20:15 states that those "not found written in the book of life" will be cast into the lake of fire. This book is none other than the catalogue of the elect, determined by God's decree.

XIII. The notable example of this distinction is found in Jacob and Esau. While they were still in the womb, before having done any good or evil, God declared, "I have loved Jacob; I have hated Esau," as recounted in Romans 9. Another example is seen in the two thieves crucified with Christ. As Luke 17:34 puts it, "Two shall be in a bed; the one shall be received, and the other left." This is not unlike the case of Pharaoh's butler and chief baker, both imprisoned

together. One was brought forth to honour, while the other faced punishment.

XIV. God has demonstrated this distinction not only in Abraham but also in his descendants, whom He elevated above other nations without any merit of their own. As stated in Deuteronomy 32: "When the Most High divided to the Nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, the Lord's portion was his people, Jacob was the lot of his inheritance." To prevent anyone from assuming this was due to the virtue of the people foreseen, God explicitly tells them in Deuteronomy 9:6: "Understand therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good Land to possess it for thy righteousness, for thou art a stiff-necked people."

XV. While Predestination encompasses reprobation because it is certain that the wicked are destined for a particular end and their deserved punishments, the Apostle, in passages such as Romans 8, uses the term Predestination to refer only to Election. Romans 8 speaks of "those that he predestinated, he called," and in Ephesians 1:5, it mentions, "Having predestinated us to the adoption of children." Thomas Aquinas, following this usage, defines Predestination as "the preparation for grace in the present and for glory in the world to come" (Summa Theologica, Question 23, Article 2).

XVI. When it comes to this doctrine, diverse opinions abound, yet Arminius, among all others, seems to grasp the nature of Predestination the least and stumbles greatly at its very outset. In his Theological Disputations (Disp. 13, Th. 3), he claims that the genus and general of Predestination is the Evangelical decree, not the legal decree of the Law. He and his followers reduce the entire doctrine of Predestination to four decrees: the first decree, wherein God decided to send His Son for the redemption of humanity; the second, wherein He decreed to grant eternal life to believers; the third, wherein He decreed to provide all people with grace and sufficient power to believe; and the fourth, wherein He decreed to grant salvation to

those specific individuals whom He foreknew would believe and persevere in the faith. They connect these decrees like links in a chain, with the latter depending on the former and the way to the latter being paved by the former.

XVII. These observations make it clear that Arminius did not truly grasp the nature of the decree of Predestination. Predestination is the divine determination of what God will do with us, not what He wants us to do. Therefore, Arminius's inclusion of God's will to save those who will believe among the decrees of God is misaligned. Arminius himself categorises Predestination under providence, making Predestination a subspecies or component of providence. Consequently, if the statement "he that believeth shall be saved" is not part of the decree of providence, it certainly cannot be part of the decree of Predestination, since Predestination is nothing more than providence confined to the salvation or reprobation of individuals. This is evident from Arminius's own opposition between the Evangelical decree and the legal decree, which pertains to justice, not providence. Hence, the rules of the Gospel have no more relevance to the providence of God and, therefore, not to Predestination than the rules of the Law.

XVIII. Consequently, the second of those four decrees should be eliminated, finding its place in the teachings of the Gospel rather than in the eternal decree and secret Predestination. By removing the second link from these four, the entire chain is broken, and it can be likened to removing one pin that unravels the entire structure.

XIX. Furthermore, Arminius completely undermines the concept of Election, rendering it a mere name. He denies that the number of the Elect is determined by God's decree. Consequently, no one is truly elected according to his view. If the salvation of different individuals were indeed determined by God's decree, it would also be determined who is part of that number, and the sum total of those chosen would be clearly and definitively established. However, if the number of the elect is not preordained by God's certain decree, then

the Book of life containing the list of the saved (Revelation 20) and the number of brethren yet to be fulfilled (Revelation 6:11), along with everything the Scripture says about the sheep given to Christ even before their conversion, must all vanish.

XX. Arminius suggests that all individuals are elected through conditional election—meaning, they are elected if they choose to believe and make correct use of the grace offered to them through their free will. This, however, presents a flawed notion of election because it extends equally to all, failing to make any distinction. It is not a true election if it doesn't prefer some over others. Does this general election mean that Simon Magus and Simon Peter were equally elected? Or that Judas and Pharaoh were also included?

XXI. Even more perilous is Arminius's assertion that the election of specific individuals occurs after faith, making God's election dependent on human free will. This leads to the idea that human salvation is purely contingent and not necessary because it relies on something contingent and changeable—namely, human will. While God may certainly foreknow contingent and accidental future events, this does not make human election or salvation necessary. Certainty does not imply necessity. Since election is not an act of God's foreknowledge but of His will, according to Arminius, its execution depends on fulfilling conditions, which can be hindered by humans. Arminians believe that every individual has the power to believe and that God is obligated to provide everyone with the ability to fulfill the conditions of the second covenant. They consider God's grace to be only a partial cause of faith, with faith not solely originating from God's grace alone.

XXII. When Arminians contend that each person is elected by God based on foreseen faith—that is, they are chosen for salvation because God foresees they will come when called and will persevere—they effectively deny true election. Simply receiving all who come does not constitute election or choice. While Arminians propose that both precedent and concomitant grace are given by God, they believe

it is within the power of human free will to accept or refuse this grace. According to Arminius, God should predestine those to salvation whom He has foreseen will use His grace correctly through their own free will. Yet, I contest that this cannot be labelled as Election, as it appears to be a decree to admit those who choose to come to Christ, without being appointed to salvation by God beforehand. In Arminius's doctrine, individuals appear to choose God and turn to Him before being designated for salvation by God.

XXIII. Furthermore, Arminius posits that specific individuals are elected for their foreseen faith but only if they are foreseen to persevere in faith until death. This implies that God does not elect anyone unless they are considered as dead or teetering on the brink of life and death. If this were true, Arminius contradicts himself when he claims that believers are elected, for he should say that they are elected, but only to cease believing.

XXIV. Additionally, consider the novel and astonishing opinion of the Arminians, where they believe that reprobates can be saved and the elect may be damned—not due to their status as reprobate or elect, but based on their ability to believe and attain salvation. However, if someone deemed a reprobate by God's decree can be saved and an elected individual may be damned, it becomes evident that Predestination is not God's decree but rather an empty title, a whimsical will, or mere foreknowledge. The certainty of Predestination hinges on foreseeing an uncertain element—namely, human free will. Who would tolerate someone speaking like this? "I am indeed a reprobate, but I can make it so that I am saved," or "I am elected, but I can arrange to be reprobated."

XXV. Thus, if the certainty of election were made to rely on human will, it might result in no one believing in Christ, and Christ's sacrifice would have been in vain.

XXVI. By the sequence and arrangement of the four decrees, in which Christ is destined for death before God determined who would

be saved, Christ is made the head of the Church without any definite members—an absurdity. According to this view, Christ is given as the head of the Church without God's certain will regarding His future body. Moreover, following the Arminian doctrine, it could be possible for Christ to be a head without a body, and the Church might cease to exist because they believe that none of the elect are exempt from damnation.

XXVII. Another crucial point is that Arminians assert Christ did not die solely for the faithful but for all individuals indiscriminately, equally for Peter and Judas. They argue that Christ, in His death, did not predetermine whom He would save through His sacrifice. In fact, according to Arminians, election had no place at the time of Christ's death because it is a concept that comes after His crucifixion.

XXVIII. The example of Caiaphas and Judas carries particular weight here. According to Arminian doctrine, God elects all individuals under the condition that they believe in the death of Christ. So, the question arises: Did God choose Caiaphas and Judas for salvation under the condition that they would believe in Christ's death? This cannot be asserted because God had decreed to use the wickedness of Caiaphas and Judas to deliver Christ to His death. How could they be elected for salvation under the condition of believing in Christ's death when they were appointed to precisely that, using their disbelief and wickedness to deliver Christ to His death? These topics are touched upon briefly and incidentally; they require more detailed explanation in their respective contexts.

Chapter 13

Of the object of Predestination, that is, whether God, in predestining, considers a man as fallen or as not fallen.

Although God has chosen some men for salvation rather than others for no other reason than that it seemed good to Him, and the cause of this difference is not to be found in man, there may be a doubt about the object of Predestination. Specifically, whether God, when electing or reprobating individuals, considers them as fallen and sinful or as not fallen, but as people in a state of innocence. The pastors of the Valacrian Churches, staunch defenders of the truth, in their most precise epistle, a copy of which they have sent to us, declare that they believe God considered those whom He elected and those He passed over as fallen in Adam and dead in sins. All the ancients share this belief, and none of them (as far as I know) ever entertained the idea that God reprobated individuals without taking sin into account. I observe that Calvin, Zanchi, Melanchthon, Bucer, Musculus, Pareus, renowned luminaries of the Church in this age, held the same opinion. I have included selected passages from their writings at the end of this work to avoid impeding the diligent reader and disrupting the continuity of the ongoing debate against the Arminians. The confession of the churches of France adheres to these limits in its twelfth article, where Election and Reprobation are established based on the corrupt state of humanity, citing passages from the ninth chapter of Romans and other scriptural references. The revered Synod of Dordt, which stands as one of the most renowned and holy synods for many ages, endorsed this view. I fail to see what can be opposed to such great authority. A holy assembly convened from various parts of the Christian world wisely recognized that this opinion is not only more moderate and secure but also most effective in refuting the objections of the innovators who audaciously revel in this matter. Thus, their constructs crumble, and their sinews are severed. With Reprobation without the consideration of sin removed, which they vigorously assail, they flail at empty air, having nothing substantial to target. The reasons that led our confession, as well as the esteemed Synod, to conclude that it is appropriate to rest

in Predestination where man is viewed as fallen, are, I believe, the following.

I. Firstly, the Scripture phrase that refers to the Elect as the vessels of mercy presents itself. Now, there is no place for mercy unless it's shown to the miserable. One cannot be elected for the salvation to be obtained through Christ unless they are considered as someone in need of a redeemer. Since the appointment to an end includes the means by which that end is achieved, and the means to salvation is the remission of sins, and there is no remission of sins without sin, it's evident that those appointed to salvation are considered as sinners.

II. God could not, while preserving His justice, punish those individuals whom He considered without sin, for God does not punish the guiltless. Damnation is an act of God's justice, which cannot stand or coexist with itself if innocent individuals are appointed to that desertion and forsaking that inevitably leads to eternal destruction. Or if God had decided to destroy individuals before deciding to create them.

III. Just as God does not condemn unless it's for sin, it's certain that He is not willing to condemn unless it's for sin. But to reprobate individuals and to be willing to condemn them are the same, just as to elect and be willing to save are the same. Therefore, God does not reprobate unless it's for sin.

IV. Furthermore, it cannot be denied that the rejection or reprobation of the creature from God is the punishment that can be inflicted on a rational being because eternal torments inevitably follow it. If we accept this premise, it follows that it's not in line with infinite goodness and the highest justice to abandon His own creature, not because they have sinned, but because it seemed good to God to derive glory from the desertion and forsaking of the soul He created. Could a father, who knows that his son's happiness depends on him, without being accused of cruelty or a lack of natural

affection, abandon his innocent son, who is found guilty of no wrongdoing, especially if this abandonment leads his son into eternal torments and makes him not only most miserable but also most wicked?

V. Nor would God act justly if He were to bestow greater evil on the creature, by infinite measures, than the good He had originally given. After giving it existence (being), albeit for a brief period, He would then, without any fault on its part, condemn it to an evil and miserable existence (male esse) for eternity. If God merely took away what He had given and reduced the creature to nothing, there would be no reason to complain. But to inflict infinite evil on a creature to whom He had given finite good, and to create man solely for the purpose of destroying him, so that He could derive glory from the abandonment of the soul He created, is repugnant to the goodness and justice of God.

VI. What is even more grievous is that by reprobating or deserting man, considered without sin, the innocent individual is not only made most miserable but also most wicked. The turning away of the will necessarily follows the denial of the Spirit of God. And since, according to this opinion, God hated man, whom He created, before man hated God, it follows that the hatred of God, by which He hates man, in the same opinion, becomes the cause of the hatred by which man hates God, thereby making God the author of sin.

VII. If God hated Esau, considered in the incorruptible mass as not a sinner, it must be understood that God hates the innocent creature. Although hatred in God is not a human emotion or disturbance, it is a firm and certain will to punish, and punishment cannot be just if there is no offense. Nor can a person be justly punished unless they are considered a sinner.

VIII. If anyone were to claim that God is not subject to any laws and, therefore, His actions cannot be properly judged according to the rule of justice because He is not bound by any rules, I would respond

that the nature of God is more potent than any law. The natural perfection that makes it impossible for God to lie or sin is also the reason why He could not hate His guiltless creature or condemn man to eternal torments for no fault of his own. If these things were indeed true, it would be wise to refrain from discussing them, to keep this provocative matter concealed, and to promote silence or ignorance rather than divulging these secrets. By revealing them, we sow doubts and uncertainties that provide adversaries with an opportunity to discredit the true religion. Moreover, such revelations do not make anyone more suitable for the duties of a Christian, a civil man, or any aspect of piety.

IX. One cannot escape the fact that those who argue that reprobation does not appoint men to damnation but merely passes them by or does not elect them are merely seeking softer words to convey the same idea. It is essentially the same whether God appoints a man to damnation or does something from which damnation necessarily follows. Whomever God does not elect, whether they are described as omitted and passed by or reprobated, they are always excluded from God's grace, and damnation undoubtedly follows this exclusion because salvation is impossible without the grace of election. Since it is evident to all that men are appointed to salvation through election, I would like to know what those who are not elected but passed by are appointed to. Surely, if election appoints men to salvation, it is clear that by reprobation, also known as omission or passing by, the rest are excluded from salvation and appointed to destruction.

X. If God has appointed the innocent creature to destruction, it must necessarily mean that He has also appointed it to sin, without which there can be no just destruction. Consequently, God would be the impulsive and motivating cause of sin. Furthermore, it would be unjust to punish a man for that sin to which he is either precisely appointed or compelled by the will of God.

XI. The fact that God's decrees are eternal and that He has foreknown all things from eternity does not negate the opinion that,

in election and reprobation, God considered man as fallen before considering him as condemned. Although God's decrees are certain, there is still an order among them. Just as the eternal decree to destroy the world by fire followed the decree to create the world, so too, although God appointed the wicked to punishment from eternity, there is no hindrance to considering that the act of viewing men as sinners preceded the act of viewing them as reprobate or appointed to punishment.

XII. The opinion of the reverend Synod and the confession of our Churches, which make the fallen man the object of predestination, does not imply that God created man for an uncertain end or that man would fail to achieve the end God set for him. God's ultimate goal was to illuminate and display His glory by manifesting His goodness and justice. To achieve this, He decreed to create man just but mutable and free. The foreknowledge of man's fall follows this decree, not in time but in order, and election and reprobation follow this foreknowledge in order.

XIII. Those who argue that God considered man as not yet created when electing and reprobating are far from the truth. They essentially claim that God considered man as nothing and, therefore, not truly a man. However, to consider something as nothing is almost like a dream. If someone intends to save or punish a man, they must first have willed him to be a man. If God had appointed man to punishment before determining to create him, it would be as if someone decided to punish their children before deciding to conceive them.

XIV. Finally, since the first act of God's omnipotence was concerned with nothing, it must have preceded the act of His mercy or justice, which can only be concerned with something that exists.

XV. Those who argue that God, in predestining, considered man as one who might be created and might fail are essentially saying the same thing in different words. For anyone who says that he might be

created is saying that he was not yet created, and anyone who says he might fall is saying that he had not fallen. However, they compound these errors by attributing a power and potentiality to something that is nothing. In God, there was indeed the active power to create the world before its creation. However, in the world, there was no passive power for creation before it was created. Likewise, there could not be power for creation or for the fall in man who was not yet created. It is also contrary to reason to claim that something which does not exist may fall. If God elected man who might be created, what prevents us from saying that He elected some whom He would never create? After all, these individuals might also be created. But if God elected those whom He presupposed He would create, the will to create must necessarily precede the election.

Chapter 14

That the Apostle Saint Paul, in the ninth to the Romans, by the word "mass," understood the corrupted mass.

I. Saint Paul maintains these boundaries in the ninth chapter of Romans, where he discusses election and reprobation more extensively and meticulously than anywhere else. Even if he had written with the brightness of the sun, it could not be clearer that he is speaking of the corrupted mass and the will of God, by which one sinful man is chosen and another reprobated.

II. The Apostle's objective is to dispel the false confidence of the Jews, who took pride in the law and the righteousness of their works. To them, it seemed absurd and impossible that the Israelites, or the majority of them, fell away from God's covenant and were not counted among His children. To remove this doubt from their minds

and humble their pride, he traces the issue back to its origin. He denies that carnal descent or the righteousness of works is the reason anyone is considered a son of Abraham. Instead, it is due to God's good pleasure and the free election of grace, by which God chose whom He would from among Abraham's descendants and rejected whom He pleased. God had mercy on some and hardened others from the same mass. He prepared some vessels for honour and patiently endured the vessels prepared for destruction. To illustrate this, he presents two pairs of examples: Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau. Isaac and Jacob represent sons of the promise and instances of God's free election by grace, while Ishmael and Esau exemplify rejection. The Apostle strategically introduces the example of Esau and Jacob to preemptively address an objection. The Jews might object that the difference between Isaac and Ishmael was because one was born to a servant and the other to a free woman. Additionally, they might argue that Isaac had already displayed evil tendencies when Ishmael was born, justifying his exclusion from the covenant. The Apostle skillfully anticipates this objection by presenting the example of Jacob and Esau, both born to the free woman, neither having done good or evil, yet God loved one and hated the other.

III. The Apostle presents all these examples to explain why God chose some Jews and rejected others, despite their belief in legal righteousness. This nation, being impure and corrupt, cannot be compared to a pure mass. Therefore, the Apostle would diverge from the topic if he used an example of an undefiled mass to teach how God chose some and rejected others from a corrupted nation.

IV. The examples of Jacob and Esau confirm and demonstrate the same principle. When they were in the womb and had done neither good nor evil, God declared that He loved Jacob and hated Esau. God could not have considered these twins in the womb without acknowledging their inherent state, which was corrupted and tainted by original sin. Jacob cannot be said to have been preferred over Esau because he was morally superior while in the womb, as neither

of them had yet performed good or evil deeds. This is the argument Saint Paul employs to silence those who question God's actions and prevent anyone from disputing or opposing Him. For the sole reason that, out of two equally sinful individuals, God chose one over the other, is His sovereign good pleasure.

V. The word "hated" carries significant weight, as it implies that God could not have hated a creature He considered pure and free from sin.

VI. The description of the elect is no trivial matter; they are those upon whom God bestows His mercy (verse 18). Therefore, in verse 23, they are referred to as the "vessels of mercy," as mercy presupposes misery. It is a misinterpretation of the Apostle's words to equate "misereri" (to have mercy) simply with "benefacere" (to do good). I would hesitate and have a moral dilemma in asserting that God had mercy on Christ as a man, even though He bestowed more gifts upon Him than any other creature.

VII. The term "hardening" is also significant; the Apostle states that God hardens whomever He wills. Just as the elect are understood to be those upon whom God has mercy, so the reprobate are those who are hardened. It is a grave injustice and an affront to God's justice to think that He determined to harden a person whom He regarded as pure and uncorrupted. By this line of reasoning, God would not only punish the innocent but also corrupt the guiltless. Obduracy and hardening constitute a form of punishment and, therefore, occur after sin. God does not harden anyone who is not already obstinate and inclined to rebellion of their own accord.

VIII. It does not require much insight to realise that Pharaoh is not a suitable example of reprobation from an uncorrupted mass and of a man considered without sin.

IX. It is crucial to note that when the Apostle speaks of reprobates, he refers to them as "vessels fitted or prepared for destruction." He

does not claim that God prepared or fitted them in this way, lest it appear that God infused sin into them, thereby making them ready for destruction. In contrast, when discussing the elect, he states that God prepared them for glory by granting them the Spirit and faith. The Apostle deliberately chooses different language for these two groups, emphasising that God found some vessels ready for destruction while making others vessels appointed for glory through His mercy.

X. Saint Augustine expressly supports this view. In more than six hundred instances, whether explicating or addressing Saint Paul's passage, he interprets the term "mass" to refer to the mass that is corrupted and defiled by sin. For example, in Epistle 105, he writes, "Because the entire mass is justly condemned, justice has assigned the contempt and disgrace it deserves, while grace bestows the honour it does not deserve." He continues, "The universal mass is justly condemned because of sin." In the same letter, he states, "If they are vessels of wrath, destined for that destruction that is rightly assigned to them, let them ascribe it to themselves because they are made from that mass which, due to the sin of one man, is justly and rightly condemned by God." Saint Augustine repeats this interpretation in Epistle 106 and in Enchiridion (chapters 98 and 99), as well as in Epistle 107, where he refers to it as the "mass of destruction." He also upholds this interpretation in Book 2 of his work Against the Two Letters of the Pelagians (chapter 7) and in Book 5 Against Julian (chapter 3). Among the ancients, no one ever believed that Saint Paul was referring to the uncorrupted mass.

Chapter 15

That Arminius intentionally obscures the clear and explicit words of the Apostle.

Arminius has written a treatise on the ninth chapter of Romans with careful subtlety, though with unfortunate results. He appears to torture the Apostle, extracting from him, as it were, against his will, those things that he believes might support his doctrine of Election based on foreseen faith.

I. Arminius suggests that the Apostle's intent is to teach that only those Jews who set aside justification by the law and pursue righteousness and faith should be considered the true sons of Abraham. He denies that the purpose, according to Election, pertains to the decree of electing specific individuals but rather to a general and conditional decree to save all who believe. Arminius contends that all individuals are conditionally elected, which cannot truly be considered election since election involves the choice of specific individuals from a multitude while rejecting others.

II. It is true that the doctrine of election by free grace lays the foundation for the doctrine of righteousness by faith. However, the entire discussion of Saint Paul regarding election, spanning from the sixth verse to the thirteenth, does not concern justification by faith. The Apostle is not attempting to prove in this passage that man is justified by faith or that God elects those who apprehend Christ by faith. Instead, he employs the doctrine of election as a precursor to his discussion of justification by faith, which he addresses later. His primary goal here is to establish that a person does not become a true son of the promise through the works of the law but through the election of free grace and the mercy of God. It is evident that works in this context are not contrasted with faith but with election and God's calling. For instance, in verse 11, Paul does not say, "Not by works, but by faith," but rather, "Not by works, but by Him who calls." Similarly, in verse 16, after stating, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth," he does not add, "but of him that believeth," but rather, "but of God that showeth mercy."

III. When considering why, out of two individuals equally conceived in sin (such as Esau and Jacob), God should choose one over the other, we must focus on God's mercy and election by grace, not on faith. Faith is not the cause but the effect of our election, and it does not precede election but follows it. As Saint Paul explains in 1 Corinthians 7:25, he obtained mercy from God to be faithful, not because he was already faithful. Therefore, throughout this discourse, where the Apostle discusses the cause of the distinction God makes between two individuals who are naturally alike, he makes no mention of faith. After completing this treatise, he proceeds, in verse 30, to discuss the righteousness of faith as the subsequent fruit of election.

IV. However, Arminius, in defence of his position, alters Saint Paul's words and interjects his own interpretation. Instead of Saint Paul's statement, "not of works, but of him that calleth," Arminius substitutes his own words, fabricated by himself: "not of work, but of faith, whereby God calling should be obeyed." Nevertheless, in the entire discussion concerning election, faith is not mentioned, nor does any indication of it appear.

V. It is astonishing how much Arminius misrepresents the examples of Isaac and Ishmael, as well as Jacob and Esau. He argues that they are presented here not as examples but as types of those who pursue righteousness through works rather than faith. There must be some correspondence between the type and the thing signified by the type. However, who has ever heard that Ishmael would have been justified by the works of the Law and not by faith? At that time, the law had not been given, and the distinctions between justification by the law and by faith were not known. It is not credible that Ishmael even contemplated or considered these matters. Therefore, Arminius is doing as much as making Nimrod a type of Pharisaical righteousness. Can night be a type of light? Or can Esau, whom the Apostle in Hebrews 12:16 calls profane and therefore a despiser of the Law, be a type of those who, aflame with zeal for the Law, seek justification through their works? But it is worth examining why he

insists on having Esau as a type of the sons of the flesh and those who pursue righteousness through works. He states, "Because he was first born." How ingeniously spoken! He might as well have said, "Because he was red" or "because he was a hunter." I am reluctant to refute these notions, but in these fabrications and contrivances, this gentleman places the primary defence of his doctrine of election based on foreseen faith.

VI. Furthermore, observe how arbitrarily he treats the Apostle. When he presents Ishmael and Esau not as examples of rejection by God's secret counsel but as types without any connection to what they represent, he uses these names in the manner logicians use Socrates or lawyers use Titius and Maevius, for just any other person.

VII. If we carefully consider what it means to have hated a person while they are still in the womb before they have done good or evil, we will easily see that Esau is presented here not only as a type but also as an example to whom these things indeed apply, even if he were not used as a type. In the book of Malachi, from which these words are taken, Esau is not presented as a type but as an example. However, how this statement, "God hated Esau while he was in the womb before he had committed any evil," can be applied to Arminius's purpose and be relevant to the type of those who will be justified by faith is something he has perceived. Frankly, I do not see it.

VIII. Paul adds, "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?" The meaning is clear and follows from what was previously discussed. He had presented two twins of similar condition and nature, neither better than the other, yet God loves one and hates the other, attributing this difference solely to the will of God, who has mercy on whom He wills, without foreseeing any virtue in one over the other. This leads to an objection: whether God is unjust in giving dissimilar things to those who are similar, and why He does not have mercy on both? What does Arminius say here? He interprets these things as if Paul were asking whether there is

injustice with God, who excludes those from the covenant who seek justification through the Law, which He Himself established, and who justifies those who believe in Christ. This is a bold conjecture, for which there is no basis or mention in what came before. But if anyone is allowed to intermingle and add so much from his own imagination to Scripture, then there is nothing too absurd or impious that cannot be proven from Scripture. However, is there no justification or reason for this interpretation here? What indication of injustice is there in God? Who would be so foolish as to question God because He justifies sinners through faith in Christ or absolves those guilty of breaking the law? Anyone who marvels or asks why it seems good to God to save sinners through faith in Christ is not seeking justice in God but trying to comprehend the mysteries of God's wisdom. And if this had been the Apostle's intention, as Arminius imagines, it would have been easy to respond that God is not unjust for saving those who believe and providing a better righteousness for those who cannot be justified by the violated Law, to which they are guilty. Or God replaces the covenant of the law, made void by sin, with another through which humanity can be saved. However, Saint Paul does not provide such an answer. Instead, he brings God Himself into the conversation, responding, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." These words do not pertain to justification by faith but rather to God's free election, in which, out of two men equally conceived in sin and equally guilty, one is chosen over the other. Saint Paul does not say that there is a need for mercy because the law has been violated; instead, he explains the reason for the difference between those who are equal by nature: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." According to Arminius, he should have said, "I will have mercy by whatever means I please, and I will make such a covenant as suits Myself." Arminius wants God not to speak about the election of specific individuals but about the manner in which God chooses to exercise His mercy. As if God had said, "I will have mercy as I please," and not, "I will have mercy on whom I will." Surely this word, "cuius," meaning "of whom," dispels this question and refutes Arminius's

weak argument. This word identifies specific individuals and not the manner in which God chooses to show mercy towards them. The question asked, "What shall we say then? Is there injustice with God?" raised doubts about the hardening and rejection of particular individuals, not about the manner in which God chooses to save or have mercy on people.

IX. These words, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," and "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy," explicitly attribute salvation and election to God's good pleasure. Arminius, however, obscures and distorts them. He interprets them as follows: "It is not of him that willeth," meaning righteousness is not of him. But in the preceding verses, the discussion is not about righteousness but about election. Furthermore, these words, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," are taken from Exodus 33:19, where it speaks of salvation, not righteousness. But let us assume it is speaking of righteousness here; would it not then follow that faith is not of him who wills it, and consequently, neither is salvation? For salvation is achieved through righteousness, and righteousness is attained through faith.

X. The obstinacy and affected ignorance of these sectaries remarkably reveal itself in one aspect. Paul introduces the questioner speaking in this way, "Why does he yet complain? For who has resisted his will?" These words clearly show that in this chapter, it is about God's will, which cannot be resisted. Arminius is willingly blind as he asserts that it's about the antecedent will of God, which he thinks can be resisted.

XI. What's more, Arminius seems to secretly accuse Saint Paul of being obtuse or overly modest when he asks, "For what need was there in the business of the election and reprobation of several persons, to stop the mouth of demanders by saying, 'O man, what are you that repliest against God?'" Since according to Arminius' doctrine, there is an easy and ready answer at hand: God elected this man because He foresaw he would believe, and He reprobated that man

because He foresaw he would not believe. Did the Apostle not see these things? Or did he see them but withhold from us the clear solution of this puzzle that could bring light to this darkness? I would prefer Paul's ignorance over another's sharp understanding any day."

XII. The wit and audacious interpretation of Arnoldus Corvinus regarding this chapter are truly remarkable. In his work against Tilenus, Chapter 9, he interprets the example of Jacob and Esau as follows: "Surely, as there, the younger was preferred before the elder, it was also figuratively indicated that salvation would not be attained through the Law, even though it was given first, but through faith." If we were to believe this man, the Law becomes the elder brother, and Faith the younger one. Did God then hate the Law before it had done good or evil? I am embarrassed to refute these ideas. Since God preached the Gospel to Adam himself through the younger brother, it is more reasonable to consider the Law as the elder. Perhaps by the elder, he means those who sought justification through the Law. However, it is equally challenging to comprehend how God could have hated them before they had done good or evil, and how they could be considered the elder when they were never sons.

XII. Lastly, the truth here is so evident that Vorstius, having parted ways with Arminius, concedes to our perspective. He believes that the Apostle's purpose in this chapter is to teach that righteousness and eternal salvation depend not on the dignity and worth of works or any carnal prerogative, such as the Jews boasted about, but solely on the mere good pleasure of God who shows mercy.

Chapter 16

The opinions of the parties concerning the doctrine of Predestination.

I. We have already stated that predestination is God's decree by which, in the work of our salvation, God has determined from eternity what He will do with every individual. There are two aspects or forms of it: Election and Reprobation.

II. Arminius, in *Thes. 15 of Theolog. Disputa.*, understands Predestination as being synonymous with election and defines it thus: Predestination is the decree of God's good pleasure in Christ, by which from eternity He has determined to justify, adopt, and freely reward with eternal life the faithful, to whom He has decreed to grant faith, to the praise of His glorious grace. All of his followers concur in asserting that election is God's decree to save those who believe in Christ and persevere in faith.

III. However, the Arminians craftily conceal their true intentions here. Arminius' definition appears to suggest that God has chosen specific individuals for salvation. Yet, the actual meaning is different; they do not understand these words, "the faithful to whom He decreed to grant faith," to refer to certain individuals whom God has precisely chosen. Instead, they insinuate the kind of people whom God would elect, namely, those who will believe. They teach that God is often thwarted in His desire to give people faith, and that those whom God has elected may still be condemned. They deny that this decree is precise, claiming it is conditional and depends on foreseen faith. According to them, God's grace is only partially responsible for this faith, as free will also plays a role in using or rejecting God's grace. Therefore, they argue that God, through this decree, seriously intends the salvation of all people and has determined to provide them with sufficient grace and the power to believe. However, due to human will, God's intention is thwarted, and He is thus disappointed in His original desire, which is assumed to be the best. Therefore, to make it clear, this decree, as Arminius defines it, conditionally pertains to all individuals, and, according to Arminians, even

individuals like Pharaoh and Judas are conditionally elected. Thus, the Arminians deny that the number of the elect is certain through God's precise appointment, and it can neither increase nor decrease.

IV. It's important to note that Arminius' definition does not apply to infants who die prematurely, as the Arminians hold that only those who believe are elected.

V. In addition to this general and conditional election, in which all individuals without exception are elected, they propose another election of specific individuals, which relies on foreseen faith. They define this as God's absolute decree to save certain individuals whom He foresaw from eternity would believe in Christ and persevere in faith. They argue that faith and perseverance are considered as already fulfilled in the decree of election. They also believe that this election, while we are on earth, is incomplete and revocable. Greninchouius states, on pages 136-137, that just as the blessings of our salvation, which continue with faith being sustained and are revoked when faith is denied, are incomplete, so is election in this earthly life. It is not peremptory or irrevocable during this time. However, they assert that once the course of election is completed, this decree becomes complete and irrevocable.

VI. They claim that God's will to save certain individuals depends on the foreknowledge of faith and follows human will.

VII. They assign the first election to the antecedent will and the latter election to the consequent will.

VIII. They believe that God supplying the means for individuals to believe is an act of His providence, not directly related to the decree in which He appointed certain individuals to glory. They deny that true faith and perseverance in faith are the result of this later absolute election since they argue that this precise election depends on foreseen faith, and faith comes before election. They do not affirm

that God has predestined anyone precisely to faith; instead, they contend that those who have faith are predestined to salvation.

IX. They condense the entire doctrine of election into four decrees, each depending on the previous one.

X. The first decree of God is to give His Son to abolish sin and redeem all of mankind. They argue that through this redemption, all of mankind is reconciled, and forgiveness of sins is obtained for everyone. The second decree is God's determination to save those who believe and will persevere in faith. This represents the general and conditional election. The third decree is where God decides to provide all individuals with sufficient grace for faith and repentance, which they claim is given irresistibly. They also assert that God is obligated to provide all individuals with this grace. However, they argue that the very act of believing is given resistibly to prevent forcing one's will. They deny that God has decreed to give anyone faith and the act of believing precisely and absolutely. The fourth and final decree is God's precise and absolute determination to save certain individuals based on their foreseen faith.

XI. These are the decrees of the Arminians, and this summarizes their entire doctrine. It is not a small task to scrutinize and understand their views as they obscure their intentions and use various tactics to make it appear as though they align with our beliefs. They camouflage their errors with eloquent language, giving the impression of agreement when they are actually far from it. Furthermore, if someone does not express all their nuances or observe their every evasion when explaining their position, they respond with complaints of forceful slander and calumny. They are quick to distance themselves from Arminius, discredit him, and even align themselves with the Papists if it helps them avoid confrontation with us.

XII. However, we address this matter more straightforwardly, without laboriously dissecting God's election into components. We

do not prescribe an order to God by which He should have arranged His thoughts and disposed His decrees. We acknowledge that there is no general election because there can be no election where nothing is chosen. Our understanding of election does not encompass anything other than several specific individuals, determined precisely by God's purpose. We believe that only those who will certainly and infallibly attain salvation are elected. We do not hold that we are elected because of faith or from faith; rather, we believe that we are elected unto faith. God does not elect individuals who are already good based on any preceding goodness, but through His election, He will make them good. He does not foreknow any inherent goodness in us but what He Himself intends to bring about, which is not foreknowledge but preordination. We do not assert that the election of specific individuals depends on human will. We also believe that perseverance and the confirmation of a person's will in faith proceed from God's free election of grace. By this election, He decreed to provide those appointed to an end with the means to attain that end.

XV. We agree with the Arminians that in His election, God considers a person not only as fallen but also as one who, by His gift, will believe. Those whom He appointed for salvation, He also appointed for faith and repentance. However, we do not view faith as already accomplished in the act of election but as something to be achieved through God's grace, as an effect of our election. God accomplishes this not by compelling the will but by inclining it and granting it the willingness to follow Him when called. This is not a force that can be resisted; it is termed irresistible because, due to God's grace, one will not resist it willingly. Nevertheless, we firmly reject the notion that God is obligated to grant His grace to individuals as a contemptuous and disrespectful opinion that diminishes His majesty. Furthermore, we disdain the Arminian view that God desires salvation equally for all, as we believe it contradicts both Scripture and experience.

XIV. We assert that election is the eternal and, therefore, unchangeable decree of God. Through this decree, God, out of fallen and corrupted humanity, determined by His own grace, through

Christ, to save specific individuals and provide them with the means to attain salvation.

XV. We consider the decree to grant faith and repentance as a part of this overall decree. The decree concerning the end inherently encompasses the means. Just as a decree for war includes horses, weapons, and provisions, and a decree to build includes gathering stones and timber, we do not find it safe to dissect God's counsels scrupulously into separate pieces.

Chapter 17

That the Arminians make foreseen faith the cause of the election of particular persons.

I. The Arminian debaters at The Hague and many of their followers often profess that they do not consider faith as the cause of Election but merely a preceding condition, something required before Election. These are mere words, for the same individuals diligently present arguments to prove that faith is the cause of the election of specific individuals. Yet, on many occasions, whether unwillingly or inadvertently, they reveal what they seek to suppress, falling into their own trap like rats caught by their own actions.

II. Nicholas Grevinchovius, on page 103, confesses that Arminius believed election depended on foreseen faith. The Remonstrants in the conference at The Hague, page 117, employ similar phrasing. Arminius, on page 47 of his declaration, says, "The decree, whereby God decreed to save certain men, rests on the foreknowledge of God, by which He has known from eternity who will believe, etc." In their answer to the Walachrians, the Arminians on page 38 state, "We determine that the foreknowledge of faith and unbelief precedes the

decree of predestination and that this decree is founded on that prior foreknowledge." It is clear that something following another does not necessarily mean it rests on it. Therefore, Arminius does not merely present faith as an antecedent but as something that sustains and forms the foundation of election, upon which it rests. Claiming that faith is the foundation is no different from claiming it is the cause of Election, as both attributions diminish God's role. Whether you assert that some virtue within a person causes God's favour or that God's favour is based on some human virtue, both propositions are equally wrong.

III. With these words, they not obscurely admit that foreseen faith is the cause of election. They argue that the foreknowledge of faith precedes election in the same way that the foreknowledge of unbelief precedes reprobation. They acknowledge everywhere that the reprobate are destined for condemnation due to their unbelief. Arminius, against Perkins on page 86, confidently asserts that sin is the meritorious cause of reprobation. Arnoldus, on page 151, states, "Election and reprobation of specific individuals were made based on the foresight of faith and unbelief." Arnoldus continues, "Can anyone doubt your fidelity when you interpret the word 'ex' (from) ambiguously in reprobation to indicate the cause but in election to indicate the condition? Therefore, they acknowledge that the elect are chosen for salvation based on foreseen faith because they believe, and foreseen faith is the cause of the election of particular persons."

IV. There is no real difference between saying that Election rests on foreseen faith or that it rests on the foreknowledge of faith, for in both cases, faith is made the cause of Election. In the latter, it is considered the immediate cause, and in the former, it is seen as the remote cause. Foreseen faith is treated as the cause of foreknowing it, and the foreknowledge of it is considered the cause of Election. Arminius himself states in his writings against Perkins on page 142, "In that God foreknows, He does so because it will happen in the future."

V. Shortly after, the same individuals, in their discussion with the Walachrians, use the word "depending" (although cautiously) in an attempt to link election to faith. They say, "Although we are not accustomed to use the word 'depending' in this context, it is not easily susceptible to calumny, unless one has a malicious intent." However, this word can indeed be interpreted to suggest causality, as Nicholas Grevinchovius himself acknowledges. These individuals reveal their willingness to use this word if they did not fear our criticism.

VI. A treatise by Grevinchovius bears the title "Of election for faith foreseen." However, the word "for" or "from" not only indicates priority but also causality. No one would accept a statement like "Tiberius was from Octavius Augustus" or "this year is from the previous one" simply because one came before the other. A proficient Latin scholar knows that the preposition "ex" is not used to signify only the priority of faith but also implies some efficiency or dependency. On page 24, the same author writes, "It is entirely appropriate for the nature of laws and prescribed conditions that the Judge's will should be moved to grant the reward by the required and fulfilled condition." The Arminians claim that this fulfilled condition is faith, which they consider in election as already fulfilled. Therefore, they suggest that God is moved by this fulfilled condition to grant the reward. If this is true, faith is clearly the cause of both the decree and the granting of the reward because it is what moves the Judge.

VII. In the conference at The Hague, the Arminians argue that God does not elect without considering qualities. This holds true not only for faith but also for repentance, provided that God, in electing, regards people as those who, by His gift and bounty, will believe and experience renewal in repentance. If you interpret this regard differently, it implies that this regard is the cause, as someone chooses something based on some quality or virtue that motivates them to do so.

VIII. Moreover, the Arminian debaters at The Hague, on page 86, use the word "cause." They state, "God sends His word not according to any absolute decree but for other causes hidden in man. Thus, man is the cause of being called, which also makes him the cause of being elected. Whatever is the cause of God calling someone to salvation is undeniably the cause of God choosing to save them. These two are interconnected." On page 109, they argue, "It is absurd to place the absolute will of God as the first and principal cause in the decree of election, before other causes such as Christ, faith, and all other causes." Here, faith is clearly listed among the causes of election. Therefore, Arnoldus, on page 53, finds it challenging to decide whether faith should be called the cause or the condition. He states, "Whether faith should be referred to as the condition or the cause, given that it is considered God's gift, the only question is how faith relates to election. He also hints that he is inclined towards the idea that faith can be called the cause of our election."

IX. Additionally, consider that Arnoldus, on page 186, and others with him, argue that faith does not belong to the elected but that election belongs to the faithful. We, on the other hand, from Saint Paul to Titus, chapter 1, verse 1, claim that faith belongs to the elect because election is the cause of faith. Since they oppose our assertion by claiming that election belongs to the faithful, what else can they mean but that faith is the cause of our election?

X. The weight and significance of their arguments should also be evaluated. During the conference at The Hague, they declare that they do not hesitate to write boldly and subscribe to the statement that election is made by Christ without any consideration of good works. However, they vehemently argue that election is the decree to save those who believe and that no one is elected by God except in respect to faith. Why do they exclude the consideration of works from election when the diligent pursuit of good works is a condition equally required for salvation as faith? This makes it clear that they do not regard faith merely as a condition, for if they did, the pursuit of good works would be placed on the same level as faith.

XI. If God elects for salvation not those whom He absolutely decreed but those He foresees will believe, it implies that God in election considers some worth or merit in these individuals that is not present in others. However, it is unlikely that any wise person would choose the best individuals for any reason other than their inherent goodness. If the goodness of the faithful precedes election, it would be highly inappropriate to elect them for any other reason than their inherent goodness.

XII. When something is promised to a person under a condition that depends on their free will, fulfilling that condition through one's free will becomes the cause for the promise's fulfillment. The Arminians argue that God gives grace and sufficient power to believe, and they even claim that He is bound to do so. However, whether to use that grace or not is within the power of a person's free will.

XIII. Extracting the information I seek from them is not difficult. Let the followers of Arminius explain why God chose Simon Peter over Simon Magus, or Gregory over Julian. They can provide no answer other than that God foresaw faith in some and incredulity in others. Therefore, even if they concede that their doctrine does not make foreseen faith the cause of God appointing someone to salvation, they must admit that, according to Arminius, foreseen faith is the cause of the difference between the elect and the reprobate. This also implies that it is the cause of why one person is preferred over another, which is essentially the cause of election. Every election is comparative and involves the rejection of one or more individuals.

XIV. So, when they deny that the number of the elect is certain and determined by God's will, they must be suggesting that human will is the cause of why the number is what it is. Consequently, each person becomes the cause of why they are among the elect and therefore the cause of their own election.

XV. Despite their efforts to dispel this suspicion, they will never remove this stain of contumely against God and the undermining of

faith's firmness and strength. This occurs when they claim that God's eternal election and good pleasure depend on human free will, and they assert that salvation is dependent on human willingness and effort. They ascribe some worth and virtue to humans, which they believe is the reason why God's eternal counsel appoints salvation to one individual rather than another. This results in a wavering faith and uncertain salvation. Although God may certainly foresee salvation, they argue that He does not certainly and infallibly will it. After all, election is not an act of foreknowledge but of God's will. How can this will be certain if it depends on something uncertain, namely human will? These matters will be examined more thoroughly in their proper context.

Chapter 18

The Decree of General Election Investigated, in Which Arminius Claims All Men Are Elected to Salvation Under the Condition of Faith.

I. In the fifth chapter, we have previously argued that the antecedent will of God, as embraced by Arminius following Damascene, is a mere concoction and an affront to God. With this foundation dismantled, the doctrine of universal election, applicable to all individuals under the condition of faith to be fulfilled, crumbles. Arminius asserts that this general election belongs to the antecedent will of God.

II. Let us also consider what we discussed in chapter 12, where we dismantled the chain of the four decrees in which the Arminians encapsulate the entire doctrine of Election. There, we demonstrated that the second decree, which does not decree salvation for specific

individuals but rather determines that those who believe shall be saved, is not a decree of providence or predestination but is the guideline of the Gospel, which prescribes the path to salvation.

III. This question should not be underestimated by merely using the term "election." Election cannot encompass all individuals; He does not choose everyone. Similarly, during the time of the deluge, Noah would not have been chosen to survive the flood if no one had perished in it. Election refers to the preference of one individual over others, while the rest are either disregarded or less esteemed.

IV. Since we should approach all matters of faith with wisdom and guidance from the Scriptures, it is even more imperative in such a profound topic that surpasses our comprehension. Therefore, let the Arminians demonstrate from the Scriptures where it is stated that all individuals are elected through the election that is opposed to reprobation (for that is the subject here, not the election of specific individuals through the consequent will of God). Who has ever heard that Pharaoh or Judas, in any way, pertained to God's election? In 2 Peter, Chapter 1, the apostle joins calling to election, instructing us to make our calling and election sure, which means that through the earnest pursuit of good works, we should strengthen our awareness of our effective calling and our conviction of election. However, this does not imply that our calling and election are identical, nor does it imply that all those who are called are elected. As the Scriptures state, "Many are called, but few are chosen" (Matthew 20:16).

V. It should also be noted that through this general election, it is not determined who will be saved, but what kind of individuals will be saved. The Arminians attempt to support this with Romans chapter nine, where it speaks plainly of God's good pleasure and His mercy towards certain specific individuals whom God chooses according to His will. The words, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," pertain to specific individuals, not qualified individuals, as the word "qualium" would have been used if qualification was intended, not "cuius" or "quorum," meaning "of whom." Additionally, applying the

example of Isaac and Jacob, who were particular individuals, to explain the election not of specific individuals but of individuals with certain qualifications, is inaccurate.

VI. However, I would like to inquire of the Arminians whether Judas or Pilate, as well as the high priests and the Scribes who accused our Saviour and led to His crucifixion, were conditionally elected and included in this general election. If they were not included, then the general and conditional election they advocate for, extending to all individuals, collapses. Conversely, if Judas and those high priests were conditionally elected, then God's decree concerning the crucifixion of Christ could not be absolute because it was carried out by individuals who were conditionally elected, under a condition they could fulfill. It would imply that before committing this wicked act, they could have repented and become faithful, thus preventing the crucifixion of Christ.

Furthermore, it cannot be said that Judas and Caiaphas were elected to salvation under the condition of believing in the death of Christ, as they were appointed to facilitate the delivery of Christ to death through their unbelief and wickedness. If Judas and Caiaphas had believed in Christ, He would not have been delivered to death. Therefore, the decree proposed by the Arminians, wherein God elected Judas, Caiaphas, and Pilate conditionally, based on their belief in Christ, presents a contradiction. They essentially make God say, "I chose to save Judas and Caiaphas if they believe in the death of Christ. But if they believe and are faithful, Christ would not be delivered to death or crucified."

Moreover, among the four decrees of the Arminians, the first two are contradictory to each other. According to the first decree, God decreed to use the unbelief and treachery of Judas to deliver Christ to death. However, the second decree elects Judas conditionally based on faith in the death of Christ. Thus, the first decree regards Judas as an absolute unbeliever and reprobate, while the second views him as conditionally elected. The school of Arminius is riddled

with such contradictory notions and chimeras, causing amusement if not for the disturbance they bring to the Church and the reproach they cast upon the wisdom of God.

VII. Furthermore, this general decree, in which all individuals are said to be elected under the condition of faith to be fulfilled, openly mocks God. It is a senseless decree made under a condition, and the one who decreed it knew with certainty, at the very moment of decree, that it would not be fulfilled. This is especially true if this condition cannot be fulfilled without the assistance and power of the One who decrees it. In such a decree, God would impose a law on Himself rather than on man. It is evident through experience that God does not provide all individuals with the necessary means to fulfill this condition. He does not will for His Gospel to be preached to all, nor does He grant the spirit of regeneration to all.

VIII. Lastly, the nature of this general election is revealed by the consequences and conclusions drawn from it. The most significant and detrimental conclusion is that they deny the number of the elect to be certain and determined by God's will in electing. This leads to the inference that the election of specific individuals is not certain according to God's will. For if it were certain by God's decree that a particular individual, or individuals, were among the elect, then the sum and certain number would be established from the combination of various individuals. Arnoldus's assertion on page 192, that the number of the elect can be increased or diminished, is so unsettling that it would make any righteous person shudder. For what does it mean for God to diminish the number of the elect other than to change His mind, remove individuals from the book of the elect, and place them among the book of the reprobates because they were not adequately considered or had their status re-evaluated?

IX. Of the same misguided nature is Greinchouius' argument against Ames on page 136, suggesting a partial, incomplete, and therefore revocable election. He claims that in the Scriptures, individuals are referred to as elect only incompletely, based on their

present state, meaning they are considered faithful for the present time, except for the last part of their lives, where the election is supposedly fulfilled. This notion of a conditional election, where even the most wicked individuals are deemed partially elect, and where God's decree is considered incomplete until fulfilled by humans, is not doctrine but rather a monstrous opinion that has likely never crossed the minds of those who bear the name of Christ.

X. However, Scripture teaches that the number of the elect is certain, as indicated in Revelation 6, where the souls under the altar are told to wait until the number of the brethren is fulfilled. Additionally, what Christ says about the sheep given to Him even before their conversion in John 10, as well as His statement that all those given to Him by the Father will come to Him in John 6:37, demonstrates that the number is determined by God's purpose. Furthermore, none of His sheep can be taken out of His hand, as stated in John 10:28. The Gospel of Luke aligns with this in chapter 10, verse 20, where Christ tells the Apostles to rejoice because their names are written in heaven. Similarly, the Apostle to the Hebrews in chapter 12, verses 22-23, refers to the church as the heavenly Jerusalem, the assembly of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. This concept is also associated with the book of life mentioned elsewhere, such as in Revelation 20, where those not found written in the book of life are cast into the lake of fire. In a vain interpretation, the Arminians on page 96 of the conference at The Hague attempt to explain Christ's words, "Rejoice that your names are written in the book of life," not as pertaining to election for salvation but as signifying that individuals are accounted pious and godly based on their present state of faith, righteousness, and obedience. This interpretation lacks both reason and credibility. Being considered faithful by humans does not equate to having one's name written in heaven. There is no cause for the Apostle to rejoice merely because people think well of them, as this often applies even to the wicked. This reason for joy is far less significant than the fact that demons tremble at the Apostles' voices and flee from them. Christ regards this latter phenomenon as minor compared to having one's name written in heaven. The phrase

"written in heaven" refers not to human opinion but to God's purpose. It is a phrase derived from the Prophets, where being written before God signifies being firmly and definitively established by His decree. For example, Isaiah 4:3 refers to those written for life, preserved by God's purpose. In Isaiah 65:6, it is said, "Behold, it is written before me; I will not keep silence but will recompense." This signifies that it is determined and certain in God's eyes, not subject to change.

XII. I find it embarrassing to consider the argument some of them put forward, stating that the names of the Apostles are said to be written in heaven because they were elected to their apostleship. By this reasoning, even Judas' name would be written in heaven, which is far from a cause for rejoicing, as his apostleship led to his destruction. Moreover, the words of the Apostle to the Hebrews, where he refers to the faithful as the firstborn whose names are written in heaven, cannot be limited to election to an office, as it pertains to all the faithful and the elect.

XIII. The topic of the book of life is a broader and more complex issue, not to be addressed here. I am aware that there is a certain book of life, distinct from the book of election, which contains a list of individuals who profess to be members of the Church and are visibly part of the covenant. References to this book can be found in Ezekiel 13:9 and Psalm 69:29, and it is evident that some are blotted out from this book. However, when individuals are cast into hell, those not found written in the book of life, it is clear that this book records a certain and unchangeable number of people who, while others are appointed to the fire, are reserved for life. The number of these individuals cannot be increased or diminished, not now and not even in the final judgment.

XIV. These points concern the general and conditional election. Let us now turn to the absolute election of specific individuals, which the Arminians suggest depends on foreknowledge of faith and is made for foreseen faith. The former type of election holds the second

position in the sequence of the four decrees proposed by Arminius, while the latter election holds the fourth position. The former pertains to the antecedent will of God, while the latter pertains to the consequent will. The former precedes, while the latter follows human will. Arminius claims that God can be disappointed in the former but not in the latter.

Chapter 19

The election of particular persons in respect of foreseen faith is refuted. It is proven that men are not elected for faith but to faith.

Out of the abundant wealth of passages provided by the Holy Scriptures, we will select some that are particularly clear and weighty.

I. In his Epistle to the Ephesians, Chapter 1, verses 3-4, Saint Paul writes, "God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he has chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world." The Apostle clearly teaches that spiritual blessings, and therefore faith, are given to us in accordance with eternal election and how we were chosen. This implies that election precedes these blessings both in order and time. Just as one who says that soldiers received their rewards and gifts according to the will of their general clearly suggests that the general's will preceded and determined the act, so does the certain and absolute will of God precede the bestowal of these blessings. Equally significant are the words that follow: "He elected us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him, in love." Here, we are chosen for holiness, not chosen from holiness or chosen for the sake of holiness. If we are elected to holiness, it

follows that we are also elected to faith, which plays a central role in our holiness. It cannot be denied that faith is a component of our holiness, unless one also denies that unbelief is a component of profanity and vice among the ungodly. Through faith, we are not only sanctified effectively but also formally, just as a wall is formally whitened by a coat of white paint. Even if the Arminians were to argue that the holiness mentioned here consists only of charity, they would gain nothing. From this passage, it is still evident that we are chosen to faith because faith begets charity, as stated in Galatians 5:6. It is not credible that someone is chosen for one aspect of holiness while being excluded from another.

Being driven from this argument, they seek other refuges. Arnoldus, on page 66, wants us to understand "the elect" as those who are called, as if election and calling were the same thing. But as it is said in Matthew 20, "Many are called, but few are chosen." Therefore, if we believe Arnoldus, there will be many reprobates among these "elect," and this election will not be in opposition to reprobation. The same man, on page 142, contends that these "elect" are the faithful, which is false in the sense he takes it, namely, that they are considered as already faithful when they are elected. For how can those who are considered as faithful be elected to holiness when, in their faithfulness, they are already holy? Paul indeed speaks to the Ephesians, whom he calls faithful and blessed, but not because they were already faithful and blessed before they were elected.

This individual has devised another subtlety and wants Paul to speak not of the election of particular persons but of the election by which any one people is chosen for the calling through the Gospel. If this were true, it must necessarily mean that among the "elect" before the foundation of the world, there were many reprobates. However, the subsequent words do not support this interpretation, for the Apostle says, "We are elected, that we should be without blame, in love." He intends for us to be chosen so that we may strive for holiness and good works. Now, good works are done by specific individuals, not by a nation. Moreover, the "elect" cannot here refer to the nations

admitted into the covenant, since Saint Paul includes himself in this group when he says, "Hath chosen us in Christ," etc. Arnoldus himself sufficiently demonstrates his lack of confidence in this explanation as he introduces another one that contradicts it. He argues that this passage refers to the election to glory and, therefore, interprets holiness as salvation. But the Apostle anticipates this escape route by adding that we should be holy and blameless. To be blameless is a virtue, not salvation itself. Furthermore, Paul explains how we are holy, namely, in charity, not in the enjoyment of glory. He refers to the duties of charity that are practiced in this life, which need no exhortation in the life to come. Ultimately, their varied and contradictory interpretations show that they have no consistent position. Unable to convince us with the weight of their explanations, they try to overwhelm us with their multitude.

It is of little importance that they derive from the word "blameless" the idea that it speaks of perfection after this life. For the Apostle wants us to be blameless even in this life, as stated in Philippians 2:15, where he commands us to be "blameless and harmless" in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. Certainly, when the Apostle says that we should be blameless in charity, it is clear that he does not speak of the saints enjoying glory, where there is no room for blame or exhortation to the duties of charity. The following verse carries weight: "He predestinated us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ." From this passage, I reason thus: Those whom God predestined for adoption, He also predestined to receive the spirit of adoption, and this is nothing else than predestining them to have faith. For the spirit of adoption is what testifies in our hearts that we are the children of God (Romans 8), and this testimony is faith itself. It is true that God appoints no one to adoption except those whom God regards as those who will be faithful by His gift. But the same can also be said of those appointed to faith, as faith is appointed to none except those whom God regards as those who will be faithful. Those who think that the faithful are appointed to the adoption of children are gravely mistaken because in their faithfulness, they are

already children. Saint John teaches this in chapter 1: "To those who believed, He gave the right to become children of God."

II. In agreement with this passage are many others. For instance, 1 Corinthians 7:25 says, "I have obtained mercy from the Lord to be faithful," not because He considered me as already faithful. John 15:16 also states, "I have chosen you, that you should bring forth fruit." Therefore, He did not choose us, considering us as already faithful and bearing fruit. Should we imagine that Christ speaks here only of the election of the Apostles to their Apostleship? I think there is no one so impudent who can deny that the same thing may be said of any of the elect. There is no one whom God has not elected to be godly and good. Just as there is no one who is not shameless who will deny that all the following teachings and lessons apply to all the faithful: "These things I commend you, that you love one another. If the world hates you, you know that it hated me first," etc.

III. Similar to this is what the Apostle says in 2 Thessalonians 2:13, "God has chosen you to salvation by sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth." He says that we are elected to obtain salvation by faith, not for faith. So faith comes after election and serves as a certain medium or intermediary between election and salvation.

IV. The words of Ananias to Saint Paul in Acts 22:14 are consistent with this: "God has chosen you, that you should know his will." By this knowledge, faith and assent to the Gospel are understood. For Saint Paul was not elected more to know the Gospel than to believe the Gospel. Therefore, Paul was elected to believe, and his election came before his faith.

V. The same Apostle, in 1 Thessalonians 1:3, praising the faith and charity of the Thessalonians, attributes the cause of these virtues to election itself: "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labor of love, as knowing that you are elected of God."

Here, the Arminians willingly stumble in a clear path. They want to interpret "Calling" by "Election," and if that were true, the reprobates themselves would be elected since they are also called. Then Saint Paul would appear deluded, as if he were not in his right mind. What need does Paul have to tell the Thessalonians that he knew they were called by the Gospel when he himself preached the Gospel to them? It would be like a ridiculous grammarian telling his students, "I know you have learned grammar." Arnoldus, on page 66, suspects that the word "knowing" should be referred to the Thessalonians themselves. But he has been too negligent here, as he does not see that, by doing so, the Greek expression would become incongruous and not in agreement because it should have been read as "know" to agree with "we know," which is in the previous verse. But distrusting this interpretation, he has suggested that the word "election" should be understood as "excellency," which is truly an intolerable license. Election differs from excellency entirely in terms of categorization. Election is an action, whereas excellency is a quality or a relation. If it were permissible to introduce such distortions and misinterpretations, what would be left in the Holy Scripture that could not be manipulated or corrupted? Let Arnoldus find another passage where "Excellency" is understood by the word "Election." Even though someone elected may be regarded as excellent, you will never find "Election" being understood as "Excellency." It should not be a wonder that Paul said he knew about the election of the Thessalonians. For God may have revealed to him something about the Thessalonians in the same way He revealed about the Corinthians (Acts 18:10), "I have much people in this city." Or, if that explanation doesn't satisfy, it can be said that when Saint Paul saw the Gospel received by the Thessalonians with great joy and much fruit, he easily convinced himself that many of those people belonged to God's elect.

VI. The same Apostle, at the beginning of his Epistle to Titus, calls himself the Apostle "according to the faith of God's elect." It is clear that faith is attributed to the elect because it is specific to them; otherwise, it would not be rightly adorned with this praise and

commendation. Even Vorstius himself confesses this, saying, "Faith is called the faith of the elect of God" (Titus 1) because faith is a distinctive mark of the elect, etc. But why is faith distinctive to the elect? Is it because everyone with true faith is elected by God? The Arminians deny this, for they write about the apostasy of the saints and believe that the most holy individuals can fall away. It remains, therefore, that faith is said to be of the elect because God gives it to the elect, and it is a fruit of election.

The Arminians attempt to evade this argument by claiming that by the name of faith, doctrine is meant. However, this evasion is not well-founded because the doctrine of the Gospel is not unique to the elect, nor can it be called the doctrine of the elect, as it is also preached to wicked and profane individuals. Here, we can observe Saint Paul and Arminius contending against each other. Saint Paul says, "Faith is of the elect," while Arminius, on the contrary, claims that election is of those who are faithful and are considered as already believing.

With a similar lack of restraint, they misuse the term "of the elect," which they interpret as referring to those who are called and holy. But in what sense? Since, according to Arminius, among those who are called and holy, there are many reprobates, by this interpretation, the elect will become reprobates. Is the Scripture to be deceived in this manner? Let us examine other passages.

VII. Christ's words in Luke 10:20 are remarkable: "Rejoice that your names are written in Heaven." Christ is speaking to people who were alive and had not yet persevered in the faith until the end. Nevertheless, their names were already written in Heaven, and their salvation was determined by the certain purpose of God. Therefore, their election was prior to their perseverance in faith, which contradicts Arminius' view that perseverance in faith precedes election, and that we are elected for faith foreseen.

If election is not definitive and unchangeable but depends on final perseverance, as the Arminians claim, then we must conclude that the names of the Apostles, who had just begun their Christian journey, were written in Heaven in such a way that it was still within their power to fall away from the faith and be reprobated. Thus, they could make Christ's words untrue. See to what audacity these innovators come. Furthermore, we have already established in the previous chapter that what is said in Scripture to be written in Heaven and before God is what is appointed and determined by His eternal counsel. We have rejected the unfounded and rash interpretation of the Arminians there. We understand the writing of our names in Heaven to mean nothing other than being recognized as the children of God based on our present state of righteousness, and this recognition is not for any other reason than because they want it to be so.

VIII. Saint Paul, in Ephesians 2:8, states, "By grace you are saved through faith." He does not say that they are saved for faith foreseen but through faith, as the means to salvation. If God does not save us for faith foreseen, He will not save us because of faith foreseen, nor does He elect us for faith foreseen. To elect means to be willing to save.

IX. The same words, "By grace you are saved through faith," clearly indicate that faith is the means to salvation. If salvation is the end and faith is the means, it logically follows that God intended to bestow salvation upon Peter and Paul before deciding to give them faith by which they would attain salvation. In any reasonable sequence, the end comes before the means: habitation before building, life before sustenance, health before medicine. How, then, can the Arminians audaciously claim that God had decreed to give Peter and Paul faith before deciding to give them salvation?

X. However, Arminius has abandoned shame here and denies that salvation is God's ultimate purpose. Instead, he argues that salvation and faith are both gifts of God, and they are linked by God's will in

such a way that faith should precede salvation, both in terms of God being the giver and in the actual process. These are Arminius' words, cited and accepted by the Arminians in their response to the Epistle to the Galatians (page 93). Nevertheless, I would rather believe Saint Paul, who teaches that we are saved by God through faith. Arminius himself appears to grant the same thing, albeit indirectly. After all, it is unlikely that God intended for faith to precede the attainment of salvation unless it was His intention to grant and bestow faith leading to salvation. Anything that aids in obtaining salvation is a means by which we reach salvation as the end. Greinchouius, following him (page 12), denies that God intended the salvation of specific individuals as an end. On page 124, he states, "We have said that faith is to be considered in two ways, either as it is prescribed and to be performed, or as it is already performed: As it is to be performed, it is not the means but the condition and the thing required. But as it is performed, it is the means for man by which he obtains salvation, promised under the condition of faith." The reader shall observe his excellent wit. This man insists that faith becomes the means to salvation when it is completed, that is, when faith ceases. The Arminians believe that faith is completed when one has persevered in faith until the end, at which point vision and sight succeed faith. Therefore, according to Arminius, faith will begin to serve as the means of salvation when it is no longer faith. Consequently, the assertion that faith, when completed, is the means for man, not for God, is quite weak. Faith serves as a means for a person to attain salvation solely because God wills and causes that person to achieve salvation through faith. Just as someone who says that food is the means for a person to live also states that God has provided this means for the sustenance of human life.

XI. It is of great importance that in the same passage, the Apostle calls faith the gift of God: "By grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." The Apostle affirms that salvation is not the only gift from God, but so is faith. For the one who provides the end also provides the means, just as the giver of life also provides the means to sustain life. Similarly, in Philippians 1:19,

it is stated, "It is given to you for Christ, that is, in matters concerning Christ, not only to believe in Him but also to suffer for His sake." Therefore, believing in Christ is a gift from God. Hence, it is not correct to say that we are elected by God for faith foreseen, as God Himself grants faith. God is not said to "foresee" those things He has determined to do unless it is a highly improper use of the term. It would be absurd to claim that God "foresees" the sun as round or shining, for God Himself has created it in its roundness and imbued it with light. The extent of the Arminians' error here, and how their doctrine implies that faith is not a gift of God, despite their occasional contrary statements, will become apparent in the appropriate context.

XII. These words also apply to the verse in Ephesians 1:11: "Being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will." If God has predestined anyone for salvation, He also works all things necessary for the execution of that decree, including faith. Therefore, faith is something subsequent to predestination since it is a part of the execution of that decree.

XIII. There is a notable passage in Acts 13:48: "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord, and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." As Paul preached to the people of Antioch, some believed while others rejected the Gospel. Saint Luke provides the reason why some did not believe, attributing it to the ordination and decree of God. Therefore, election precedes faith, as God's election is the cause of why people believe. According to Arminius, Saint Luke should have expressed it differently, something along the lines of: "And as many as believed were elected by God as a reward for their faith." But on the contrary, Saint Luke states that they believed because they were elected.

Socinus and, following him, Arminius, distort this passage with great audacity. By "those who were ordained" (Greek: τοὺς τεταγμένους), they understand those who were disposed, prepared, inclined, or

well-affected. This interpretation is bold and without precedent, as neither the Scriptures nor any known source have used τάσσω (tatssō) in this sense. To further illustrate this point, it is worth considering examples from the book of Acts itself to demonstrate how Saint Luke consistently uses this word. In Acts 15:2, τάσσω is translated as "they decreed" or "determined" when it says, "They determined that Paul should go up." In Acts 28:23, it is translated similarly when it says, "When they had appointed him a day." Saint Paul also uses τάσσω in Romans 13:1 when he speaks of "the powers that be, ordained (τεταγμένοι) by God." Saint Chrysostom, in his homily on Acts, interprets this passage as "as many as were ordained to salvation," where he renders it as "ordained," "severed by God," and "fore-determined."

Furthermore, even if the word were ambiguous, reason itself refutes their argument. None of the unregenerate can be well-disposed or well-affected towards eternal life. All the people in Antioch, before they believed the Gospel, were unregenerate; therefore, they were not well-disposed towards obtaining salvation. Arminius' followers should explain what disposition the thief crucified alongside Christ had to believe before he believed, or what disposition Apostle Paul had when he persecuted the followers of Christ and fervently upheld righteousness through the Law with Pharisaical pride. Common sense rejects such usage as they propose. We typically say someone is well-disposed, inclined, or well-affected toward virtue but not toward enjoying or obtaining something. Such inclination is directed towards doing something rather than gaining or obtaining something. One may be inclined towards exercising their body but not towards health, or inclined towards combat but not towards the reward or victory. Alternatively, if one prefers to take "disposed" to mean "desire," there is no one who does not desire salvation.

It is essential to note that the Greek text contains not just τεταγμένους (those ordained) but τεταγμένους ὡς (those ordained as). The use of the pluperfect tense clearly signifies an ordination that preceded, rather than a present disposition.

Their argument falls flat when they contend that those ordained are understood as those disposed because, in this passage, they are set against those deemed unworthy. Luke does not make such an opposition, and even if he did, it would not hinder us. We know that through election to faith and salvation, individuals become worthy. Therefore, we are contrasted with those deemed unworthy. In conclusion, the reader should judge for themselves the nature of this doctrine, which asserts that individuals become worthy before they believe, and that among unbelievers, some are deemed worthy of salvation.

XIV. In Mark 13:22, it is written: "For false Christs and false prophets shall rise, and shall shew signs and wonders, to seduce, if it were possible, even the elect." In this passage, the reason for some not being ultimately deceived is explicitly stated in the word "Elect." The cause is highlighted for why some cannot be led astray to the end, namely, because they are elected. Therefore, election precedes perseverance in faith to the end, as it is the cause of that perseverance. What serves as the cause for the perseverance in faith is also the cause for faith itself. If something is the cause of one's continual belief, it is also the cause of their belief in the first place. Thus, the opinion of Arminius, which asserts that not only faith but also perseverance in faith precedes election and that God, in electing, considers it as a condition already fulfilled, is invalid.

XV. We must not overlook the words of the Apostle in 2 Timothy 1:9: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." These words appear to be diametrically and directly opposed to Arminianism. The Apostle not only denies that we are saved based on the foresight of our works, but he also invokes the eternal decree of God to exclude any consideration of works. If God did not elect us based on the foresight of works, then certainly not on the foresight of faith, which produces and results in works. If God did not elect anyone based on the foresight of faith, then it cannot be for the right use of grace or

for the obedience of faith, as both of these are evidently works. There is no doubt that embracing the Gospel through faith is a form of action and an act of the will.

XVI. Do you know that Arminius acknowledges faith to be not only an action but also contends that faith is imputed for righteousness, not merely as an instrument (i.e., not solely for apprehending Christ) but as a work and an action? These are the words of Arminius, as reported by the Walachrian brethren in their Epistle: "Faith is imputed for righteousness, not as an instrument, but as an action, even though it be through Him whom it apprehends." The Arminians do not deny these words in their response; instead, they willingly acknowledge them as Arminius' words. In the preceding page, they confess that Peter Bertius, a prominent figure among the Arminians, holds the opinion that the very act of faith is imputed to us for righteousness in a literal sense. I do not address this particular aspect here, but I focus on the matter at hand: since faith itself is not only an action and a work but, according to the Arminians, we are justified by faith inasmuch as it is an action, a work, and an inherent virtue, it is evident that the foresight of faith is excluded by God's eternal good pleasure. This is akin to the Apostle's use of God's eternal purpose to exclude the foresight of works, for faith itself, according to Arminius, is a work, an action, and justifies as such.

XVII. To this point, we must consider Romans 9:11, which states: "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth." Since faith itself is a work and, according to the Arminians, justifies as such, the exclusion of foresight of faith is consistent with the Apostle's use of God's purpose according to election to exclude the foresight of works. According to the Arminians, using grace rightly is also equivalent to working.

XVIII. The Scripture speaks of the decree of election as certain and unchangeable. In 2 Timothy 2:19, it is written: "The foundation of God stands sure, having this seal, the Lord knows those who are

His." Romans 9 also emphasizes that God's purpose, which is according to election, remains steadfast. In John 10:28, Jesus declares, "I give to My sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand." Additionally, in John 6:37, Jesus says, "All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me." To reinforce this, Mark 13 suggests that the elect cannot be deceived.

Would Pilate have considered it unlawful to change the title on the cross that he had written? Would it be fitting for the majesty and wisdom of God to erase what He has written, altering His opinion and erasing the names He had entered into the register of the elect? Anyone who contends that the decree of human election is mutable and revocable, dependent on human will, does not hold a high view of God and undermines the Gospel's doctrine. We've heard that Greinchouius denies the decree of election to be final and absolute during our earthly existence. The entire Arminian school proclaims with one voice that the number of the elect is not certain or determined by God's election and will. However, if the number of the elect is not certain by God's will, then neither is the election itself certain. They rightly make election mutable by making it contingent on human will, as they assert that election is based on foreseen faith, and they consider faith itself dependent on free will. They may claim that preventing and accompanying grace are necessary for faith, but they argue that the use of this grace is within the power of human will, which always has the liberty to either utilize or neglect it. In due course, we will explore the Arminians' teaching that God's grace is not the sole cause of faith but only a partial cause.

In conclusion, you can find throughout the Scriptures that election is based on God's purpose and grace alone, as exemplified in passages such as 2 Timothy 1:9, Ephesians 1:5-6 and 11, Romans 9:15 and 11:3. However, there is no evidence that anyone is elected based on foreseen faith, and the Arminians fail to establish this through distant and convoluted consequences, which we will examine in their proper context and order.

Chapter 20

Election Based on Foreseen Faith Is Refuted by Passages from the Gospel of Saint John

This debate can be resolved by turning to the testimony of Christ Himself in the Gospel according to Saint John. In this Gospel, Christ utters several statements that unravel this issue and leave no room for doubt.

I. In John 6:37, Christ addresses the Jews in the following manner: "Whatever my Father gives me shall come to me." To come to Christ is to believe, as Christ himself explains in verse 35: "He who comes to me shall not hunger, and he who believes in me shall never thirst." Christ could have used the word "believe" in both places instead of "come" to emphasize that we come to Christ through believing. Therefore, Christ's meaning is clear: those given to Him by the Father will believe in Him. Those who are given to the Son are given so that He may save them, and they become His flock. Hence, the interpretation of Christ's words, "whatever my Father gives me shall come," is as follows: "Whosoever my Father gives me to be saved shall believe in me." These individuals are given to Christ before they can come or believe because they come to Christ and believe as a result of being given to Him. Arminius, however, contends that they must believe before being given, as he posits that they are elected and given to Christ for their foreseen faith. Christ asserts that they come because they are given to Him, whereas the sectarians argue that they are given because they come.

In another instance, these individuals' stubbornness becomes evident. They wish to interpret those given to Christ as if Christ had

said, "He who believes in me will come to me." Yet, as we have already demonstrated, to come is synonymous with believing. Therefore, according to Arminius, the sense of Christ's words would be, "Whoever believes will believe in me." Furthermore, in the Arminian doctrine of election, faith and perseverance in faith are considered already accomplished. Consequently, those elected are viewed as spiritually dead or on the brink of death, and they cannot be said to come if they have not already traversed the course of their spiritual life. Those given to Christ cannot refer to those who first gave themselves to Christ, for that would entail them not giving themselves to the Son but merely being willing for the Son to receive them as they come to Him. Christ indeed receives those who come, but they come because Christ draws them, as He states in verse 44: "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him."

I. The Arminian debaters at The Hague, page 87, suspect that those given to the Son do not refer to the faithful but to those given the ability to believe. However, since Arminians believe that even reprobates are given the ability to believe, and that God genuinely intends their faith and salvation, it would be incorrect to say that those given to the Son are the ones who will believe. The very words of Christ confirm, and common sense attests, that those given to Christ are His flock, and therefore, the elect. This is because those given to Christ are distinguished from those who are not given.

II. In John 8:47, Christ states, "Ye therefore hear not, because ye are not of God." Therefore, those who hear and believe do so because they belong to God. To belong to God means to be part of His flock. Conversely, in verse 44, those who belong to the devil are said to be "of the devil." Therefore, as Christ Himself testifies, some people believe because they belong to God. It follows that they must first belong to God before they believe since belonging to God is the reason they believe.

III. Similarly, in John 10:26, Christ says, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." Therefore, those who believe do so because

they belong to Christ's sheep. This contradicts Arminius, who suggests that they belong to Christ's sheep because they believe. The Arminians prefer to interpret the sheep of Christ as the faithful, and while the sheep of Christ are indeed those who believe, the term "sheep" cannot be used in this sense in this context. To do so would introduce a senseless tautology: "Ye believe not, because ye believe not." Christ previously referred to those not yet converted as His sheep when He said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice."

IV. In John 17:6, Christ declares, "I have manifested thy name unto them which thou gavest me." Therefore, they were given to Christ before He revealed God's name to them, and through this revelation, they received faith. The Arminian debaters at The Hague, page 87, argue that this pertains only to the already believing Apostles. However, even if this is granted, my point still stands that the Apostles were given to Christ before He revealed Himself to them. Christ Himself explicitly confirms this in verse 20: "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me, through their word." Since verse 9 contrasts them with the world, these statements apply to all the faithful. Unless, perhaps, the School and followers of Arminius believe that only the Apostles are exempt from the world's curse and not part of the world. Considering that no part of Scripture provides more comfort and strengthens our faith in the face of temptation than this divine and extensive prayer of Christ, it is crucial. This is because Christ's intercession for us consists of many hidden promises and declarations of the Father's goodwill, which always aligns with the Son's petitions. Therefore, let the Arminians consider what spirit guides them and why they diligently attempt to rob us of this comfort, which is undoubtedly taken from us if this prayer of Christ is meant solely for the Apostles, or if only the Apostles are referred to as those given to Christ.

Chapter 21

The same is proven from the eighth, ninth, and eleventh chapters of Romans.

Saint Paul, in the eighth chapter of Romans, when discussing Predestination, easily dispels all clouds of error. His words are as follows, verses 28, 29, 30: "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified."

I. Firstly, the statement presents itself that we are predestined to be made conformed to the image of Christ. Since this conformity in this life is achieved through faith and charity, it is evident from the Apostle that we are justified by faith and not for faith. I acknowledge that Christ Himself did not have faith as it is understood in the Gospel. However, given that the conformity of the faithful with Christ consists of charity, righteousness, and holiness, and these are the effects of faith working through charity, one who says we are predestined to charity and righteousness also asserts that we are predestined to faith, which accomplishes and produces all these things. This is akin to saying that someone appointed to live is also appointed to breathe.

II. What do the Arminians say here? Well, they understand "conformity with Christ" to mean the experience of the cross and afflictions for Christ's sake. However, the subsequent words refute this interpretation: "that he might be firstborn among many brethren." Christ is the firstborn among the sons of God for various reasons, including His greater endowment with the gifts of the Holy Spirit, setting an example of righteousness and holiness. Just as the

firstborn receive more of their father's inheritance, Christ's designation as the firstborn cannot simply be attributed to His experience of the cross and afflictions. This idea is novel, audacious, and contrary to reason. It is also certain that what Saint Paul is speaking of pertains to all the faithful. He adds, "whom he did predestinate, them also he called, whom he called, them also he justified, whom he justified, them also he glorified." Glorification, justification, calling, and predestination are the four interconnected links in the chain of conformity to the image of Christ, and they are so tightly woven together that they cannot be separated. All who are glorified are justified, all who are justified are called through the effectual calling reserved for the elect, and all who are called are destined to be conformed to the image of Christ. Let the sectarians tell me whether glorification, justification, and calling do not apply to all the elect. Arminius, by restricting this conformity to afflictions, implies that many elect individuals are not conformed to Christ because many of God's servants, even the best, have enjoyed uninterrupted peace and honour. Do the Arminians exclude themselves from the company of the elect when they, during times of peace and forgetful of Christ's suffering, cause this harmful and deadly schism within themselves and the Church? I am aware that these words from the Apostle are spoken to comfort the afflicted, for whom all things work together for good. However, there is no reason why he should not offer such consolation through teachings applicable to all believers. In the same way, the Apostle Saint Peter, in 1 Peter 2, initially instructs servants to be subject to their masters, whether they are good or harsh. Later, he encourages them to endure suffering for conscience's sake, as this pleases God. He reminds them that Christ, though innocent, suffered to leave us an example to follow in His footsteps. There is no doubt that those referred to as predestinated to conform to the image of Christ in this passage are the same as those called by God's purpose in the same context. However, those who suffer for Christ are not limited to the called; they include all the elect, among whom many are free from persecution.

III. Pay particular attention to the fact that Saint Paul is speaking here about the election of specific individuals—those whom He predestined and those whom He glorified. The Innovators, however, want to place the election of specific individuals after calling and assert that God elects those He foresees will respond to His call. They make election contingent on this foresight. Yet, Saint Paul clearly states that election precedes calling when he says, "Whom He predestinated, them He also called; whom He called, them He also justified; whom He justified, them He also glorified." Just as justification precedes glorification in chronological order, and calling precedes justification, so does the predestination of individuals precede their calling.

IV. It is worthwhile to consider the sequence of the Apostolic chain: "Whom He predestinated He called, whom He called He justified, whom He justified He glorified." Do you not see that we are predestined to our calling, and through our calling, we are justified? Since we are justified by faith, it follows that we are predestined to faith. After all, how can someone be predestined to justification by faith if they are not predestined to faith? These matters are of vital importance.

V. I'll skip the fact that the Arminians overturn Saint Paul's words, "whom He justified, them also He glorified," by claiming that many who are justified are reprobates. They make this clear in their Epistle against the Walachrians, page 40: "They who believe for a time may be said to be justified, whom the event shows to be reprobates."

VI. In the same chapter, verse 16, he says, "The Spirit of God bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." Is this testimony of the Spirit certain or doubtful? If it is doubtful, then the Spirit of God is accused of lying. If it is certain, what is the basis for this certainty? Does it rest on the power of free will? This is a doubtful and deceptive certainty. Or is this testimony certain because it is given only to those whom God has definitely appointed for salvation? This is what we affirm, but the Arminians deny.

VII. There is no less force in the ninth chapter of Romans, where the Apostle thoroughly and extensively discusses election and reprobation. The Apostle's aim is to teach that election and salvation are not based on the works of the law but on God's calling and mercy. His purpose is not (as Arminius claims) to discuss justification by faith. I won't repeat the points made in chapter 15, where we challenged Arminius for distorting the Apostle's words to make them align with his cause.

VIII. The discerning reader will note that after Saint Paul speaks of God's purpose according to election, he immediately uses Jacob as an example of this election. God loved Jacob before he had done any good or evil, and thus, before he had believed (for believing is an action). This means that election precedes faith. Even if believing the Gospel and obeying it were not considered actions, if election precedes the consideration of works, it must also precede the consideration of faith, from which works flow. If faith were to precede election, God, in electing, could not consider faith except as something that produces works. Otherwise, He would be considering faith not as it is but as it is not.

IX. Also, when Saint Paul says, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy," this would be false if God showed mercy to people based on foreseen faith. For the Arminians firmly hold and vigorously defend the idea that God gives all people the power to believe in Christ and that He is obligated to do so. According to their doctrine, although God may provide ample grace for one to believe in action, it remains within the power of human free will to use this grace or not, to believe or not to believe. They also argue that God elects those He foresaw would believe and whom He considers as already believing. According to this doctrine, it would be correct to say that salvation is the result of one's will and effort, not just of God showing mercy. But if Paul said that it is not of him that willeth because it is not solely based on human will, why should it not also be permissible to say that it is not solely of God showing mercy because it is also dependent on human free will?

X. If one were to answer the question about why God loved one person and hated another from the same mass by saying that it was because God foresaw that one would believe and the other would not believe, Saint Paul should not have reproached the questioner and commanded silence. This is because the reason for this difference is readily available: in one case, faith was foreseen, and in the other, unbelief was foreseen. Does Arminius think that Saint Paul was either slow to comprehend or unnecessarily scrupulous? To avoid saying this, Arminius has devised some subtleties and distorted interpretations, such as interpreting "of him that calleth" as referring to faith and "of God that showeth mercy" as referring to justification based on faith and not works. However, these interpretations are either problematic or twisted, and we have addressed them in the 15th chapter.

XI. Additionally, consider what is written in the eleventh chapter of Romans: "At this present, there is a remnant according to the election of grace." This "remnant" refers to those Jews who remained faithful to Christ and did not fall away from the covenant like the rest. Therefore, the reason why they persevered in their faith and did not fall from grace is that there was a reservation made according to the election of grace. Consequently, perseverance in faith is in accordance with the election of grace, and not the other way around, as Arminius suggests. To evade this passage, Arminius claims that it speaks of election to righteousness rather than election to faith. Even if this were true, it does not diminish the significance and clarity of this passage, as anyone elected to righteousness is also elected to faith. Arminius' argument resembles Socinianism and reveals an underlying issue. What is the point of arguing that it speaks of election to righteousness when, according to Arminius, this is not certain based on God's will but depends on human free will?

XII. Arnoldus, on page 346, approaches this more cautiously. He believes that this passage refers to the rejection of the Jews and the acceptance of the Gentiles. However, the use of the word "remnant" or "reservation" contradicts this interpretation. It is evident from this

passage and the preceding verses that the author is inquiring about why only a few Jews, a remnant, are part of the covenant. Later in the chapter, he explains how the Gentiles were grafted in to replace those who were rejected and cut off.

In conclusion, the Arminians, despite their cleverness, evade and struggle against these passages of scripture. Their reluctance and evasiveness make it seem as though they either do not want to be understood or lack confidence in their own position. Moreover, if their claims were true, it would imply that no one has truly understood what Christian religion is.

Chapter 22

The same Election, in respect of Faith fore-seen, is confuted by Reason.

I. Reason itself is in agreement with the Scripture. If perseverance in faith is considered in the context of Election as something already accomplished, then no one is elected unless they are regarded as dead and having completed their journey. After all, one cannot be said to have persevered until the end unless they have reached the end.

II. This also reveals that Arminius contradicts himself. He claims that Election is for those who believe. However, those who have died have ceased to believe. Therefore, to remain consistent with his own stance, Arminius should say that Election is for those who have ceased to believe, not for those who believe.

III. Furthermore, if Election for glory were based on some foreseen virtue, then Christ Himself, in His human nature, was not

predestined for glory. He did not attain such a high degree of glory due to foreseeing His faith, works, or any virtue. Whatever virtue or holiness exists in Christ as a human stems from His personal union with divinity and His immaculate conception, which kept Him free from original sin. Therefore, His holiness cannot be said to be foreseen but rather decreed. He was not predestined for holiness but to holiness. There is no reason to assume that the Election of the head (Christ) should contradict the Election of the members (believers) or that the head should be elected for virtue while the members are elected based on virtue.

IV. Additionally, when Election is said to be for foreseen faith, there is an implied Election that does not apply to infants who die prematurely. These infants lack faith.

V. Indeed, Election based on foreseen faith cannot truly be called Election. It is merely an admission and acceptance of those who come to Christ through faith and those who, by their free will, choose God first and put their trust in Him before being chosen by God. In stark contrast, Christ Himself states in John 15:16, "Ye have not chosen me; but I have chosen you." Although the Arminians argue that this verse refers only to Election for apostleship, they inadvertently acknowledge that it undermines their position if it is related to Election for salvation. Their contention is that in the work of salvation, man should choose God before God chooses man. Let us suppose, then, that it indeed refers solely to Election for apostleship, as that would greatly support our argument. If the Apostles were chosen for their apostleship, not due to any foreseen virtue, but rather to receive the virtues and gifts needed to fulfil their apostleship, it is even more likely that man is not elected for salvation based on foreseen virtue. Eternal salvation is a far greater blessing than apostleship, more removed from human power, beyond our capacity, and thus necessitates God's assistance to a much greater extent. Salvation is also less influenced by human free will than the attainment of apostleship.

VI. This doctrine also implies that faith in Christ depends on human free will, within the realm of choosing to use grace or not, to believe or not to believe, and to decide whether or not to employ those powers for belief that are given irresistibly. Surely Arminius would never have claimed that Election was based on foreseen faith if he believed that God had decisively decreed to grant faith to specific individuals whom He elected for salvation. Arminius acknowledges no precise and necessary decree from God to grant anyone the very act of believing. Such a statement as "God elected Paul because He foresaw that He would give him Faith" would be inappropriate. If in Election, faith is considered to have already taken place and to be the basis of Election, it logically follows that God has not initiated it. Otherwise, one would be saying that God chose to save a person because He intended to give them faith. Conversely, God grants faith to someone because He has decreed through His certain and unchangeable will to save them.

VII. The implications of this doctrine can be discerned from the consequences built upon this foundation. These include assertions that God's Election in this life is neither certain nor irrevocable, that the number of the elect is uncertain and not determined by God's will and Election, and that God's grace is not the complete cause of faith. Such claims are profound and undermine the very foundations of faith, as we have previously demonstrated and will continue to discuss.

VIII. Consider how this opinion deprives individuals of the ability to believe that they are elected. If someone believes they are elected, they would also believe that their faith occurred after their Election. In the same way, believing that one is a man follows the realization that they were a man before believing it. If faith and perseverance in faith precede Election, then anyone who believes in Christ may hope or presume that they are elected after persisting in faith. However, they cannot believe they are already elected, as per Arminius, since according to his doctrine, no one is elected until after they have believed and then ceased to believe. Has this harmful doctrine truly

ripped the heart out of the Churches of the Low Countries, erasing from their minds the assurance of Election? Is it that no one, except through impudence and falsehood, may believe they are elected by God for salvation?

Chapter 23

Saint Augustine's Opinion on Election based on Foreseen Faith.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Pelagius and his followers for the learned treatises of Saint Augustine, which are full of valuable insights and provide a more comprehensive and lucid explanation of key aspects of Christian faith, including Grace, Free Will, and Predestination. Prior to the time of Pelagius, these topics had been discussed in a general and somewhat rudimentary manner, lacking the precision that Saint Augustine later offered. Saint Augustine himself, in his work on the Predestination of the Saints, Chapter 3, and in his retractions, Book 1, Chapter 24, as well as in many other places, acknowledged that he initially wrote on these matters with limited consideration. This holy man was not ashamed to change his views after engaging in spirited debates, and it was through these debates that the sparks of truth emerged.

Although the heresy of Pelagius was dispelled, remnants of Pelagianism persisted in France. In order to avoid appearing to support Pelagius, those who held these remnants made a distinction between nature and grace. They asserted that sufficient grace was offered to all individuals, and its reach extended as far as nature itself. They acknowledged the concept of Election but viewed it as conditional rather than absolute. According to their beliefs, individuals were elected by God based on His foreknowledge of their

faith and the proper use of His grace. This led to the ideas that Election is based on foreseen faith and that the number of the elect is not determined by God's certain decree. They contended that the fruit of Saint Augustine's doctrine, which advocated Election according to God's purpose, led to either despair or a lethargic indifference. This was because, in their view, the reprobate person could not be saved through any effort or struggle, nor could the elected person lose their place in the kingdom due to negligence. It is worth noting their words, as taken from Prosper's Epistle to Saint Augustine, which is included in the seventh volume of Saint Augustine's works:

"They determine that the propitiation, found in the Sacrament of Christ's blood, is offered to all individuals without exception. Whoever desires to come to faith and baptism may be saved. They assert that God foreknew, before the creation of the world, those who would believe and continue in the faith (subsequently aided and supported by God's grace). God predestined those to His kingdom who, having been freely called, He foresaw as worthy of Election and as those who would depart from this life with a good end, etc. However, they argue that Saint Augustine's opinion takes away the incentive for those who have fallen to rise again and fosters a heavy apathy among the Saints, etc. They do not concede that the predestined number of the elect cannot be increased or diminished. This is pure Arminianism, the very same opinion, and we are confronted with the same baseless accusations that Saint Augustine faced."

Against these Semipelagians, the holy man wrote a book on the Predestination of the Saints. It will be beneficial to extract and cite some passages from this book.

Chapter 3: "We read (the Apostle saying it), 'I obtained mercy, that I might be faithful.' He does not say, 'because I was faithful.' It is given then to him who is faithful, but it is given him also that he might be faithful."

Chapter 17: "Let us understand the calling whereby men are elected, not those who are elected because they believed, but those who are elected that they might believe. For this, the Lord himself makes plain enough when he says, 'Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.' For if they were, therefore, chosen because they believed, they had first chosen him by believing in him, that they might deserve to be elected. And a little after: 'They did not choose him, that he might choose them, but that they might choose him, he chose them, because his mercy prevented them, according to his grace, not according to their desert. And in the same chapter; God then elected the faithful, but it was that they might be so, not because they were already so. By choosing them, he makes them rich in faith, as heirs of a kingdom; and rightly, because he is said to choose that in them, which that he might work in them, he has chosen them. Does anyone hear our Lord saying; 'Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you'? And dares he say that men believe that they might be chosen when rather they are chosen that they might believe?"

Chapter 18: "He chose us in him before the world was made, that we might be holy and without spot. Therefore, not because we were holy, but that we should be holy; it is certain, it is manifest: Therefore we were to be such because he elected us, predestinating us, that by his grace we should be holy."

In the nineteenth chapter, he repeats the same words and adds: "When, therefore, he predestinated us, he foreknew his own work, who has made us holy and without spot."

In the same place, the Pelagians, rejecting election based on foreseen works, focus solely on the foresight of faith. They say, "We do say that our God foreknew nothing but faith, whereby we begin to believe, and therefore He elected us," etc. Against these views, Saint Augustine argued extensively, and he concluded his speech as follows: "Neither does faith itself go before, for He does not choose us because we believe, but He chose us that we might believe, lest we should be said to choose Him first. That would be false (which God

forbid) given what Christ said, 'You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.' We are not called because we do believe, but we are called that we might believe, and by that calling, which is without repentance, it is wrought, and thoroughly wrought, that we should believe."

Furthermore, he stated that even Pelagius himself, in order to deceive the Palestinian Synod with an ambiguous confession, condemned those who claimed that grace is given according to merit, a view endorsed by the Synod. Those who asserted that election was based on foreseen faith were condemned. Saint Augustine affirmed that these two views are essentially the same in his fifth book against Julian, chapter 3. God elects no one who is worthy, but by electing them, He makes them worthy.

Saint Augustine repeatedly emphasised absolute election, or what Arminius referred to as precise election, which is not dependent on the foreseen virtue or worth of individuals. In his writings, Saint Augustine delves into this topic in over six hundred instances. For instance, in Epistle 105, he contemplates why one person believes while another does not, even when both hear the same message and witness the same miracles. He concludes that the judgments of God are unsearchable, and He shows mercy to whom He wills and hardens whom He wills. These matters may be hidden and secret, but Arminius, according to Saint Augustine, claims that the difference is due to the foresight of faith in one of them.

In the Book "de fide ad Petrum," whether authored by Fulgentius or Augustine, in the third chapter, it is stated: "They shall reign with Christ, whom God, of His free gracious goodness, has elected to the kingdom. He has prepared them to be worthy of the kingdom by predestinating them. He has prepared those whom, according to His purpose, He will call, that they may obey. He has prepared those whom He will justify, so that, having received grace, they might believe rightly and live well. Those who have come to this kingdom

have been saved by God's free grace, without any preceding merit of good will or good work."

Chapter 24

The arguments of the Arminians, by which they endeavour to establish Election for faith foreseen, are examined.

I. The Arminians, who, by a new name, call themselves Remonstrants, in the conference at The Hague, present a dense array of passages from Scripture with the aim of persuading that election is for those who believe and that the decree of Predestination is nothing but the will to save those who believe. This, however, is to address another matter and does not touch upon the question at hand. The crux of the debate between us is not about these matters. The essential question is whether election is based on foreseen faith, and whether, in electing specific individuals, God takes into account their perseverance in faith as something already fulfilled, and as a condition on which Election depends. These individuals, however, leave the actual question unaddressed and are entirely focused on trying to prove that election is for those who believe. Therefore, even though their nine syllogisms, arranged or admitting many other exceptions, have some flaws in their reasoning, particularly in the fallacy known as Ignoratio Elenchi, where the conclusion is thought to harm the opponent but actually does not, it is better to concede what they wish, namely, that God elects only those who believe, and that election is of the faithful, provided this is understood in a suitable and positive sense. Specifically, God elects and is willing to save those who believe because He saves no one without granting them faith, and because faith is indispensable for attaining salvation. Furthermore, in electing, God considers individuals as faithful,

meaning that they are those who, by His gift, will have faith. The decree of election pertains to faith because the decree of salvation also encompasses the means by which one attains that end, including faith in Christ. It is important to note that Arminius and later Arnoldus (page 92) falsely attribute to us the belief that God determined to save the elect without considering faith in them.

Therefore, the thunderous argument they present with such pomp is easily deflected with a mere breath or the wave of a hat, and it neither affects us nor the actual matter under consideration.

II. Equally irrelevant is the argument put forth by other sects, who often cite the words of Saint Paul in Ephesians 1:4, "He hath elected us in Christ," interpreting it as if Saint Paul had said, "He hath elected us for Christ" and considered us as already believing in Christ when He elected us. However, the Apostle did not say any such thing. His meaning is clear and straightforward: "He elected us in Christ," meaning that He appointed us for salvation, which would be bestowed upon us through Christ, or in Christ.

III. These passages do not support their claims either: "No man shall separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus," from Romans 8:39, and "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself," from 2 Corinthians 5:19. Surely, there is no mention of foreseen faith in these verses. Even if they were to ponder these verses endlessly, they could not extract any evidence for their position. "God was in Christ" while Christ was on earth, working out our reconciliation through Him, but what does this have to do with foreseen faith?

IV. Their argument is feeble when they cite passages like, "He that believeth in me hath everlasting life," from John 6, and "without faith it is impossible to please God," from Hebrews 11. While these passages indeed establish the necessity of faith, they do not imply foreknowledge of faith before election. No one is saved without

believing because God has determined faith to be the means of salvation and grants salvation only to those to whom He gives faith.

V. Conradus Vorstius, in his book titled "The Conference with Piscator," states, "If we are adopted by faith, we are also elected by faith." However, I deny that this conclusion logically follows. Adoption occurs after Election, as the Apostle teaches in Ephesians 1:5, "He predestinated us to the adoption." When someone says that we are adopted by faith, it does not mean that we are elected by faith or for faith. Instead, it suggests that through faith, we are made aware of the fatherly love of God towards us, and believers receive the Spirit of adoption.

VI. Vorstius attempts to defend his position by citing 2 Thessalonians 2, "He hath chosen us from the beginning, through faith." Yet, he deceitfully truncates the Apostle's words and presents them in a crippled manner. Saint Paul's actual words are as follows: "God from the beginning hath chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the spirit, and belief of the truth." He does not say that we are elected for foreseen faith but that we are elected to obtain salvation through faith. If it is inferred from this passage that we are elected for foreseen faith, then it must also be inferred that we are elected for foreseen sanctification or regeneration, which would contradict Arminius's beliefs.

Furthermore, Vorstius cites James 2, "Hath not God chosen the poor of the world, rich in faith?" However, this argument is futile because they are rich in faith because God has granted them faith, and God granted them faith because they are elected. If I were to say that God elected the saints who now enjoy glory, would it imply that God elected them based on foreseen future glory? Similarly, when Arminians interpret the words of Christ, "I give my life for my sheep," as an anticipation of those who were not yet His sheep but would become His sheep, why do they not allow us to interpret the words, "God chose the believers," as an anticipation of those who do not believe in practice but are considered as those who will believe?

VII. Vorstius also adds that in Matthew 22, it is said that few are elected because few have the wedding garment. However, this is not what is found in the text. Christ concludes the parable of those invited to the wedding with the statement, "Many are called, few chosen." This statement does not explain why the one who lacked the proper attire was cast out but rather why, out of the many called, only a few responded to the call. To obscure this fact, Vorstius employs a double deceit. He omits the words "many are called" and substitutes "Nam" with "Quia" to persuade that the reason for the one inappropriately dressed being called out is given. He knew that the particle "Nam" often indicates a note or mark but not the cause, as seen in Matthew 26:73 and many other places. However, in this instance, there is no doubt that the cause is indicated. The cause is noted as to why so few followed His call out of the many invited – because although many are called, only a few are chosen. Therefore, it is clear that this passage, more than any other, refutes Arminius.

VIII. Other arguments presented to prove that the elected are those who believe are irrelevant. The elected are the believers, and the believers are the elected. However, they are not elected because they are believers but so that they may believe.

IX. The objection from 2 Peter, chapter 1, does not hold water. From these words, Vorstius infers that calling precedes election. Yet, Peter does not place calling before election but rather the certainty of our calling before the certainty of our election. I willingly acknowledge that this certainty is first in order. However, just as justification precedes glorification, and calling precedes justification, so predestination precedes calling, as Saint Paul teaches in Romans 8.

X. Greinchouius, in opposition to Ames, argues as follows on page 171: "I say that by your predestination the Gospel is inverted. For this is the sentence of the Gospel: If thou believest thou shalt live. But this your predestination says, if you are predestinated to life you shall believe." I respond that it is one thing to invert or change the sentence and another to overturn it. This sentence is convertible:

whoever is elected shall believe, and whoever believes is elected. We are speaking of the faith that Saint Paul in Titus 1:1 calls the faith of the elect. Are not the Arminians the ones inverting the Gospel? They claim that faith is not of the elect but that election is of the faithful. What Greinchouius inserts about reprobation will be addressed in its proper place.

XI. The same individual, on page 130, argues as follows: "Salvation is the reward of faith," as stated in 1 Peter 1:9. "The crown of righteousness is the reward of labor, the prize of our strife and finished course, the inheritance of the sons of God, that is, of the faithful," as mentioned in John 1:12 and Galatians 4:30. Because it is difficult to see how these statements can be linked to election for foreseen faith, given that the texts do not mention election or foreseen faith, he adds, "Therefore, Election to salvation is not the decree concerning the end of men as they are men simply, but concerning the salvation of men as they are this particular type of men, namely, the faithful and those who persevere in the faith." We also acknowledge this in the sense we mentioned before. However, it would be more accurate to say, "those who are to persevere," because when God elects, He does not consider faith and perseverance as accomplished facts but as things to be accomplished, and this is accomplished through His grace and gift.

XII. He adds further, "The will of bestowing the reward, the wages, etc., does necessarily presuppose the fore-seeing of faith and perseverance in faith by the covenant of the Gospel. If thou believest and dost persevere, thou shalt be saved." Here, you digress from the question. It was initially about election based on foreseen faith, but you now speak of salvation, which is granted after faith. When God elects to salvation, He foresees that faith will come before obtaining salvation. However, He foresees this in a way that God foresees what He Himself will bring about. Properly speaking, this is not foresight but divine will. Furthermore, eternal life is referred to as the reward of faith because it can only be obtained after the struggle of faith. We can only reach it through our efforts, but it is not given as a reward

for those efforts. Nor are we chosen for salvation based on the foresight of our efforts or faith. God, who predestines us to the reward, also predestines us to the struggle, as Paul testifies in Philippians 1:26, "It is given to you on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him but also to suffer for Him." It is also a kind of reward freely given, as Saint Ambrose teaches in his first letter, Book 1: "The reward of liberality and grace differs from the wage of virtue and the pay for labour." In the meantime, readers should note that Arminians argue for election based on foreseen works. In Holy Scripture, eternal life is called the reward not only of faith but also of works, almsgiving, and patience, as seen in Matthew 19: "Call the labourers and give them the pay." Therefore, if election based on foreseen faith can be proven because eternal life is called the reward of faith, why should the same not apply to election based on foreseen works, especially since faith itself is considered a work? Arminians argue that we are justified by faith as a work, as will be discussed further.

XIII. The same person, on page 170 and 188, takes pleasure in this argument: "If predestination is as you imagine it to be, then God's will regarding the salvation of a person who will be saved is twofold and contradictory. One part of His will ordains salvation for someone who does not believe, in other words, not based on foreseen faith. The other part of His will, at a later time, will not save the same person unless he is faithful. But I deny that these things are contradictory. Electing someone to salvation who does not believe so that he may believe, and willing the salvation of someone who already believes, are not contradictory. It's like a father designating his two-year-old son for the role of a senator or pastor and later taking care to provide him with an education when he's older to prepare him for the position. Does this father will contradictory things because he initially appointed his son, who was unlearned, to the office and later, when he is educated, ensures he can fulfill it?"

XIV. The same person, on page 194, argues as follows: "Whatever men are like and however qualified, God saves them in time in the

same way and order that He has decreed to save them, considering their qualifications. In time, He first provides Christ, then, according to His wisdom, administers the necessary means for faith and repentance, both sufficiently and effectively. Those who repent and believe in action, He receives into grace. Finally, He saves those who persevere in faith. Therefore, He has decreed to save those men in the same manner and order, considering their qualifications."

Ans. The major proposition blends false and true elements together, allowing the false to hide within the multitude. It is not entirely true in all respects. It is undeniable that those whom and of what kind God saves in time, the same individuals and the same kind of people He has decreed to save. However, the claim that God saves them in the exact order He decreed is partly true and partly false. It is true that God saves in the same order as He decreed to save, but it is not true that in executing or saving, God follows the same order as in decreeing. In decreeing, He first considers the end before thinking of the means. Conversely, in executing, He commences with the means and aids, ultimately achieving the end. So, just as a physician initially intends health before prescribing medicine but, in practice, administers the medicines before healing, God operates in a similar fashion. Greinchouius, therefore, makes an error by deducing God's order in decreeing from the order He follows in executing His decree. By the way, it's worth noting the spirit of Arminius in Greinchouius' words. He does not dare to say that God gives faith but claims that God provides only the means to faith. This is because he wants to maintain the idea that free will has the power to use these means and that faith is only partially a gift from God.

XV. The argument put forth by Arnoldus on page 181 suffers from the same issue. He states, "These things are thus coupled: that God will first have one believe before He will have him be saved. Whereas your predestination teaches the opposite, that God first wills to save a person and then wills that he should believe." In these words, he confuses the order of decreeing with the order of execution. In the execution of His decree, God indeed wills that one believes before

being saved. However, in decreeing, God first decrees to grant salvation before decreeing to provide faith. He initially considers the end before thinking of the means.

XVI. The same individual, on page 195, contends that it is incompatible and impossible to simultaneously will to save Peter absolutely and to will not to save him except on the condition of faith. I respond by pointing out an ambiguity and equivocation in the word "absolutely." If by "absolutely," it is understood as certainly, precisely, or necessarily, then these two desires are not contradictory: to will to save Peter certainly and precisely and to will that Peter should be saved by faith. This is similar to how it is not contradictory to will absolutely that Peter should live and to will that he should live by food and breathing. However, if by "to will to save absolutely" it is meant that God will save without faith, then this is a misrepresentation, for none of us hold such an opinion, and no one believes it. Greinchouius, however, seems to suggest this meaning, for he adds, "These things are contrary: to will that the same man should believe and that he should not believe." None of us, indeed, no Christian, has ever claimed that God wills that a person should not believe in Christ. Yet, he attributes this view to Calvin, citing his Institutes, Book 1, Chapter 18, Section 13, even though there is no such statement in Calvin's work. Calvin was a staunch advocate of faith in Christ. Therefore, after vomiting this falsehood against us, he triumphs as if he had accomplished something commendable, much like a rooster crowing on a dung heap. He says, "When you have reconciled these things, then I will consider you a skilled reconciler." However, it was not Ames, a man who contributed greatly to the Church, who needed to labour to reconcile Gospel doctrine with Satan's blasphemy.

XVII. The sectaries accuse us of undermining the Gospel in the following manner: They claim, "The Gospel, which promises life to the believer conditionally, cannot serve to execute the decree by which life is precisely assigned to certain and determined individuals." However, I assert that it can serve, because God

promises life under a condition that He decreed to work in the elect. What prevents God from promising life to the believer while also decreeing to give faith to those certain and determined individuals He has elected?

XVIII. Arnoldus, on page 52, states, "If faith is an effect of election, it cannot be comprehended in the decree of election." However, none of us claim that faith is encompassed within the decree of Election, but rather a purpose or will to give faith. This will has a relationship to the decree of election, like a part to the whole. The decree of the means to the end is included in the decree by which the end is decreed, just as the will to provide stones and timber is included in the will to build a house.

XIX. They repeatedly emphasise a matter of little consequence: According to the Gospel, they say, faith is a condition required for salvation and election, but not according to your opinion. This is a slander. We acknowledge that faith is a condition required for saving a person, but not a condition foreseen in electing them, as Arminius suggests. Faith is something without which God does not elect, but it is not something foreseen in the process of election. That faith is required in election, even though the Scripture does not state it in the same words, can be appropriately understood according to the meaning of the Scripture, if faith is considered a condition following election and without which God grants no salvation. Just as breathing is a condition for life, even though a person is appointed to life before breathing.

XX. In their Epistle against the Walachrian brethren, p 43, the Arminians explain their opinion as follows: "It seems most inconvenient to us to affirm that God, in election, decreed what He Himself would work in man by His Spirit. For by the decree of absolute election to salvation, only the conferring of salvation and not of faith is decreed." They support this false and foolish opinion with the following argument: "Since salvation and faith are completely different predicates and do not make the same thing

either by itself or accidentally, it cannot be that the decree to confer salvation is the same as the decree to confer faith." I respond: Even though salvation and faith are different things, faith is a necessary means to salvation, and the decree of the end includes the means. Life and breathing are no less different than faith and salvation, and yet, by the same decree that appoints one to life, one is also appointed to breathing because breathing is the means to life.

XXI. The Arminians frequently use this objection: "If God predestines men to faith as a means by which they should attain salvation, it must follow that God also predestines the reprobates to unbelief and impenitence as means by which they should come to damnation." However, I deny that this follows. Here we are discussing the means that God Himself supplies, while unbelief and impenitence are means suggested by man himself. The means that God finds already present must be distinguished from those He creates. In predestination, God considers man as corrupt and immersed in sin, which leads to the fact that the means to damnation are already within man. There is no need for them to be supplied differently, especially not by God, who is never the author of sin. However, since man is naturally lacking in the means of salvation, they cannot come to man unless God provides them. Furthermore, unbelief is a condition required before reprobation, while faith is a condition that follows election. Hence, unbelief and impenitence are deserving of reprobation, but faith is not deserving of election or salvation.

XXII. Another argument used by these sectaries collapses under scrutiny, an argument they repetitively present in a rather distasteful manner: They claim, "If God does not elect based on foreseen faith, then He does not reprobate based on foreseen sin." However, I deny that these two things are equivalent or that one necessarily follows from the other. God foresees sin because He is not the author of sin, but He does not foresee faith; instead, He decrees to bring it about. What God decrees, He does not foresee; He wills it. If we were to use precise and appropriate language rather than obfuscate matters with

improper speech, this would be clear. In truth, the Arminians appear to be ensnaring themselves with their own arguments. If their reasoning prevails, why shouldn't we argue as follows: "If God elects without regard to good works (as Arminius contends), then He also reprobates without regard to evil works"? The consequence is the same, yet the Arminians do not accept this. Arnoldus, following in Arminius's footsteps, artfully compiles various points to bring reproach upon our cause and foment hatred towards it. It is worthwhile to examine these points as they are cunningly presented with much artistry and adorned with specious arguments. At the forefront, he places arguments intended to demonstrate that our position is contrary to the wisdom of God.

XXIII. On page 217, Arnoldus argues as follows: "It is contrary to wisdom to first ordain something absolutely for someone, which is lost and therefore nonexistent, and then decree that he should obtain the same thing." We've already addressed the homonymy in the term "absolutely" in the sixteenth objection, so the answer can be found there. However, it is not true that this is contrary to the wisdom of God, any more than it is contrary to wisdom to decree that someone should recover their lost health absolutely and yet decree that they should take medicine and obtain the physician's help.

XXIV. He repeats a similar argument in other words on the same page and the following page, but he adds that it is contrary to the wisdom of God to ordain first who shall receive the reward before ordaining the condition upon which they are to receive it. However, we do not teach this. We determine that all of God's decrees are eternal. As for the order, we do not split them into two decrees, one for the individuals to be saved and another for the conditions under which they will be saved. By a single decree, God determined to save certain individuals through faith. But if we were to express it as Arnoldus imagines, it would not detract from God's wisdom. A father often decrees to give something to his children before deciding on the condition or the work required. In this context, Arnoldus has added many aspects of irresistibility and reprobation, which we have

deferred to another discussion. Thus, he transitions from discussing God's wisdom to discussing God's justice, which he contends we violate.

XXV. Therefore, on page 224, he begins with a false accusation, stating, "You determine that God decreed to save some men without considering faith." I maintain that he falsely accuses us. Even though God does not elect us for faith, He does elect us to faith, and faith is a part of the definition of election. However, if God elects one person to salvation from two who are equally sinful, not considering obedience as something already achieved but electing him to perform obedience, God will not be unjust. Regarding His own, He does as He pleases, as the Scripture says, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy." It suffices that although He grants grace to one that is undeserved, He imposes no punishment on the other except that which is deserved. Meanwhile, the Papists have reason to rejoice, for they have found a proponent of merit in Arnoldus. It is said to be merit when a reward is given for righteousness. Since eternal life is a reward, and Arnoldus argues that it should be given for beholding obedience already performed, he contends that it is given to one who merits it.

XXVI. What Arnoldus adds on page 225 is baseless. He claims that by the decree in which God has determined to grant salvation only to those who believe, we make it appear that God loves obedience more than the creature. In contrast, he argues, our decree portrays God as loving sinners more than righteousness, which contradicts justice. These assertions are intertwined with wicked sophistry. First, he falsely assumes that we teach God will save individuals other than believers. Secondly, he craftily compares God's love for obedience to His love for the creature. Such a comparison should actually be made between God's love for obedience (which is His very justice) and His love for His own goodness and mercy. While God may love His justice more than the creature, He does not love His justice more than His goodness, through which He bestows good upon the creature. God provides clear and definite evidence of His goodness,

just as He does for His justice. This goodness is also a form of justice, understood not strictly as the virtue that rewards the just and punishes the unjust, but as the general virtue through which God does all things fittingly and as they should be done. Although everything in God is equal, and all of God's attributes constitute a single virtue and the essence of God, Scripture more profoundly extols God's goodness than His justice. For example, the Law states that God visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations but extends His mercy to thousands of generations. Psalm 36 likens God's judgments to mountains and His goodness to the deep. In Psalm 30, His goodness is said to last for a lifetime or an age, while His anger is limited to a moment. Saint James concurs with this view in James 2:13, stating that mercy boasts and triumphs over justice because God has provided us with more evident proofs of His goodness than His justice. Thus, it is right to call God "Optimus maximus," the Most Good and the Most Great, with "Most Good" placed first and then "Most Great." To recapitulate, if we return to the beginning, we find that the decree of creation is the primary consideration, in which goodness is present but not justice.

XXVII. Arnoldus expounds on the same themes more extensively in Chapter 9, where he claims that our position violates the justice of God by suggesting that God has ordained individuals for salvation without considering any obedience. As I have previously mentioned, this is not our position. I admit that God loves His justice more than mankind, but I deny that He loves the demonstration or execution of His justice more than He loves the manifestation of His mercy and goodness towards humanity. God loves what is owed to Him by His creation more than He loves the creation itself. However, He does not love what is owed to Him by the creation more than what He owes to Himself, namely, the manifestation of His glory through benevolence towards His creation. It is precarious to suggest that God could not uphold His justice without the intervention of these innovators who advocate for His justice, prioritizing it over His goodness and wisdom. This is the point at which Arnoldus claims

God becomes a debtor. "Justice," he says, "requires that God should give to the creature, which performs obedience, what is rightfully His." Never before has such a statement been uttered, even by the most fervent proponents of human merit. Arnoldus appears ready to demand from God, "Give me what is mine, for your justice demands it." What arrogance! But let us move on to other matters.

XXVIII. Shortly thereafter, he attempts to demonstrate that we also offend against the goodness of God in the doctrine of reprobation. We have dedicated a separate chapter to examining these issues, as well as to addressing the haphazard insertion of topics such as reprobation, free will, and Christ as the foundation of election, which he scatters throughout his work without order.

XXIX. It is worth noting that Arminians often criticise the doctrine of Election as believed in our Churches, all under the guise of promoting piety and encouraging good works. They claim that strict election extinguishes all motivation for good deeds, prayers, attending sermons, and undermines every pious effort. Their argument is that if someone believes they were predestined for faith and good works, they will leave the task of moving people infallibly to God and discard wholesome fear, convinced that their salvation cannot be lost, and their faith cannot be abandoned. They borrow these and other ideas from Pelagians and, to a certain extent, from the Catholics, and they parade them around with great clamour, as if in a grand procession. These cunning individuals speak from what they consider personal experience. They assert that when they held our opinion, they felt vices growing in them due to this doctrine. They sensed a decline in their love for God and sometimes experienced temptations of despair. However, as soon as they abandoned the belief in strict election, these afflictions were cured, and their piety grew fervent. No doubt, we would have bid farewell to piety and righteous conduct had this sect not emerged, which has conquered vices and rekindled almost extinguished piety. I do not delve into their personal lives; what I can say is that their writings carry a tone of anger and are filled with bitterness.

However, to the point: I deny that our doctrine provides any legitimate reason for sinning or encourages indulgence. There is nothing so holy or true that it cannot be misconstrued or corrupted by a malevolent interpretation. Saint Paul faced the same slander, and in Romans 6, he preemptively dispels this misconception, saying, "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?"

XXX. Therefore, we reject the notion that these consequences, as they imagine them, follow from our doctrine. If God has predestined someone to faith and repentance, this should not reduce their diligence in seeking to please God and obey Him. Repentance itself embodies vigilance and carefulness. Therefore, their argument implies that the elect should be less vigilant because God has predestined them to be vigilant, which is a flawed reasoning.

XXXI. The benevolence and generosity of God do not impede human vigilance and diligence. Just as God provides us with our daily bread, it does not deter us from labouring for it. To expect life's sustenance from God while sitting idly with arms crossed is a futile endeavour. The same God who provides us with food also encourages us to work, for His blessings do not come upon laziness but upon industry.

XXXII. Furthermore, nothing prevents a person from pursuing their labour with less diligence when the outcome is determined by the certain decree of God, whether this decree is known to us or not. Christ was not unaware of the length of His earthly life, yet He avoided dangers and escaped the hands of the Jews more than once. Hezekiah, after recovering from his illness, knew he had fifteen more years to live, during which he undoubtedly took care of his health and nourishment. God had revealed to Paul that none of the passengers on the same ship would be lost, yet he still encouraged the sailors to work and ordered them to stay on the ship when they tried to escape in a boat. Arminians themselves would not deny that the outcome of their battles was determined by God's purpose, yet they would not conclude that it was pointless to fight courageously. In many places, Scripture testifies that God has set the limits of each

person's life and that the number of our days is determined by God's purpose. Nevertheless, seeking medical attention when sick or wearing armour before battle is not to be criticized. Human effort must align with God's decree, and God's generosity should not lead to negligence. Just as an infant moves within the womb and contributes to its own birth, even though the power to move is from God, so too should faith and repentance, as the means to salvation, not be neglected. Saint Paul, in Philippians 2, acknowledges that both the will and the ability to act come from God. Yet in the same passage, he encourages us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. We would rather believe Saint Paul than Arnoldus, who states that those who know they are delivered from sin by God's absolute and unchangeable ordinance have their conscience of sin extinguished. Was David's conscience hardened to sin or did he lose the sense of sin after God, through the Prophet Nathan, signified that He had taken away his sin? No, David grieved and deeply lamented his sin, and sorrow and repentance remained in his heart after receiving forgiveness. Similarly, Saint Paul, in 1 Timothy 1, states that God had mercy on him, yet in the same passage, he expresses his detestation of sin.

XXXIII. The same applies to prayer as it does to the effort put into good works. We rightly and piously ask God for things that are determined by His certain purpose. God, who has decided to do good to us, grants that good through our prayers, not through laziness and complacency. Jehoshaphat did not pray in vain before the battle in 2 Chronicles 20, even though he knew that God had already decreed the outcome of the battle. The Apostles were well aware that their sins were forgiven by God, yet they prayed daily, saying, "Forgive us our trespasses." Christ did not doubt His resurrection and the attainment of glory after the battle, yet He prayed during the night and withdrew to the mountain to pray.

XXXIV. We should also consider that every person, even the most righteous, is susceptible to temptations. When these temptations

assail us, we should seek God's help to prevent our faith from wavering or allowing sloth and negligence to take hold.

XXXV. Saint Paul also attests in Romans 8 that the Holy Spirit prays within us and inspires sighs and prayers. He is referred to as the "Spirit of supplication" by Zechariah (Zechariah 12:10). Since this is the result of God's good pleasure and the fruit of election, it would be astonishing if election itself discouraged us from prayer.

XXXVI. If anyone who is elected still doubts their salvation, they have something to ask of God: a complete conviction, the strengthening of their wavering faith, increased charity and zeal, and the attainment of glory. If they are certain of their salvation, they must pray for an increase in this confidence, they must seek perseverance in faith and good works, and they must pray to be shielded from sin, to which they feel inclined. They should pray for the fulfilment of God's promises and pray against the temptations of Satan, who, even though he cannot overthrow the elect, still pricks at their heels and prods them with his goads.

XXXVII. Arnoldus, following Arminius, raises a similar objection on page 304: "Your doctrine," he says, "makes the servants and Ministers of God lazy in their ministry because it follows from this that their diligence can benefit only those whom God will absolutely save, and who cannot perish. Conversely, their negligence can harm only those whom God will absolutely destroy, and who cannot be saved." Pelagians made similar objections to Saint Augustine, which we have already answered extensively. The same reasons that motivate the diligence of the listeners in repentance and good works also motivate pastors to diligently fulfil their duties and urge their listeners towards repentance. Although the elect cannot be lost, we know that God brings them to salvation through the word, sacraments, and the ministry of the Gospel. Therefore, our obedience should serve God's decree. While the minister's negligence cannot cause the elected to perish, it harms the minister themselves and they will bear the punishment for that negligence on Judgment Day.

Thus, although they do not harm others, they certainly harm themselves. Saint Paul, a fervent advocate of election, professes that he endures all things for the sake of the elect, that they may obtain salvation (2 Timothy 2:10).

XXXVIII. As for the reprobates, if Arminius's reasoning prevails, by the same logic, we should neither eat nor drink, and parents should not be obligated to care for the health of their children. This negligence could harm no one but those whom God has decreed to perish and for whom He has set certain bounds on their lives that cannot be altered or surpassed. Moreover, if it were clear to pastors who among their flock are reprobates, there might be some reason to doubt whether they should be concerned with the salvation of the reprobates. However, since this is unknown to them, they should scatter the seeds of the word everywhere and leave the outcome to God.

XXXIX. Arnoldus, on page 307, makes a statement that, in my opinion, is extremely flawed. He says, "If anyone were to teach that God Himself has precisely appointed to nourish someone for a certain time in this life and that He would provide the bread with which they should be nourished in such abundance that they cannot help but have it, I agree that such a person would not need to be warned to be careful about providing bread for themselves. However, I maintain that such a person still needs and should be warned to prepare bread for themselves because the same God who promises bread and has decreed to give it also declares in His word that He will give this bread through our labour and by means of our diligence. Therefore, the One who will give the bread also gives the strength, will, and industry by which this bread should be prepared." Arnoldus concedes to himself what no sensible person would concede to him.

XL. Furthermore, the certainty of Election can be understood in two ways: either as the immutability of God's decree or as the assured conviction with which someone believes they are elected. In this

discussion, we are only addressing the former kind of certainty, while the latter warrants a separate discussion. It is important to clarify that we do not endorse the false claims attributed to us by Arnoldus. One such claim is that all individuals are obligated to believe they are elected for eternal life. On the contrary, we teach that anyone who refuses to believe in Christ and repent is obligated to believe that the salvation obtained through Christ's death does not apply to them. Similarly, Arnoldus falsely accuses us of instructing wicked individuals to be complacent, as if their salvation cannot be lost through sinful deeds. This is an abominable distortion of our doctrine.

To assert, "I am elected, therefore I may indulge in wickedness," is the statement of a reprobate person who intends to live sinfully because they presume on God's goodness. The love that God has bestowed on us through Christ, which should be the most compelling incentive to love God, is perverted into a cushion on which profane complacency can rest. Those whom God has elected have been given, or will be given, the Holy Spirit, who prevents them from entertaining such profane thoughts. Just as God has decreed life for someone, He has also decreed the means of sustaining life, such as food and breathing. It would be absurd for someone to say, "If God has decreed that I will live until I am eighty years old, why should I bother eating, since it is certain that I will live that long?" Such a person is dangerously deluded, for God has ordained to use their senseless obstinacy as a means of punishment.

XLI. Meanwhile, it is essential to distinguish carefully between the certainty of election for specific individuals and the certainty with which individuals believe they are elected. The former pertains to the certainty of God's decree, while the latter relates to the certainty of faith. Even if Arminius could demonstrate that piety and the pursuit of good works are compromised by a belief in one's own election, it would not logically follow that God's decree concerning the election of specific individuals is not certain and precise. It would only imply that we should not regard this decree as certain in our own belief.

This highlights the flawed reasoning of Arminius and Arnoldus, who wrongly conclude that God's decree concerning the election of specific individuals is not absolute or precise because the confidence in one's own election can lead some to be less diligent in acts of piety.

XLII. In addition to these considerations, we have already expounded in the second chapter how the doctrine of election is beneficial for virtuous conduct and the cultivation of piety. However, we emphasize that this does not mean everyone should expect a personal revelation of their election. Instead, one should listen to the Gospel and firmly fix in their mind and heart the promise of God, which grants eternal life to those who believe. Through this persuasion, anyone who feels moved by the love of God and compelled to repentance can readily infer that they are among the elect and that the promises of the Gospel apply to them. Although election precedes faith and repentance in nature, being their cause, faith and repentance are more readily apparent to us, and we should always proceed from what is better known. This often leads us from the effects to the cause, a logical order known as "Resolutio" in academic terms.

XLIII. If we were to imitate Arminius, it would be simple to lay these arguments at his feet and demonstrate how his doctrine conflicts with the wisdom and goodness of God, and consequently, His justice. We could show how his doctrine can lead to distrust and stubbornness, inflating a person only to cast them down. For one filled with Arminianism may reason thus: "God may want to save me, but His will could be thwarted, and His noble desires frustrated. Those whom God desires to save by His Antecedent will, He may destroy through His Consequent will. Furthermore, His election is based on foreseeing human will, making my salvation dependent on something so fickle." Such a person might also argue, "God grants sufficient grace to all, yet He has not revealed Christ to everyone. Therefore, there must be some grace available without knowledge of Christ." This person may also entertain the idea that God is mocking humanity, as Arminius teaches that God earnestly desires the

salvation of all, yet calls many in a manner that is incongruous—through means, in time, and in measure that are not suitable. Whoever is called in this way never responds to God's call. But who am I to know whether God is using congruent means?

Let's not forget Arminius' famous opinions: that unregenerate individuals perform good works, are meek, thirst for and do the Father's will, and that faith is partly derived from grace and partly from free will. Moreover, Arminius' followers dare to impose rules on God Himself, asserting that God is obligated to grant all humans the power to believe. They argue that God's justice demands that He provide humans with what is rightfully theirs and that individuals can open their hearts to receive God's Word. What fidelity! Are these the renowned incentives to a holy life you speak of? Does Arminius inspire piety through these teachings? If anyone is stirred to good works by these notions, they are all the more corrupted by them. God would rather see sins accompanied by repentance than righteousness tainted by pride. God will not stimulate repentance at the expense of either our faith or His glory. Our duty is not only to encourage repentance but also to ensure it is done through suitable means, without dishonoring God.

Chapter 25

Whether Christ is the cause and foundation of Election.

I. We assert that no one is saved except through and for Christ. Christ is the ransom and price of our redemption, the cornerstone and meritorious cause of our salvation. However, we do not claim that He is the cause of election or the reason why, among two individuals considered in their fallen state, one is chosen over the other. There are examples of the most wicked individuals, to one of whom (according to God's providence) the Gospel has been preached, leading to their conversion and belief. Yet, to the other, the Gospel has not been preached. Scripture does not attribute this to the death of Christ as the cause but rather derives it from God's sovereign pleasure, as He has mercy on whomever He wills. The love of the Father precedes the mediation of the Son, for it was the Father's love for the world that prompted Him to send His Son.

Indeed, considering that Christ Himself, as a human, is elected and the head of the elect, He cannot be the foundation and cause of election. Just as He is the head of humanity as a human being, so is He the head of those predestined, as a man predestined to such great honour, which came to Him purely by God's grace.

II. Therefore, the Apostle refers to Christ as the "price of our redemption" and the "propitiation" (Colossians 1, Romans 3). However, he does not state that Christ is the cause of why some individuals are elected over others.

III. Even reason itself agrees with this. Just as the intention to heal a sick person always precedes the use of a physician, it must be in God's mind that the thought of saving humanity (not in time, but in order) precedes the thought of sending the Saviour.

IV. In addition to this, we must consider that the mediation and redemption of Christ is an action by which the justice of God is satisfied, a concept not signified by the term "Election." Being a mediator is one thing, and being the cause of Election or the preference of one individual over another in God's secret counsel is another. Therefore, Christ is the meritorious cause of our salvation, but not of our election. This is akin to saying that Christ is the foundation and cause of the execution of the decree of Election, but not the cause of Election itself.

V. It is of great significance that Christ, in John 15:13, states that He lays down His life for His friends and, in John 10:11, refers to Himself as the good shepherd who lays down His life for His sheep. If Christ died for His friends and His sheep, it implies that when He died for them, He considered them already as friends and sheep, even though many of them were not yet called, as Christ Himself attests by calling those His sheep in the sixteenth verse of the same chapter, who were not yet converted. If Christ, when dying for us, considered us as His friends and sheep, it is evident that before Christ's death, a distinction had already been made between His friends and enemies, between the sheep and the goats. Therefore, the decree of Election was in place before Christ's death, and Arminius's opinion, suggesting that Election had no relevance when Christ died, should be rejected as undermining the Gospel. Surely, He who died for His sheep died for the elect, not for those who were to be elected after His death.

These considerations make it clear that by "friends" and "sheep" for whom Christ died, we do not mean only those who love God and follow Christ, but all those whom God loves and for whose salvation He decreed, even when they did not yet love God and were His enemies. This is why they are referred to as enemies in Romans 5:10, because at that time, they did not love God, but they were greatly loved by God and appointed for salvation in Christ. In different respects, they were both friends and enemies, sheep and goats:

friends because God loved them, enemies because they did not yet love God.

VI. Nor does this in any way diminish Christ's glory if it is said that the Father's love and good pleasure precede the decree of sending His Son. In John 3:16, Christ Himself testifies that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son," wherein the love of the Father is explicitly placed before the sending of the Son. This should be understood as not excluding the Son from the act of Election itself, as He is one God with the Father, but rather, it was done by Him not as a mediator but as God.

VII. Christ is not diminished in any way if it is stated that the Father's will regarding the salvation of humanity precedes the redemption of Christ, given that this redemption also follows sin. For the illness precedes the remedy.

VIII. Nor is anything taken away from the magnitude of the price of our redemption if it is said that the will of Him who offered the price precedes it.

IX. The very definition of the decree of Election supports this argument. Election is the decree to save certain individuals through Christ. In this definition, Christ is not presented as the cause of Election but as the means of its execution and as the meritorious cause of salvation.

X. It's quite remarkable how much the Arminians take this issue and distort it. Because we maintain that the love of God precedes (not in time, but in order) the mediation of the Son, they treat it as if we taught that God loved us without considering Christ and without faith in Christ. This is far from our view. We believe that God bestows salvation on us by simultaneously considering us in Christ, destined to be saved by Him. There is no reason for us to be accused of Socinianism in this matter. We want nothing to do with that monstrous and hellish doctrine that completely undermines the

benefits of Christ. It's one thing to say that in God's decree, the thought of creating man preceded the thought of adorning him with holiness and righteousness, but it doesn't imply that God first considered man as unjust or unholy. Similarly, if someone says that in God's decree, the thought of overthrowing the world by fire followed the thought of overthrowing it, it doesn't mean that God initially intended to overthrow it without fire. All of God's decrees are eternal, even though there is a certain order and relationship between them.

XI. Arminius finds himself vexed by a passage from Saint John, Chapter 3: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son," where God's love is presented as the cause for Him giving His Son. In response, he tries to evade this straightforward passage with a feeble quibble, claiming that love is not the reason why God will grant eternal life. He supports this by pointing to John's inclusion of faith between this love and eternal life. However, it should be noted that Arminius himself acknowledges a certain love of God towards men that precedes His decree of sending His Son. But he argues that God, by this love, is not willing to grant eternal life. What, then, does this love achieve according to him? He ought to clarify this point. Will God, by this love, leave men in death? Is it possible for God to love His creatures, whom He created for life, and not will that they should live by the same love? Such subtlety is embarrassingly weak. In fact, by sending His Son, it is evident that God, by this love, desires the restoration of humanity to life. Arminius's argument that faith comes between this love and eternal life is no obstacle. Can I not desire the recovery of a sick person even though the physician stands between my desire and their healing? He makes opposites out of things that are actually connected and harmonious. It's not clear why he would favour Socinus, who claims that Christ is not the cause of Election, over the one who argues that Christ is not the cause of the love by which God sent Christ into the world and provided us with a Redeemer. Both views agree that redemption is a means and not the first cause. Therefore, let us not begrudge God the Father the

honour of having His good pleasure as the source and original of our Election.

XII. Furthermore, it's important to observe that the Election that Arminius insists Christ is the foundation of is the general Election, wherein all individuals are conditionally elected. As we have extensively discussed in Chapter 18, whatever the Arminians present to prove that Christ is the foundation of Election evaporates. There was truly no reason for them to labour so earnestly to establish that Christ was the foundation of an Election in which even Pharaoh and Judas were elected. This imaginary Election is described as follows: "I decreed to send my Son to save all who will believe, but I have not determined who or how many they will be; I will only provide all with sufficient power to believe, but belief will be at their own discretion."

XIII. Arminius attempts to defend himself against such a clear truth with just one word from the Apostle, Ephesians 1:4: "He hath elected us in Christ." However, there is a distinction between being elected "in Christ" and being elected "for Christ," with Christ being the cause for one's election over another. The meaning of the Apostle is clear: to be elected is nothing other than to be appointed to salvation. Therefore, to be elected "in Christ" means to be appointed to salvation to be obtained in or through Christ. For whoever God has decreed to save, He has given them to Christ and considered them as united to Christ. It would be searching for a knot in a bulrush to attempt to obscure what is clear and plain with far-fetched interpretations.

XIV. Arminius, and subsequently Arnoldus, lay the foundation for their opinion by asserting that Predestination is the foundation of Christianity. However, they make this assertion without proof, much like someone who, at the outset of a discussion, would seek to obtain a concession that a circle has corners. This is a significant assertion, and I believe no one would grant it to them, especially those who understand what predestination is and what forms the foundation of

the Christian Religion. The foundation of the Christian Religion is acknowledging that Christ, the only Son of God, was sent by the Father so that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. The foundation of Christianity must necessarily be the rule of faith upon which the faith of Christians is based. However, predestination is not the rule of faith; it is an action of God by which He determines to save certain individuals through Christ. We would never claim that the secret decree by which specific individuals, such as Peter or Charles, are elected, forms the foundation of Christianity. If someone were to attempt to teach religion starting with this decree of predestination, they would either tremble with fear at the entrance due to the darkness that engulfs them or fall straight down in disorientation. Therefore, anything Arnoldus builds on such a false proposition falls by itself, and we do not need to overthrow what will naturally collapse. Moreover, he opposes and argues against something we do not believe—that we are loved by God without Christ. We must also note the ambiguity in his attempt to deceive the reader when he claims on page 171 that "Christ is the foundation of our receiving into grace and into the love of God." If, by "receiving into grace and love," he means reconciliation through Christ's satisfaction on our behalf, then I admit that Christ is the foundation of that receiving into grace and love. However, if "receiving into grace and love" means the love of the Father by which He sent His Son to save us (which is the greatest love of all and the source of all goodness), then certainly Arminius himself would not have Christ as the foundation of that love. Nevertheless, it is by that very love that God chose whom He would from eternity.

XV. I do not delve into what Arminius has boldly and rashly dared to say, that God could not save us in any other way than through Christ, nor did He have any other means for the salvation of humanity. Arminius states, "God could not will eternal life to anyone without the mediator's involvement." Additionally, the Arminian conference at The Hague claims, "It is impossible for God to decree salvation for sinners without first decreeing the satisfaction of His justice, specifically through the satisfaction of Christ." Surely, they

presumptuously and rashly confine God's wisdom within limits, and even if this were true, it is not for humans to speak in such terms. It suffices to acknowledge that God has followed the most suitable and best path. It's worth noting that this opinion has not pleased Vorstius, who argues on page 33 of his work "de Deo" that it was lawful for God to relent or yield some of His own rights, just as much as it was to retain or pursue what is rightfully His. On page 399, he asserts that it is false to claim that no sin could go unpunished by God's justice.

XVII. The delegates at The Hague argue in the following manner: "If the decree concerning Christ the Saviour comes after the decree regarding the election of specific individuals for salvation, then God decreed the salvation of specific individuals before He decreed the satisfaction of His justice."

This is a manifold deception: They treat the decree of saving certain individuals and the decree of sending Christ to save them as two separate decrees when, in fact, they are one and the same. Election is the decree to save specific individuals in Christ. It is not one decree by which God appointed someone to life and another by which He appointed them to existence. Another deceit is their comparison of the salvation of specific individuals with the satisfaction of God's justice, when the comparison should have been made between the manifestation of God's goodness in saving specific individuals and the satisfaction of His justice. It is not inappropriate to say that God first decreed the manifestation of His goodness before the satisfaction of His justice. Furthermore, they cunningly use the phrase "the election of some particular persons" to diminish and belittle it. These "some particular persons" constitute the Church of the Elect, whose salvation is of such great importance to God that He would satisfy His own justice for their sake. Hence, it follows that, in order to demonstrate His goodness, God initially intended their salvation before the satisfaction of His justice.

Chapter 26

Now, let's examine the other aspects they introduce.

I. The doctrine of Reprobation is, to some extent, beneficial to the elect. By comparing the fate of the Reprobates with their own, they are motivated to praise and appreciate God's generosity toward them. Moreover, when the assurances of Election begin to wane, and the spirit of adoption is troubled by the desires of the flesh, it is useful for the faithful to be filled with a certain dread and be prompted to examine themselves. This self-examination helps them determine whether they are progressing in regeneration or sliding into a worse state. Thus, Reprobation serves as a stimulus and incentive to those who might be complacent.

II. The very concept of election implies the existence of reprobation, for there cannot be election without the rejection of others. Scripture mentions Reprobates, as in 1 Peter 2:8: "Which stumble at the word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed." Likewise, in Jude 4, we read: "Certain men are crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation." In the book of Revelation, those not found in the book of life are marked out for us as Reprobates. Christ himself suggests that their number is significant when He says, "Many are called, few chosen." Experience also confirms this, as there are numerous nations, even today, who remain unaware of the name of Christ, and without this knowledge, salvation is deemed impossible.

III. Reprobation is God's eternal decree in which He determined not to bestow His grace upon certain individuals, thereby leaving them in their inherent depravity and condemning them to just and deserved punishment for their sins.

IV. I am not satisfied with Thomas's definition, who states that the decree of Reprobation is the act of permitting one to fall into sin and imposing damnation upon them for their sin. This definition is flawed because the permission through which God allows sin does not pertain to predestination but rather to His providence, even though it serves the purpose of predestination.

V. The Arminian sect holds the opinion that Reprobates can be saved. Arminius himself asserts that this decree pertains not to the power but to the act of salvation. This view is deeply problematic. If God's act is determined by His decree, then any resistance to this act would be in vain. Embracing this opinion leads to other equally flawed beliefs. It implies that a Reprobate could potentially cause themselves to be written in the book of life, rendering the number of the elect uncertain and the decree of Reprobation revocable and not final, unless after a final persistence in unbelief. Additionally, it would suggest that a Reprobate could, if they choose, attain faith and convert themselves, undermining the concept of faith being solely by the grace of God, as we will see is Arminius's opinion later on.

VI. God is the cause of Reprobation in a similar manner as a judge is the cause of the punishment imposed upon the guilty, with sin serving as the meritorious cause. Sin, therefore, is the remote cause of damnation, not merely a condition that is foreseen as necessary, while the judge represents the immediate and proximate cause.

VII. Despite sin being the cause for assigning punishment, it is not the cause for the distinction between the Elect and the Reprobate. For instance, consider two individuals guilty of the same crime, and the king chooses to condemn one while absolving the other. Although the condemned person's sin is the reason for their punishment, it is not the reason for the king's different disposition toward them since both are equally guilty. The distinction is due to something intervening and altering the outcome, which, in the context of predestination, is solely the good pleasure of God. It is a grave transgression for us to contend with God for making such

distinctions, as He is not subject to any creature and punishes no one unjustly. He bestows grace upon one undeservedly while imposing deserved punishment upon another.

VIII. An important question arises regarding the nature of the sin for which God reprobates—whether people are Reprobated solely for the sin inherited from Adam and the common stain shared with the elect or whether they are also reprobated for the actual sins they commit throughout their lives. The answer is straightforward: although natural corruption is sufficient for Reprobation, it is undeniable that God decrees condemnation for the same reason He condemns, which includes the actual sins committed in practice. In hell, Reprobates suffer not only for original sin but also for their actual sins. Therefore, God predestined them to damnation for these very sins. Reprobation and the appointment of punishment are essentially the same. God executes His will in time as He decreed it from eternity. Consequently, He punishes in time for actual sins, and thus, He decreed from eternity to punish for these sins. This explains why the punishment for the people of Capernaum will be greater than that for the Sodomites and why the punishment for one who knew their master's will will be greater than for one who did not, due to the significant difference in the actual sins for which they are punished. There is no hindrance to God considering a person in their natural corruption and depravity while also viewing them as tainted by the sins they commit due to that inherent depravity.

IX. Arminius does not believe that anyone is Reprobated solely for original sin because he argues that Christ has secured the forgiveness of it for all humanity. Instead, he asserts that individuals are Reprobated based on the foreknowledge of their actual sins, particularly for breaking the law and rejecting grace. This position appears inconsistent because all actual sins are believed to stem from original sin. Therefore, it is contradictory for God to forgive the source and origin of these sins (original sin) but not the sins that flow from it, similar to forgiving intemperance while punishing

adultery. Actions naturally result from habits and inclinations, as secondary actions arise from primary ones.

X. Undoubtedly, incredulity and the rejection of the Gospel are among the sins for which someone is Reprobated. By rejecting the Gospel, individuals transgress the Law by which God will judge them. The law commands wholehearted love for God, complete obedience in all matters, and, without exception, belief in God's word and obedience to His commandments, including believing when He speaks or instructs us to have faith in Him, whatever that may entail.

XI. It is irrational to argue that someone should be Reprobated for rejecting the Gospel and despising Christ's grace when the Gospel was never preached to them. Those whom the Gospel does not save remain under the law's jurisdiction, subject to judgment according to its requirements. The law obliges individuals to believe in Christ when Christ is proclaimed to them. However, the law does not bind them to believe in someone like Jeremiah if they have never heard of him or had any means of knowing about him.

XII. Although reprobation cannot be considered the cause of sin because sin precedes reprobation, it is undeniable that reprobation is the cause of the denial of grace, the preaching of the Gospel, and the gift of the spirit of adoption, which is exclusive to the elect. Since this denial constitutes a form of punishment, it must necessarily be inflicted as a consequence of the just judgment of a divine judge. These are Arminius's own words, found in his writings against Perkins. He states, "Effectual grace is denied by the decree of Reprobation," and further clarifies that "God, by the certain decree of Reprobation, determines not to give faith and repentance to some by withholding His effectual grace, through which they would undoubtedly believe and be converted." Therefore, there is no basis for the Arminians to falsely accuse us in this regard, as the principal figure of their sect makes the same assertion.

Moreover, it is easy to understand why God is not obligated to grant faith and repentance to all individuals. God, who did not cause the disease (sin), is not obliged to provide remedies for it to everyone or enable individuals to fulfill their obligations towards Him. This inability to perform is a consequence of human actions and choices, not a result of God's actions. Fulfilling the law is a natural obligation. As this law is violated through the rejection of the Gospel, it is evident that it is also a natural obligation to believe the Gospel, not before it is preached but when it is proclaimed.

XIII. The Arminians hold the belief that no one is Reprobated unless they have scorned the grace that leads to Christ. They consider incredulity to be the primary cause of reprobation, not only in those to whom the Gospel is preached but also in those who have never heard of Christ. Arminius argues that everyone is irresistibly granted the capacity to believe and the power to attain faith if they choose. They even assert that sufficient means for belief were made available to the heathens living in the remotest regions, such as Spain or Scythia, before the arrival of Christ. They propose a universal, sufficient grace common to all individuals. However, when they attempt to define this grace, they sometimes attribute it to common notions and natural light, sometimes to contemplation of the creation, and sometimes to a general knowledge of the law. The discussion of this contentious doctrine, and how it inadvertently aligns with the teachings of Pelagius, will be addressed in its appropriate context.

XIV. Nevertheless, we face constant opposition from their side, with the Arminians levelling abundant reproaches against us and fabricating monsters they can defeat. The participants at The Hague Conference, on page 122, conclude their discourse with this statement after levying some accusations: "These things are briefly spoken, against that absurd, detestable, and abominable opinion." Such harsh words do not unnerve us. They falsely accuse us of teaching that infidelity results from reprobation, as if reprobation were the cause of unbelief. They repeatedly assert this unfounded

accusation against us, attributing to us a doctrine we neither believe nor teach. Just because someone has not decreed to provide remedies to restore sight to a blind person does not make them the cause of that blindness or designate them for blindness.

XV. Their arguments are built on a flawed foundation, leading to even worse conclusions. They commence their discourse on Reprobation on page 118 with the statement: "It is known to the Contraremonstrant brethren that such as Election is on the one part, such Reprobation ought to be on the other part." This serves as the source of their error, as this misguided premise has led these astute individuals astray. The relationship between Election and Reprobation is not analogous. Sin and unbelief are not conditions required in the same way for reprobates as faith is required for the elect. Sin is a prerequisite condition for reprobation, while faith is a consequence of election. Reprobation is determined based on sin, while election is established for faith. Sin leads to the assignment of punishment, while faith results from election. Sin follows reprobation only in the realm of logical consequence, not in the realm of necessary effect. Faith, on the other hand, follows election in both logical consequence and necessary effect. This argument effectively dispels the calumny hurled at us by Arnoldus and others that we deny reprobates are reprobated because of sin.

XVI. The Arminians falsely accuse us because we maintain that the decree of reprobation is precise and absolute. We do not share the same views as Arminius, who teaches that reprobates are not saved but could potentially be saved. Arminius also denies that the number of reprobates is determined by God's decree. However, there is nothing in our position that implies reprobation is the cause of sin or that anyone is reprobated without the consideration of sin.

XVII. Arnoldus attempts to challenge our viewpoint with minor objections on page 219. He claims, "You assert that reprobates are excluded from salvation by God in His decree due to one sin but will be excluded in time for another different sin." This is a

misrepresentation; we neither believe nor declare such a thing. He repeats this false accusation on pages 229 and 238, asserting that individuals are reprobated based solely on their connection to the sin of Adam.

XVIII. On the same page, he fruitlessly argues: "It is not wise to let those who are excluded from good by God's absolute decree hope for it." However, I contest that unbelievers and profane individuals are not excluded from God by God's absolute decree in the way you understand "absolute," which implies exclusion without regard to their sins. It is not folly to command those who are excluded from eternal life due to the certain and inevitable decree to strive for eternal life since they are excluded precisely because they have not aspired to it.

XIX. On page 226, the same individual states, "You determine that God has precisely reprobated some sinners who are descendants of Adam, without considering their impenitence." This is a false accusation; our Churches do not hold this belief. The confessions of the Churches of France, England, and the Low Countries do not assert it. While the decree of reprobation does include the will not to grant faith and final repentance to reprobates, it does not follow that reprobation occurs without considering impenitence.

XX. Arnoldus adds, "Your doctrine asserts that God demands faith from the reprobates and decreed to condemn them if they do not believe, even though it is impossible for them to believe in Christ with a sure conviction. This impossibility arises not only because God does not grant them the power to believe but also because even if they were endowed with the ability to believe, they would believe something false since Christ did not die for them. It goes against God's justice to require such obedience and then punish creatures for failing to perform an obedience that is absolutely impossible for them." He repeats similar claims in other places, particularly on pages 261 and 262.

Many aspects of these assertions are inaccurate. Firstly, it is untrue that faith is demanded from all reprobates; it is required only of those to whom the Gospel is preached. Moreover, faith is not unconditionally demanded of all who hear the Gospel; it is required under the condition of repentance and conversion. We firmly teach that if they do not repent, the benefit of Christ does not extend to them, and their hope and faith in Christ are in vain as long as they remain opposed to God's invitation to repentance. Secondly, it is false to claim that God is unjust for commanding faith and obedience from those who, due to their innate corruption, cannot believe and obey, and to whom God has not granted the power to believe. This depravity in humanity is voluntary, and God, in requiring faith in His message delivered through Christ, asks nothing beyond what humanity inherently owes. Obedience to the law is a natural debt. To refuse or reject God's commandments communicated through Christ is to break the law, as we have extensively expounded in various places, particularly in Chapter 11, where we explain that the capacity for belief was bestowed upon us through Adam before the fall, although the opportunity to exercise it was lacking. Consequently, this capacity was lost through Adam. God is not obliged to restore it, as Arnoldus erroneously asserts, attempting to dictate terms to God. These clarifications also address Arnoldus's erroneous accusation on page 230 that we maintain that faith is required of reprobates while denying them the means to obey in faith, which is not the case. Faith is demanded only of those to whom Christ is revealed, and even then, it is conditioned upon repentance. We do not ask anything of them that they do not inherently owe.

XXI. Arnoldus adds a malicious accusation to this, attempting to discredit our position. He states, "You want faith to be required of reprobates so that they may be without excuse, and their damnation may be heightened." While it is true that their damnation is made more severe, we do not claim that this was God's intention. Just as when we say a person goes to war to be killed, we describe what will happen, not the intended purpose. It is not our place to scrutinize the end that God had in mind. However, two certain ends are evident:

requiring humans to fulfil their obligations and, by this means, bringing the elect to salvation.

XXII. He directs another criticism at us on page 286, stating, "Your doctrine contradicts the Evangelical threats. Since God's intention in presenting them is to drive people away from impenitence and towards salvation, your teaching, on the contrary, maintains that God withholds necessary means for repentance from some individuals because He has determined not to save them." First, we may question whether there are any Evangelical threats, as the warnings contained in the Gospel books do not constitute a part of the Gospel itself. Since the word "Euangelium" (Gospel) signifies a good message, it is unclear how threats can be a part of a good message. Those who do not believe the Gospel will be punished, not by the Gospel, but by the law. Nevertheless, even if such threats exist, I see nothing here that contradicts them. God intends to demand from humanity what is due, just as the law itself requires that God be obeyed. Denying grace and the restoration of the faculties that man lost through his own fault aligns well with the declaration of these warnings. There is no contradiction in offering life to an individual under the condition of obedience while not restoring the lost faculties of obedience that resulted from their own fault.

XXIII. Nor is there a contradiction in presenting life to someone under a condition while simultaneously appointing the same individual to death due to foreseen disobedience.

XXIV. Arnoldus, following Arminius on page 269, launches an attack against our opinion. He asserts, "Your opinion leads to the conclusion that public prayers cannot be offered to God as they ought to be—with faith and confidence that they will benefit all who hear the word—because according to your view, among those who hear, there are many whom God not only does not want to be saved but has also determined to condemn through His absolute, eternal, and unchangeable will that precedes all things and causes them. Yet the Apostle commands prayers to be made for all men and adds this

reasoning: because it is good and acceptable to God, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

XXV. In response, I must refute Arminius' false assumption that public prayers should be offered with the confidence that they will benefit all who hear the word. Such confidence would be reckless and not grounded in the word of God. Most ministers of the word have encountered many who are disobedient and openly profane. Moreover, they do not doubt that there are also many who appear pious but are secretly afflicted with inward vices. The parable of the seed sown in various types of soil, each with different dispositions and outcomes, should evoke more fear than confidence in this regard. Nevertheless, because we are unaware of the secrets of reprobation, we rightly pray for all, hoping for the best for everyone. I fail to see the relevance of this objection, except perhaps to distract the reader with a childish argument. Furthermore, Arminius himself cannot escape this objection since he, despite denying the precision of God's decree, acknowledges that God certainly foreknows who will be damned. To confess this is nothing less than to teach that God wants us to pray for those whom He knows our prayers will not benefit. However, Arminius' claim that we assert the decree of reprobation precedes all things and causes, even before sin itself, is in direct contradiction to our position. If such words have unintentionally slipped from anyone's mouth, they do not represent the beliefs of our churches. We defend what is truly ours but cannot be held responsible for the opinions of others.

XXVI. Concerning the passage from the Apostle where he says that God desires all men to be saved, I will address it in its proper context. In this context, "to will" means to invite and call. Additionally, when the Apostle speaks of "all men," he is referring to people of every rank and condition. This usage is similar to Titus 2:11, where the grace of Christ is said to bring salvation to all men, even though many still perish. In the former passage, the reference is to kings, while in the latter, it pertains to servants. Despite their dominion being contrary to Christ at the time, and their social status

being lowly, the Apostle does not discourage praying for them. This suggests that such individuals can partake in saving grace.

XXVII. Arminians may think they are clever when they argue as follows: If there is someone whose eyes have been gouged out for failing to keep watch diligently, is it just to command them to watch and guard in the future? And if they fail to do so, is it fair to impose severe punishments on them for not watching? I must respond that this example is irrelevant. They use the example of a blind person, who is not obligated to see. However, even though humans are corrupt and wicked, they are still obligated to obey God. If they fail to do so, they are justly punished. They also offer an example of someone whose eyes were forcibly removed, even though they resisted and did not consent. In contrast, humans willingly brought their own corruption upon themselves and chose to be evil. Therefore, they are justly punished.

Chapter 27

To what extent and in what sense Christ died for all: The positions of the parties.

I. The Arminians believe that through His death, Christ obtained forgiveness of sins, reconciliation, and salvation for all individuals. They do not hesitate to claim that the death of Christ secured reconciliation for figures like Pharaoh, Saul, Judas, and Pilate—not because they were reprobates but because they were sinners. According to their view, God equally intends and desires the salvation of all people. They assert that the reason remission and reconciliation are not applied to everyone is due to human unbelief.

However, Vorstius, the foremost defender of the Arminian position, wavers on this question and appears to be more inclined towards the opposite opinion. In page 56 of *Collat. cum Piscat.*, he states that Christ was delivered to death by God, not for the elect alone, but for all individuals, or at least for those who are called.

III. They believe that God did not intend to achieve a specific purpose by delivering His Son to death or that Christ was appointed to die by the precise will of God to save humanity. They argue that Christ was appointed to die by His Father before God contemplated the salvation of mankind. Thus, Christ was appointed to die without regard to the belief of those who would be saved. Greinchouius, on page 21, explicitly claims that although reconciliation was attained, there was no obligation to apply it. In other words, even after salvation and reconciliation had been secured for all people, there was no necessity for anyone to be saved. It was even possible that no one would be reconciled in practice. This is because he insists that the decree to send Christ preceded the decree to save those who would believe. Consequently, according to this view, God determined to send His Son when He had not yet determined to save those who would believe. The Arminians propose that God's purpose in sending His Son was to make salvation possible, opening a path by which He could save sinners without compromising His justice. They argue that this approach gave God the power to save humanity, as without Christ's death satisfying God's justice, He would not be willing to save men.

IV. Even if no one had believed in Christ, according to these individuals, Christ would still have achieved the purpose He set out to accomplish in His death. They reject the idea that He died specifically to save anyone but rather to make the salvation of humanity possible. He opened a gateway to salvation, which, with the help of grace, is left free for individuals to enter or not to enter.

V. Therefore, they distinguish between obtaining reconciliation and applying it. They argue that reconciliation and forgiveness of sins are

obtained for all, but they are applied only to those who believe. They claim that all individuals are granted the right to salvation through Christ, but not the actual experience of salvation. They contend that God has neither determined nor rejected the application of reconciliation (i.e., faith and salvation) for all; instead, He has determined that it will happen if they believe and are willing to receive grace.

VI. These individuals also deny that Christ, on the cross, represented the elect or died specifically for them because election had not yet occurred. They assert that election is something that comes after the death of Christ.

VII. They maintain that Christ offered Himself as a sacrifice for all individuals. However, concerning His intercession, they are not consistent in their position. At times, they suggest that Christ intercedes only for the faithful, implying that something can be obtained without intercession. At other times, they propose two types of intercession: one general and common to all and another particular, which is exclusive to the elect.

VIII. Our viewpoint significantly differs from this opinion. We acknowledge that Christ died for all, but we deny that His death secured salvation and forgiveness of sins for all individuals. We do not believe that reconciliation was made for individuals such as Cain, Pharaoh, Saul, Judas, and others. We also reject the notion that forgiveness of sins is obtained for anyone whose sins are not forgiven, or that salvation was purchased for those whom God has decreed to condemn from eternity. This would be an empty purchase. We do not accept the idea that election takes place after the death of Christ. Among other reasons, this is because, during the very agony of His death, Christ provided a notable example of election in the thief, whose heart He touched and enlightened in an indescribable manner, while the other thief was left and neglected. Additionally, as Christ repeatedly states that He died for His sheep

and for those whom His Father gave Him, He clearly indicates that His death was for the elect.

IX. When we say that Christ died for all, we mean that His death is sufficient to save anyone who believes, and that it is sufficient to save all individuals if everyone in the world believed in Him. We assert that the reason not all individuals are saved lies not in the insufficiency of Christ's death but in the wickedness and unbelief of humanity. In essence, Christ can be said to reconcile all individuals to God through His death in the same way we say that the sun illuminates the eyes of everyone, even though many are blind, asleep, or in darkness. This is because, if everyone had their eyes, were awake, and were in the midst of the light, the sun's light would be sufficient to illuminate them. It is beyond doubt that it can be said not only that Christ died for all individuals but also that all individuals are saved by Christ since no one is saved except through Him. This is similar to how the Apostle states in 1 Corinthians 15:20 that all individuals are made alive by Christ because no one is made alive without Him.

Chapter 28

That reconciliation, remission of sins, and salvation are not obtained or purchased for all individuals by the death of Christ.

I. First, anyone who claims that reconciliation is obtained for all individuals through the death of Christ, even when considering Pharaoh and Judas, not as reprobates, but simply as sinners, is essentially saying that reconciliation is obtained for those who have never believed and will never believe. Since it is neither fair nor just for reconciliation to be obtained for such individuals, using the death

of Christ to achieve something unjust and contrary to the justice of God is wrong.

II. It would require a willing suspension of disbelief to accept that reconciliation was obtained for Judas through the death of Christ, considering that Christ's death was, in fact, the very crime that led Judas to his downfall and eventual suicide.

III. Given that at the time of Christ's death, many individuals were already suffering in hell, it would be rather simplistic to believe that salvation or reconciliation was obtained for them through His death.

IV. Furthermore, this doctrine openly ridicules God. It suggests that Christ obtained something from His Father that He knew would never be of any benefit. It implies that God granted His Son the salvation of individuals whom He had decreed to condemn from eternity. If Christ indeed obtained reconciliation and forgiveness of sins for Pharaoh and Judas, whether regarded as reprobates or sinners, He certainly knew that obtaining it would not serve their good or benefit. Thus, Christ is depicted as asking His Father to extend grace to those whom He knew would never receive it, and whom He knew were destined for condemnation. Since Christ, both in His death and before it, possessed full knowledge of the secrets of election, these arguments made by these individuals appear to undermine the seriousness of Christian religion.

V. They also subject God to ridicule by suggesting that He both loves and hates the same person simultaneously. According to their view, God loves the individual because He gave His Son for them and desires reconciliation to be obtained, but He also hates them because He decreed their condemnation from eternity.

VI. If it is claimed that Christ obtained forgiveness of sins for Judas, then it follows that God granted this request to Christ and forgave Judas's sins. If this were true, it would imply that God nullifies His own actions, condemning Judas and punishing sins that were

already forgiven. This would mean that people could be punished for sins that had been pardoned, and Christ's testament, through which they argue salvation is purchased for all, would be rendered void.

VII. Not only is God mocked in this scenario, but He is also made to mock humanity. It is evident, based on historical practice and the experiences of all ages, that the Gospel is scarcely preached to every tenth person, and the name of Christ is unknown to the majority of the world. This occurs by the providence of God, as He dispenses it in a certain way. If reconciliation and salvation through Christ were indeed acquired for all people, why does God not proclaim this benefit throughout the entire world? Why does He allow reconciliation to remain unknown to the vast majority of humanity? Why does He withhold from so many people the grace that rightfully belongs to them and has been obtained for them? Without knowledge of this grace, no one can be saved. Their answer is that God does this because humans prove themselves unworthy of this grace. However, no one can truly be worthy of it or demonstrate their worthiness. It is common knowledge that the Gospel is preached to those who are most unworthy, and where sin has increased, grace has abounded. If God were hindered by human unworthiness from making reconciliation known, then that same unworthiness should have hindered the obtaining of reconciliation. For when reconciliation was obtained, God foreknew the unworthiness that would follow with the same certainty as if it were already present.

VIII. When they assert that Christ died for all with regard to the acquisition of salvation but not its application, they openly admit that Christ did not obtain that this reconciliation should be applied to all. Consequently, this acquisition of reconciliation becomes futile and even absurd. They are essentially saying that freedom was acquired for someone, but not that they should be freed, or that food was acquired for someone, but it was not ensured that they would be nourished by it.

IX. Since faith is the means by which the application of Christ's death is achieved, if Christ did not obtain for us the application of this reconciliation through His death, it would follow that He did not obtain faith for us either. Those who deny that faith is obtained for us are essentially denying that faith is solely a result of grace. They argue that it partly depends on free will, suggesting that individuals have the power to accept or reject grace and to believe or disbelieve.

X. Those who carefully consider the meaning of these words, "the obtaining of application" and "the application of the thing obtained," will find that they are mere fantasies or flights of fancy, unseasonable trifles with which they confuse people's minds. Christ obtains nothing that He does not apply, nor does He apply anything that He has not obtained. Otherwise, the acquisition of that benefit, known to both the one who obtains it and the one from whom it is obtained, would be in vain. It is not credible that the remission of a sin that will never be forgiven is procured.

XI. Moreover, these innovators speak as if they wanted something to be procured by the death of Christ, not for us, but for God. They claim that through Christ's death, God obtained the power to save us, but they deny that the application or conferment of salvation was obtained by Christ's death for Peter or Paul. Instead, they argue that only a gate and way were opened for them to reach salvation. Therefore, according to them, Christ, through His death, will be seen not as the giver but as the preparer of salvation. Arminius's opinion tends in the direction that Christ should be considered as not having obtained reconciliation for anyone but as having opened a way for God to bestow salvation.

XII. They also engage in trivialities when they acknowledge that the fruit of Christ's resurrection pertains only to the faithful, while extending the fruit of His death, namely reconciliation and remission of sins, to all individuals. Therefore, if we believe these men, there will be some people for whom the fruit of Christ's death applies, but the fruit of His resurrection does not. In other words, they are

suggesting that Christ died for some people for whom He did not overcome death, and that the benefits of His death are available to all but not the benefits of His victory. They propose that some individuals, although He offered Himself on Earth, are not offered salvation in heaven. However, Scripture treats these aspects as inseparable and indistinguishable: "It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is at the right hand of God, making intercession for us" (Romans 8:34). "That they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him that died for them, and rose again" (2 Corinthians 5:14). No one can partake in the benefits of Christ's death without also being affected by His resurrection.

XIII. It is of significant importance to note that if reconciliation were obtained for all humanity, then all infants born outside the covenant would be reconciled, and their sins forgiven. Consequently, it would follow that they could not receive a greater blessing than if someone were to, in an act of gentle cruelty, kill them in their cradles. If they were to die in this state of reconciliation, their salvation would be assured. However, if they were to live, they would be raised in paganism, which is the surest path to eternal damnation.

XIV. Since no one can be saved unless reconciliation has been obtained and applied to them, I fail to see how the obtaining of reconciliation differs from its application in the case of infants who die prematurely. According to the doctrine of Arminius, they are saved by reconciliation alone. Therefore, the distinction between obtaining reconciliation and applying it disappears here. This distinction may have some relevance among humans, but it cannot apply to God, who grants nothing that He does not actively give. Nothing is obtained from Him that He does not grant and confer in action. He foresees all things, and nothing can occur that would compel Him to revoke what He has granted, change His plan, or annul His actions.

XV. When these two actions are compared, namely, obtaining reconciliation for one's enemies so they may be saved, and bestowing salvation upon those who are already reconciled, it is undoubtedly a far greater act of love to die in order to reconcile one's enemies than to grant salvation to those who are already reconciled. The Apostle explicitly teaches this in Romans 5:10: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." If we believe Saint Paul, it is easier and more likely to save someone who is already reconciled than to reconcile an enemy by dying for them. Therefore, if we accept Arminius's view, it would be said that Christ, in dying for us, loved Pilate, Judas, Saul, and Pharaoh no less than Peter and John. However, it is inconceivable that Christ loved those with His greatest love whom His Father had eternally hated and whom the Son Himself knew were eternally appointed to punishment.

XVI. Indeed, since Christ, as one God with the Father, predestined the reprobate to damnation from eternity, it is unlikely, if not impossible, that the same Christ, as man and mediator, obtained reconciliation for Judas while reprobating the same man as God from eternity. Although these sectarians claim that the decree of reprobation is, in order, after the obtaining of reconciliation, neither of them precedes the other in time. Thus, it must be the case that the desire for reconciliation and the decree of reprobation coexisted in one and the same mind.

XVII. Christ's words in John 15:13 are noteworthy: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Christ means that friends cannot be loved more than by dying for them. Although it may be considered a greater love to die for one's enemies than for one's friends, nothing can be done for the sake of friends that would more clearly demonstrate love than dying for them. Therefore, as the greatest love is to die for someone, whether friend or enemy, it must be concluded that Christ loved all men with His greatest love. Consequently, if they wish to remain consistent

with themselves, they must affirm that Christ, in dying, loved Judas, Pilate, and even Cain and Pharaoh, who were already in hell.

XVIII. The delegates at The Hague attempt to free themselves by stating, "If loving in the highest degree means not only meriting salvation but also bestowing it, we deny that Christ generally loved all those in the highest degree for whom He died." In doing so, they condemn Christ and accuse Him of falsehood, for they argue against Christ's assertion that the greatest love is to die for someone. It is impossible for Christ to love anyone with the highest degree of love without also bestowing salvation upon them. Even if these two aspects could be separated, it would still hold true that Christ loved the one for whom He died with His greatest love, even if He did not subsequently grant salvation to them. The greatness of Christ's love should be measured not by the benefit received by the one for whom He died but by the intensity of the suffering He endured for them. Furthermore, anyone who carefully considers these matters will find that it is a greater act of love to suffer death to secure some small good for a friend than to do so to prevent their friend from perishing in a more horrific manner, such as being burned alive.

XIX. They do not escape criticism through the distinction between Antecedent and Consequent love because the Antecedent love they attribute to Judas and Pharaoh by Christ cannot be anything other than the greatest love, beyond which, as Christ Himself testifies, none can be extended. These are not two distinct loves—one to be willing to show mercy before faith and the other to be willing to save after faith. Instead, they are two effects of one and the same love.

XX. If Christ, through His death, served as the guarantee and price of redemption for individuals like Judas, Pharaoh, and Saul, it would imply an injustice on God's part. God would have exacted two punishments for the same sins when the initial satisfaction was sufficient. He would have passed judgment on the same matter twice: once when these individuals were considered dead in Christ, with Christ taking on their sins on the cross, and again when they

faced eternal damnation in their own persons. Consequently, it would follow that Christ bore the penalties due to Judas and Pharaoh in vain and acted as a futile pledge for them. For if Christ on the cross was the pledge and surety for all individuals and stepped into their place on the cross, then the statement of the Apostle in 2 Corinthians 5:14 would apply to all, without exception: "If one died for all, then were all dead." However, no one, to my knowledge, has dared to assert that the reprobates died with Christ or in Christ. The subsequent words of the Apostle indicate that he is not speaking of all people worldwide but specifically of those to whom the fruit of Christ's resurrection applies and who have become new creations.

XXI. The Apostle teaches that reconciliation is acquired solely for the elect in Romans 5:11: "We joy in God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom we have now received reconciliation." Did Saint Paul rejoice so greatly in a benefit that he shared with individuals like Herod and Pilate? In Romans 3:25, it is stated, "God hath set forth Christ to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood." Therefore, propitiation requires faith, and without faith, there is no acquisition of reconciliation. This reveals that God is appeased toward a sinner and propitiation occurs because Christ has obtained reconciliation for that individual.

XXII. In the same epistle, Romans 8:34, it is not merely stated that Christ died for the elect but that He died for them, from which the Apostle infers that no accusation can be brought against them: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: Who shall condemn? It is Christ that died, &c." From this passage, we can deduce the following argument: Those for whom Christ died cannot be condemned, and no charges can be brought against them. However, the reprobates are condemned, and accusations are made against them. Therefore, Christ did not die for them, at least in the sense I mentioned earlier, i.e., that Christ did not obtain reconciliation and salvation for them.

XXIII. Those for whom Christ obtained reconciliation and forgiveness of sins are the same for whom He prayed and interceded. However, He does not intercede or pray for the world but only for the faithful, as Christ Himself stated in John 17:9: "I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me." Undoubtedly, "the world" refers to those who do not believe, including those who have not received Christ's grace, among whom are obstinate individuals. Christ affirms that He does not pray for these individuals. Now, all people are naturally in this category, being devoid not only of faith but also of the capacity to believe. Yet, among them, God gives certain individuals to Christ and grants them faith in Christ. It is only for these that Christ explicitly states that He intercedes with His Father.

XXIV. The sectarians employ a clever but unnecessary distinction here, creating a dual intercession: one general, in which Christ intercedes for all, and another particular, in which He only intercedes for the faithful. In the first, reconciliation of sins is obtained, and in the second, the application of reconciliation and salvation. However, this general intercession appears superfluous. Requesting reconciliation without the application of salvation is futile. In this general intercession, Christ either asked for salvation for Judas and Pilate or did not. If He did not, His intercession was in vain. If He did, then He suffered rejection, rendering His intercession futile. Christ Himself claimed in John 11:42 that His Father always heard Him. Perhaps, they claim Christ asked for the application of salvation for all on the condition that they believe, with the expectation that they will believe. If this is the case, then Christ did not intercede for all. Anything asked with a condition is not requested if you remove the condition. Therefore, Christ restricts His mission into the world, and consequently, His intercession, to believers alone, as evident in John 3:13. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." This illustrates that not only the application of the Son's gift but also the gift itself belongs solely to believers.

XXV. It is essential to understand what the specific intercession is, which, according to these sectarians, Christ makes for the faithful in John 17, and what He is requesting through it. He says, "Father, keep them," and a bit later, "I pray thee that thou wouldest keep them from the evil." If this intercession is reserved for the faithful, it seems there is no purpose for the general intercession, as these requests are crucial to all intercession. In the Lord's Prayer, both forgiveness of sins and deliverance from evil are requested together. Who would accept such a bold distortion where Arminians separate these aspects, claiming Christ secures forgiveness of sins for all but not deliverance from evil?

XXVI. If Christ prays for all, He must also pray for those who commit the sin unto death, a prayer that Saint John, in 1 John 5:16, advises against.

XXVII. Moreover, the Arminians are inconsistent here. While they argue that Christ intercedes with a particular intercession for the faithful and those given by the Father to the Son, they also believe that the faithful and godly can fall from faith and be condemned. This implies that Christ, by their doctrine, intercedes for many reprobates through a particular intercession, as many of the faithful could be reprobates.

XXVIII. Arminius, in his response to Perkins, presents several arguments. I am unsure if his followers would agree with these points. Firstly, he suggests that Christ sacrificed Himself for many for whom He does not intercede because His sacrifice preceded His intercession. He separates Christ's sacrifice as an act of merit from His intercession as the application of that merit. These arguments seem not only contrary to truth but also to common sense. Anyone preparing to be a purifying sacrifice for another necessarily prays that the sacrifice they are offering will be acceptable on behalf of the intended recipient. Likewise, anyone offering a ransom for redemption would first request that the ransom be accepted, as

Chryses does in Homer when he says, "Release to me my loving daughter, and accept the gifts."

See, in the first place, His prayers, and then the offering of the price: Therefore, intercession necessarily precedes the sacrifice. Arminius adds, "It is true indeed that Christ, in the days of His flesh, offered up prayers and tears to God the Father; but those prayers were not made for the obtaining of those good things He merited for us (that is, for the obtaining of salvation), but for the assistance of the Spirit, that He might stand in the combat." This is an impious and wicked opinion, for it denies that Christ prayed for our salvation before He died. Yet, in John 17, He prays before His death: "Keep them in Thy name. And, Father, I desire that those whom Thou hast given me may be with me, that they may see the glory which Thou hast given me." Arminius himself appears to be ashamed of this false doctrine, for he adds a doubtful correction, saying, "But if He did then offer prayers for the obtaining of this application, they did depend on His sacrifice that was to be finished, as if it were finished." The use of "But if" is the language of doubt, even though the matter is most certain. However, this does not contradict Perkins, who states that Christ does not sacrifice Himself for those for whom He does not pray. These arguments presented by Arminius are irrelevant and do not address the main issue. Even though Christ's prayers for our salvation before His death were based on the merit of His forthcoming death, it remains true, as Perkins asserts, that Christ does not sacrifice Himself for those for whom He does not pray. The death of Christ would not have been a sacrifice unless He had prayed for it to be accepted by the Father for the lives of those for whom He died. Grief and torment, in their own nature, do not constitute a sacrifice; a petition is necessary.

XXIX. I do not deny that Christ, in His death, prayed for those who crucified Him. However, I deny that He prayed for all without exception, but only for those who did it out of ignorance. As He said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:24). These individuals, as Saint Luke testifies, were later converted to the

faith in Acts 2 and Acts 3:17. Did Christ express this with human affection rather than as the Redeemer? As a man, He might have wished well for those whom, as God, He knew were reprobates. He wept over the inhabitants of Jerusalem, even though, as God, He had decreed their fall and rejection.

XXX. When the sectaries deny that Christ, on the cross, represented the elect, they openly oppose Christ's own words. He said in John 10:11, "I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." Also in John 15:13, "Greater love than this hath no man, that a man lay down his life for his friends." In Ephesians 5:25, it is stated, "Christ loved the church and gave himself for it." Therefore, Christ died for His sheep, His friends, His Church, which are none other than the faithful and elect. Can Pharaoh, Judas, and others be called Christ's sheep in any sense? The Arminians argue that they are called sheep not in regard to their present condition but to their future condition. This is a futile argument. The future condition was already present in God's decree, by which they are called sheep even before their conversion (John 10:16). They are called sheep not only because they would gather themselves to the fold of Christ but because God, in His eternal counsel, decreed to give them the faith by which they would gather themselves to Christ's fold. If they were not given to Christ until they joined themselves to Him through faith, they would have given themselves to Christ before God had given them to Christ.

XXXI. In the meantime, it is worth noting the inconsistency of these sectaries. They assert that God chose those who believe, which we do not deny, as long as believers are understood to be those who will believe by God's gift and those to whom God has decreed to give faith. We argue that faith is considered as something to be accomplished, not as something already present or accomplished. When we speak of election, we say that believers are chosen not based on their current condition but on their future condition. This, although in line with reason and the word of God, is rejected by these sectaries as absurd. However, a little later, they employ the same

argument and concede to our position. They assert that the statement, "I give my life for my sheep," should be understood not in terms of the present condition but the future, and that they are called sheep because they will gather themselves to Christ's fold. Therefore, there is no reason for them to be so troubled when we say that believers are elected not based on their present or past condition but on their future condition, by considering the faith through which, by God's gift, they will attain salvation. What pleases them when they say it themselves should not displease them when we use the same argument. Especially since the Scripture never explicitly states that believers are elected, but it clearly states that Christ died for His sheep and for the Church.

XXXII. For these reasons, the Holy Scriptures, while sometimes stating that Christ died for all in the sense I have mentioned, often qualify and restrict that general statement, affirming that the blood of Christ was shed for many (Matthew 26:28) and that the Son of Man came to give His life as a redemption for many. It is also stated that He was offered once for the sins of many (Hebrews 9:28).

XXXIII. If you trace the matter back to the beginning and the covenant God made with Adam, you will find that this covenant applies only to those whose heel the Serpent bruises and lightly wounds. Therefore, it pertains only to the faithful and the elect. For the rest, the Serpent infects them with his poison, kills them with his bite, and delivers them a deadly wound.

XXXIV. If Christ, by His death, secured reconciliation for Cain, Pharaoh, Judas, and others, it would imply that Christ redeemed them. However, He has not redeemed them because they remain captive forever. It is not credible that Christ would pay the price of redemption for those He knew would never be set free. It is also unlikely that Satan could take away the souls redeemed by Christ at such a great cost.

XXXV. Saint Paul, in 2 Corinthians 5:20, states that God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself. If "the world" is understood to mean all individuals without exception, it would imply that not only was reconciliation obtained for every person, but also that they are actually reconciled. This would suggest that even Judas and Pharaoh were once counted among God's friends, a claim that even Arminius himself would not dare to make.

XXXVI. Lastly, if Christ has obtained reconciliation for all people, even those outside the covenant, then no one would be born outside of Christ's covenant. This would contradict what Saint Paul says in Ephesians 2:3, where he describes the condition in which we are born, stating that by nature, we are children of wrath, meaning born subject to the curse. How could anyone be born subject to the curse if reconciliation with God is obtained for all people without exception?

Chapter 29

The objections of the Arminians are countered, in which they attempt to assert and confirm the attainment of salvation for all individuals.

The Arminians put forward numerous objections to these arguments, but they do not succeed. First, they cite various passages from Scripture and then provide other reasons to support their position.

I. They cite the passage from Saint John, Chapter 3, Verse 16, where it is said that God loved the world so much that He gave His Son. We have already explained that this passage undermines Arminius' position, as the subsequent words restrict the sending of the Son to believers alone. Therefore, it is evident that Christ was sent to save only those who would believe. One could even argue that "the world"

here refers to the faithful alone, as seen in John 6:33, 1 Timothy 3:16, and Hebrews 2:5. However, even if we grant that "the world" includes all of humanity, it does not logically follow that Christ purchased salvation for all individuals, as the fact that some are saved abundantly demonstrates God's love for humanity.

II. It is worthwhile to understand the interpretation that the Arminians apply to Christ and the meaning they assign to Christ's words: "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." According to Arminius' doctrine, this passage must be understood as follows: God loved all of humanity with a love that did not include the intention to save them. He first decided to send His Son, not with the purpose of saving humanity, but to acquire the ability to save them. Later, He determined to grant every person the ability to believe if they choose, so they may attain eternal life. This doctrine is monstrous and presents a new Gospel.

III. They also challenge us with the words of Saint John, 1 Epistle, Chapter 2, Verse 2, where Christ is referred to as the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. They also point to the first chapter of Saint John, where He is called the Lamb who takes away the sins of the world. However, these citations do not support their position. These statements are made because, in the entire world, no one's sins are forgiven except through Christ. It is in the same sense that Saint Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15:22, "In Christ all men are made alive," because no one is made alive except through Him. Similarly, if someone were to say that Hippocrates taught all of Greece and Italy the art of medicine, it would not mean that every single individual in Greece and Italy learned medicine from him, but rather that no one learned medicine except from him. Therefore, it is clear that Christ has not taken away the sins of every individual because many people remain in sin and are condemned for their sins.

IV. They boast about the passage from 1 Timothy 2:4, where it is stated that God desires all men to be saved and come to the

knowledge of the truth. They also cite verse 6, "Christ gave himself a ransom for all," and a similar passage in Titus 2. However, in these verses, the context and content of the passages show that "all" refers to any men of any state or condition. In the passage to Timothy, the Apostle instructs prayers to be made for kings, and in the passage to Titus, he commands servants to be faithful and not steal. The reason for this exhortation is that the promise of salvation applies to kings even though they were estranged from Christ at that time, and to servants, even though they held a lowly status. No condition of men is excluded from salvation. Saint Augustine interprets the passage from 1 Timothy in this manner in his *Enchiridion to Laurentius*, Chapter 103, and Thomas in his commentary on this Epistle. This interpretation is confirmed by the Apostle's own words, as he says, "God desires all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth." However, it is evident from experience that God does not grant, and indeed, does not even offer, the knowledge of the truth to all individuals.

V. It is common in Scripture to use the word "all" to mean "any," as seen in Luke 12:42, "Ye tithe Mint and Rue, & omneolus, and all manner of herbs," and Matthew 9:35, where Christ healed "omnem morbum," meaning every disease or every kind of disease. A similar example is found in Colossians 1:28. In this sense, Hebrews 2 states that Christ died for all.

VI. Moreover, there is no doubt that the Apostle instructs us to pray not only for kings in general but for all individual kings. We, who are unaware of the secrets of election, ought to hold hope for everyone. However, commanding us to pray for Nero does not imply that God will necessarily save Nero, but it simply prohibits us from despairing of him.

VII. Therefore, the meaning of the words "God desires all men to be saved" is as follows: God invites individuals of all kinds to salvation and does not exclude any group from salvation. If God absolutely willed or earnestly desired the salvation of each and every individual,

He would have the means to accomplish His desire without infringing upon His justice or human liberty.

VIII. The passage they bring from Romans 14:15 does not serve their argument. "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died" does not mean to condemn but to cause stumbling and offence to someone's conscience. By such actions, we would lead them toward spiritual destruction, but it is not within our power to absolutely destroy anyone. As in 2 Corinthians 10:8, to destroy is equivalent to causing offense and hindering one in their acts of piety.

IX. In the second Epistle of Peter, Chapter 2, Verse 1, Christ is said to have redeemed false prophets who denied Him. However, this redemption does not refer to deliverance from eternal death but to freedom from ignorance, error, and the darkness of their time through the light of the Gospel. These false prophets corrupted the Gospel with false doctrines. Redemption, in the Scriptures, is often used to denote various forms of freedom. For instance, resurrection is referred to as the redemption of our bodies in Romans 8:22 and Ephesians 4:30.

X. In the same Epistle, in Chapter 3, Verse 9, Peter states, "God is not willing that any should perish." This means that God is not the cause of anyone's perishing, and He accepts all who turn to Him. However, God is not obligated to restore all the faculties lost due to human fault or grant faith to everyone, as we have extensively demonstrated in Chapter 11.

XI. In Ezekiel 18:23, God says, "I am not delighted with the death of a sinner, but that he should be converted and live." These words simply mean that God does not desire the death of a sinner who repents. However, if the sinner remains unrepentant, even Arminius would not deny that God wills their death, just as a judge wills the punishment of the guilty. God is not pleased with the death of a sinner in His capacity as a compassionate being, but no one can deny that God loves the execution of His justice.

XII. Indeed, in 1 Timothy 4:10, God is referred to as the "savior of all men." However, the Apostle is speaking of the preservation of life in this present world and God's providence, which extends to the preservation of all people. This care of God, as seen in Psalm 36, even extends to animals, where God is called the preserver of both humans and beasts. The preceding words of the Apostle clarify this context, stating, "We hope in the living God," as he speaks of God granting life to His creations. A similar passage can be found in Acts 17:25.

XIII. Arminius, in page 220 of his argument against Perkins, brings up the promise made to Adam concerning the seed of the woman, claiming that it pertains to all individual men. I respond that this promise only guarantees the defeat of Satan by the seed of the woman, but it is never stated that it pertains to every single individual. The Gospel doctrine preached to Adam does not apply to all his descendants in the same way as the precepts of natural law, because obedience to the law is a natural obligation, whereas the Gospel doctrine is a supernatural remedy. Thus, Adam's sin against God's law is imputed to all his descendants, but his faith in the Gospel is not imputed to them. Furthermore, if Adam, through his unbelief, had rejected the promise of the seed of the woman, this would not have caused his descendants to lose hope of salvation. It is evident that this promise regarding the seed of the woman crushing the serpent's head is specifically intended for the faithful. Satan only bruises the heel of the children of God, while he fatally wounds the rest.

XIV. The Arminians, having no ground in Holy Scripture, resort to their reasoning. Just as they use Scripture without reason, they employ reason without Scripture. They hurl this syllogism at us as though it were a mighty weapon, but it is nothing more than a feeble twig:

1. Whatsoever all men are bound to believe is true.

2. All men are bound to believe that Christ died for them; therefore, that is true.

The minor premise of this syllogism is false and admits many exceptions. Those to whom Christ has not been preached and who have not heard of Christ's death are not obligated to believe that Christ died for them. This applies to the majority of the world. Even for those to whom Christ is preached, they are not bound to believe unconditionally that Christ died for them but only on the condition of their conversion. If they persist in impenitence, they are bound to believe that Christ's death has no relevance to them.

XV. Arminius, in his argument against Perkins and his followers, repeats these points excessively. He says that if there are individuals for whose sins God did not desire satisfaction to be made through Christ's death, then faith cannot be rightly required of them. In this case, Christ cannot be their judge, and the reprobate cannot be blamed for rejecting the grace of redemption since it did not pertain to them. I respond that all these arguments are based on the false assumption that faith is required of all people. We have already explained that faith is not required of those who never had the means to know Christ. Furthermore, those to whom Christ is preached are not obliged to believe unconditionally that they are redeemed by Christ's death but only on the condition of their conversion.

Those to whom the Gospel has not been preached will not be condemned for rejecting the Gospel but for breaking the Law. Christ, appointed by His Father, is the Judge of this, leaving those whom He does not save through the Gospel under the Law. Those who, through their unbelief, have rejected the grace offered to them through the Gospel are justly condemned, not because they have rejected what pertains to unbelievers and the impenitent, but because they have despised the condition that was offered to them, which, although they cannot fulfill by their natural abilities, remains their obligation. Man's own fault brought about the disability to believe, and God is not obligated to remedy this in all. We have

discussed this extensively in Chapter 11. They argue, "Reprobates cannot be blamed for despising the grace that does not belong to them," but this is incorrect. Reprobates reject it because they do not love Christ, and their own will leads them to despise it. Reprobates do not believe because salvation does not belong to them; rather, salvation does not belong to them because they do not believe. Their own unbelief and impenitence bring about their own destruction. While reprobation is indeed the reason why God does not grant faith and repentance to a particular person, it is not the cause of instilling unbelief and impenitence in that person. Therefore, when Christ says in John 10:16, "Ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep," it should be understood that God does not grant you faith, which is unique to the elect, because you are not chosen.

XVI. This is the objection from Greunchouius, page 19: "If election precedes the obtaining of salvation, then God first decreed the communication of salvation before He decreed its obtaining." I not only find this unabsurd but believe it is entirely necessary. It is always necessary to consider the end before the means to achieve it. The salvation of humanity was God's ultimate purpose, as evidenced by the fact that it is the final result. Thus, God first intended to grant salvation before considering how to obtain it through Christ, as this is the means by which He leads us to salvation.

XVII. The same individual, on page 87, argues as follows: "They to whom this price (suitable for their salvation) is offered, and if they themselves embrace it, it is paid for them by the purpose of God. But it is offered to Reprobates on the condition that they embrace it; therefore, it is also paid for them by the purpose of God." I respond that the minor premise is not universally true because this price is not offered to all Reprobates. The major premise violates the rules of presupposition, which require that the subject of every axiom or sentence exists. For example, the statement "Whosoever fulfils the law is saved" is not false, but its falsehood lies in the presupposition that some individuals fulfill the Law. The major premise of this syllogism has a similar problem. Its subject is imaginary and non-

existent: "They to whom this price is offered to embrace it if they will." I deny the existence of such individuals because this price is not offered to Reprobates on the condition that they embrace it. It is certain that they will not and cannot choose to embrace it due to their inherent inability to do so. Man himself is the cause of this disability. This price is also not offered to the Elect on the condition that they embrace it because, in offering this price, God works within them so that they will embrace it.

XVIII. When they discuss the sufficiency of Christ's death, just as they extol its efficacy, they claim that it is sufficient not only for humans but also for demons. If this were true, it would imply that God subtracts something from the value of Christ's death and diminishes its efficacy. While I acknowledge that the value and dignity of Christ's death depend on His divine nature's infinite excellence rather than His human nature, I reject the idea that His death is suitable for the redemption of demons. This is because God's justice requires that man, who sinned, bears the punishment. It was necessary for the Mediator between God and man to have a connection to both through His nature. Thus, to save man, Christ did not take on the nature of angels but the seed of Abraham, as stated in Hebrews 2. If a man's death were suitable for atoning for the sins of angels, then the torments of an angel, if Christ had assumed the nature of angels, would be suitable for atoning for the sins of man. Ultimately, when we discuss suitability, we must not confuse it with sufficiency. Otherwise, we could argue whether Christ's death is sufficient to save horses or beetles and grant them immortality, which would be impious.

XIX. These innovators defend themselves by distorting our position rather than refuting it. They change our position before attacking it, making it impossible for them to refute our true beliefs. For example, in John 3:17, Christ states, "God sent not his son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." Greinchouius, on page 21, claims that we interpret this passage as follows: "God sent his Son into the Elect." However, it is clear from

the context that "the world" refers to this region of the earth and Christ's presence among humans. He freely attributes many such things to us, distorting our views. Here is another example from page 76, where he makes us say, "Ye Reprobates, why do you cease? Having received such a suitable price of redemption, if you believe or break through a rock, you may go straight to the kingdom of heaven from here." And a little later, "He has also given you, namely, the Reprobates, His calling, even though you are destined for eternal punishments, not because of any fault of your own, but so that, being more blinded and stupefied, you might bring upon yourselves a greater judgment." His language is meant to be entertaining and inflammatory, but it deviates from our actual beliefs. We do not instruct Reprobates, those who persist in unbelief and impenitence, to believe a lie or to delude themselves with false hopes under the guise of faith in Christ. Nor do we claim that they are predestined for eternal punishment without any fault of their own, as they have brought this punishment upon themselves through their own sins. We also do not teach that anyone is solely called by God to bring about their own greater judgment, although being called often makes people inexcusable because knowledge of their duty increases the fault of neglecting that duty. The purpose of God's calling to Reprobates is to demand from them what they owe; for the Elect, it is to provide the efficacy of their calling for their salvation. In both cases, God's intention is to reveal what is acceptable to Him and what obedience pleases Him.

XX. However, Greinchouius should not be let off lightly. It is fitting to expose these matters and unveil the astonishing doctrine of the Arminians without any false accusations. Assuming the persona of an Arminian, I may address the Reprobates in this manner:

"Take heart, you Reprobates, for even though you are Reprobates, you may still be saved. It is true that no Reprobates are saved, but there is none among you who may not be saved. Christ has obtained salvation for you, though not the application of salvation. He has secured good things for you, but He has not secured that you shall

ever possess these good things in reality. He has obtained reconciliation, which, at the very moment He procured it, He certainly knew would not benefit you. He has secured the forgiveness of sins that He certainly knew would not be forgiven. For this reconciliation is not applied except on a condition He knew would not be fulfilled. To show you how much Christ desires your well-being, I tell you that He intercedes for you with a general intercession, though not with a specific one, without which no one is saved. Through Christ's death, reconciliation is obtained for you, but not the communication of that reconciliation. The application of the obtained reconciliation is not procured for you, but by it, God has gained the freedom and ability to save you. Through His death, Christ is made a Redeemer without any certain purpose from God regarding who would be redeemed. He is made the head of the Church without any certain members. God, in sending His Son into the world, was inclined and affectionate towards humanity, but without any definite intention to save them. The decree to send His Son preceded the decree of salvation. By that decree, all are elected, though many were reprobated from eternity. God indeed desired to save all earnestly, but He is disappointed by you, and He has not achieved what He desired, which greatly troubles Him. Know this, O Reprobates, Christ procured and purchased salvation for you all, but He does not will it to be known by everyone, although without this knowledge, no one can be saved. While He obtained reconciliation for you, He did not obtain faith, without which there is no salvation. Therefore, God calls you to salvation, but not in a fitting and agreeable manner, which many of the called do not heed. Nevertheless, do not lose hope, for God has given you all the power to believe so that you may believe in action if you choose. It is within the power of your own free will to use grace or not, that you may be saved, even though you are certainly to be damned."

This is kindly spoken—or rather, wickedly spoken, and a mockery of God and humanity. Who does not shudder at the shape of such an astonishing doctrine? Who does not grieve for the state of the Christian Church, which some have deformed and turned into a

monstrous entity through their subtle arguments? Therefore, when Greinchouius, on page 70, claims to be ready to assist our weakness and ignorance, it is uncertain whether he deserves more laughter or pity.

Chapter 30

That it was long ago disputed whether Christ died for all, but in a far diverse sense.

Saint Augustine, having passed away, left behind his writings on Predestination, Grace, and Free Will, which were variously received by different individuals. This conflict particularly afflicted Aquitaine. Out of these disputes emerged the heresy of a group known as the Predestinati, as mentioned by Sigebert in his Chronicle up to the year 415. They taught that the efforts of good works were of no benefit to a reprobate person. Conversely, they argued that wicked deeds did not harm an elected person, even if they indulged in lust, gluttony, and robbery.

Lucidus, a priest in Aquitaine, was influenced by this error. An epistle from Faustus, Bishop of Riez in Aquitaine, addressed to Lucidus, still exists, bearing the signatures of eleven bishops from the Council of Arles. In this letter, an anathema was pronounced against those who claimed that Christ did not die for all and against those who asserted that God did not will the salvation of all men. The Arelate Synod rightly judged that Faustus spoke in accordance with the Catholic faith. The synod believed that Faustus aimed this statement against Pelagius, who denied original sin and believed that a person could perfectly fulfil the law through their free will. Thus, it is no wonder that he said Christ did not die for all, as he questioned

why Christ should die for those who were not sinners. In his view, why would there be a need for medicine where there was no disease? Why would the Gospel be necessary for one who had fulfilled the law?

However, Faustus, a cunning and crafty man, presented his views to the Arelate Synod with ambiguous and deceptive language in the epistle he submitted. Later, he clarified his position in his book "De gratia qua saluamur," which leaned more towards the teachings of Pelagius. Gennadius and Sidonius Apollinaris mentioned this book in a way that seemed to view it favourably. At the same time, Caesarius, Bishop of Arles, and Avitus, Bishop of Vienna, wrote against Faustus's book, as attested by Ado in his Chronicle. Fulgentius, Bishop of Ruspe in Africa, also joined in this opposition. Therefore, we can conclude that Faustus's authority should not be held in high esteem here.

Furthermore, the question was never previously discussed in the sense it is today. As far as I am aware, there was never any debate in earlier times about whether Christ, through His death, purchased salvation for all individuals, including Pharaoh and Peter, or whether His death merely obtained reconciliation.

Chapter 31

Whether God loves all men equally, and desires the salvation of all.

I. The question in which it is asked whether God equally loves all men and desires their salvation is an extension of the previous question and depends on it. For if forgiveness of sins and salvation are not procured for all men through the death of Christ, it is evident that not all men are equally loved by God. Consequently, these

innovators defend their positions in both questions using the same passages of Scripture. Arnoldus states, "In a general will and affection, God equally desires the salvation of all men." Greinchouius agrees with this, saying, "The will of God and His desire to save men are equal for all. In the series of four decrees encompassing the entire doctrine of Predestination, this is the third: God decreed to provide all men with sufficient means for faith and repentance."

However, I suspect that they affirm these statements not because they truly believe and sincerely hold these views, but rather to support their other opinions, which cannot be upheld if this viewpoint is rejected. They openly contradict Scripture, experience, and even themselves.

II. Before we demonstrate this, it is important to note that love in God is not an emotion, passion, inclination of the mind, or desire. God is not moved by such emotions, as He is impassible and not subject to human affections. Instead, in God, love is a certain and unwavering will to do good to His creatures. Consequently, a person can rightly be said to be loved by God when God has given or decreed to give more and better blessings to that individual.

III. This distinction is not only evident between the good and the evil but also among good individuals themselves. God has given one person more understanding and distributed His Spirit in a larger measure, while to another, He has been more sparing, as if with a measured portion. He gives two talents to one and five to another, all according to His own good pleasure. God not only provides many blessings to the best individuals but also makes them even better as He bestows more upon them.

IV. I cannot help but wonder with what audacity Greinchouius, on page 335, dares to claim that God gave five talents to one in the hope of receiving more gain from him than the other, as if hope, fear, or gain could be applied to God. Or as if the one who carefully increased

his estate by using the five talents for usury did not receive from God the will and power to employ them so profitably. It is improper to say that God hopes for that which He Himself will accomplish. These clever individuals are inclined to say, when pressed, that these things are spoken anthropomorphically for the understanding of humans. Nevertheless, they misuse these inappropriate words to introduce their own speculations and reinforce their own opinions. Such impropriety in speech may be tolerated when preaching and addressing the general public, but it should not be allowed in the context of scholarly debate and when the importance of truth is at stake.

V. Concerning this inequality in God's gifts, I challenge the Arminians to explain why God gave more gifts to Paul than to Mark or Cleophas, who were equally righteous and good men. Was it because Saint Paul, before his conversion, was more inclined toward the faith of Christ and had better intentions than they did? Or because Paul made better use of the common and general grace, which also extends to the reprobate, than Mark did? These are trivial explanations, for there was no greater enemy to the name of Christ than Paul prior to his conversion. So, what was the reason? It was simply because it pleased God, who does as He wills with His own and distributes the gifts of the Holy Spirit not according to any arithmetical or geometrical proportion but according to His own pleasure, as He is beholden to no one and not subject to any law.

VI. The difference and inequality in God's love become even clearer when we compare those whom God calls through His Word and to whom He grants the spirit of adoption, faith, and salvation with other individuals. As Christ states in Matthew 22:14, "Many are called, but few are chosen." Here we have three categories of people: those who are not called, those who are called but not chosen, and those who are called and chosen. It is impossible to assert or even think that they are all equally and indiscriminately loved by God and that God equally desires their salvation.

VII. In John 6:44, Christ declares, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him." This drawing refers to drawing toward faith and, through faith, toward salvation, a point on which there is no doubt. Since it is evident from these words that not all are drawn in this way, it follows that those who are so drawn are more loved. Faith is a gift from God, but not all possess it, and it is granted only to a few. Therefore, these few are more loved. Likewise, the spirit of adoption is a privilege of God's children; thus, these children are also more loved.

VIII. Does not God visit certain people from on high and grant them the preaching of His Word, while others are neglected? As Saint Paul teaches in Acts 14:16, "In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways." Even today, there are numerous nations plunged into deep darkness, where not even the report or name of Christ has reached.

IX. Were the Corinthians and Philippians, who lived before the time of the Apostles, as beloved by God as their descendants, who were converted to the faith through the preaching of Saint Paul? Can it be claimed that God desired the salvation of the former as much as He did for the latter?

X. Why should I mention the people of Tyre and Sidon? If Christ had wished for their salvation as much as He did for the Jews, it would be puzzling why He did not make the Gospel known to them, especially when He testified that they were more inclined to repentance than the men of Capernaum.

XI. In Acts 16:6-7, when Paul attempted to preach the Gospel in Asia and Bithynia, the Spirit of God prevented him and instructed him to go to Macedonia. It is evident that God did not equally will the salvation of the Bithynians and the Macedonians since He preferred the Gospel to be preached to the latter rather than the former, providing the necessary means of salvation to the Macedonians while denying it to the Bithynians. I acknowledge that the Gospel

eventually reached Bithynia after some years, but during that time, many in Bithynia perished without the means to come to knowledge of Christ. It is beyond belief that God desired their salvation as much as He did for the Macedonians, to whom He urgently directed Paul. This is akin to suggesting that a physician equally desires the recovery of two patients suffering from the same illness but provides medicine for one and neglects the other.

XII. When Jesus says in John 10:16 that He has other sheep whom He has not yet gathered, did He love those sheep, who were yet to be gathered in His time, no more than other individuals whom He not only did not draw through His word but did not even deign to call? Surely, if God equally desired the salvation of all, He would provide the means of salvation equally to all. He would not merely offer many people a faint glimmer of light and means that even the Arminians themselves have not dared to claim lead anyone to salvation.

XIII. A noteworthy passage from Christ in Matthew 11:25 is when He gives thanks to His Father for having hidden the doctrine of salvation from the wise and revealed it to babes. But why did He give thanks? Did He love those from whom He concealed the doctrine of salvation as much as those to whom He revealed it? Arnold, on pages 413 and 414, distorts the words of Christ. He insists that Christ gave thanks because His Father had revealed those things to babes that were hidden from the wise. However, Christ explicitly states that God concealed these things from the wise.

XIV. The passage from Saint Paul in Romans 9 troubles the Sectaries, where it is stated that God loved Jacob and hated Esau before they had done good or evil. Thus, God Himself declares that He does not equally love individuals who are naturally equal, with neither being better than the other. This distinction is not based on any good or evil deeds but solely on God's sovereign will, by which He has mercy on whomever He chooses. Although Malachi states that Jacob's dominion over his brother is an effect of this love and

hatred, the Apostle, being privy to the mind and purpose of God, interprets this as an example or type of election according to God's purpose, extending God's words to the work of our salvation. There is no need for further elaboration on such a clear matter.

XV. The Arminians shield themselves from this barrage of arguments with their distinction between the antecedent and consequent will of God. They argue that God loves some individuals more than others through His consequent will, which is based on their faith and repentance. According to this view, God loves those the most whom He foresees will believe and use grace well through their free will. However, through His primary and antecedent will, God equally loves all individuals and desires the salvation of all to the same extent. Therefore, He provides all individuals with sufficient grace for faith and, consequently, for salvation. They argue that the reason the Gospel is not preached to all is not God's will but either the negligence of Christians, the unworthiness of the people, or the sins of their ancestors who rejected offered grace.

XVI. This is undeniably a dangerous statement and is diametrically opposed not only to Scripture but also to itself. While they present reasons for why God does not offer His Gospel to all, they inadvertently concede to our viewpoint. They outline the causes of why God does not equally love all. However, the question is not why God loves some more than others, but whether God loves all individuals equally. Therefore, they become ensnared in their own argument. We have elaborated extensively on how absurd this distinction between the will of God into antecedent and consequent is, and how disrespectful it is towards God, as taken by the sectaries, in Chapter 5.

XVII. Furthermore, they teach that God is often disappointed by His antecedent will, and that the love of God towards us is mutable if He loves us with His consequent will, which is based on our love, faith, and will. It is wicked to desire that the immutability of God's love towards us should depend on our love and will. The love of God

cannot be certain if it is founded on our initial love for Him. Therefore, for the love of God towards us to be certain and immutable, it must precede our love, as Saint John teaches: "We love Him, because He loved us first" (1 John 4:19).

XVIII. If God loved one person more than another based on His consequent will because He foresaw that person would believe and use grace well, then God would not separate man; man would separate himself. This goes against what Saint Paul says in 1 Corinthians 4:7: "Who separates you?" And this individual would be loved more by God than another because he loved God more.

XIX. Then the Apostle's statement in Romans 9 would fail: "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." If man's will precedes God's will, whereby He will certainly and immutably have mercy on us, then this statement would be invalid. For the Arminians teach that God's antecedent will can be resisted, but His consequent will cannot. Therefore, they must claim that the Apostle is speaking of God's consequent will and the love by which God loves us through His consequent will, which is based on man's will. They are ensnared in a dilemma from which they will never extricate themselves. If they argue that the Apostle in this passage speaks of God's antecedent will, which can be resisted, then they contradict what is said there, "Who hath resisted His will?" But if they claim it is spoken of God's consequent will, which is based on man's will and the right use of grace, they are refuted by another statement from the Apostle: "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." Saint Paul directly teaches here that man's will and foresight of the right use of grace and faith, which God's will to have mercy should follow, are excluded by this unresistable will of God.

XX. Let the Arminians explain why God loved Jacob and hated Esau before they had done any good or evil. Surely, Jacob was not preferred over Esau due to God's consequent will, which followed Jacob's faith or works, since Saint Paul explicitly removes from the

election according to God's purpose any consideration of the good they had done or would do. For the Apostle would be speaking improperly if he only excluded the consideration of the good done before their birth and not the consideration of the good that Jacob would do after his birth, for it was known that Jacob could not do any good before his birth. Even if he could have done so, the foresight of the good to be done after his birth would detract no less from the election of free grace than the foresight of the good that would precede his birth. And if God's election had been based on the good that Jacob would do, Saint Paul would not have pacified one who pleads with God and inquires scrupulously, as the reason would have been readily available: that one was preferred over the other because God foresaw the faith and works of one. In conclusion, the statement "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth" excludes all human effort and assistance from the causes of election and God's benevolent will, by which He unchangeably has mercy on man.

XXI. The examples and testimonies we have presented from Scripture do not only confirm the inequality of God's love by His consequent will but also by His antecedent will. When Christ says in John 6, "No man can come to me unless my Father draws him," He is referring to the calling that precedes faith and is exclusive to some individuals. The same can be inferred from the other examples. Did God, while preaching to the Jews and not to the people of Tyre, love the Tyrians less than the Jews based on His consequent will, meaning that He saw the Tyrians as less inclined to believe than the Jews? No, because Christ testifies that the Tyrians were actually more prone to repentance than the Jews.

XXII. Did the Corinthians or Romans who lived in the time of the Apostles have a greater inclination towards faith than their ancestors who lived a hundred years earlier? Did God withhold the doctrine of salvation from the Corinthians and Ephesians who lived just before the birth of Christ because their ancestors had rejected it? But if this were the reason, then why did He enlighten their descendants who

came from the same ancestors? It was because it pleased God, who bestows more blessings on those He loves more, even if they are not any better disposed towards faith and repentance.

XXIII. Why did God call Paul with such a powerful calling when he was actively persecuting the Church, transforming him from a wolf into a sheep and from a sheep into a shepherd? Was it because God perceived in him some inclination towards faith in Christ? Or because he made good use of universal grace? No, it was not for these reasons, for at that time, Paul raged against the followers of Christ like a wild animal. God did not love him any more based on His consequent will, meaning due to the foresight of faith, as Paul's faith was the result of God's love. He was not loved because he would be faithful but that he might become faithful, as he himself attested in 1 Corinthians 7, stating that he obtained mercy to be faithful.

XXIV. Since it happens that God bestows more of His grace and gifts upon an evil person born of sinful parents and effectively converts them, so that grace abounds where sin abounds (Romans 5:20), I wonder whether God is more generous to an evil person based on His antecedent will or His consequent will. If it's based on His antecedent will, our argument prevails; if it's based on His consequent will, the Arminians must explain what will of the evil person preceded their effectual calling, which cannot be found in someone who is less evil. Will they claim that the more evil person thirsted, was slightly evil, and did the will of their father, as they say? They will have an easier time extracting oil from a lump of rock than finding such dispositions in Saint Paul before his conversion, in the thief before his crucifixion, or in those to whom God gives a heart of flesh after having a heart of stone, before their regeneration.

XXV. Additionally, the Scripture states in Acts 14:16 that "God in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways." Here, I ask whether God loved these nations and desired their salvation as much as He loved their descendants, whom He later called effectively through the Gospel. I believe that no one has the audacity to affirm

this. The Arminians do not deny that the saving calling through the Gospel is a significant evidence of God's love towards any nation. However, they have directed their argument elsewhere, seeking the causes of why God loves some more than others, which aligns with our own purpose.

XXVI. Finally, if God equally desires the end, which is salvation, for all people, then He should also equally provide them with the means to reach this end—namely, the word, faith, and the Spirit. However, He does not provide these things equally to everyone. Nothing could be more absurd than to suggest that God equally desires all individuals to believe and be saved while providing some with suitable and effective means and others with unsuitable and ineffective means. Yet, this is the doctrine of Arminius.

XXVII. Their explanation of the causes of God's greater love towards one nation and lesser love towards another is rather feeble. At times, they attribute this difference to the disposition of one nation being better than another, which we reject. For instance, Rome, Corinth, or Ephesus were not more inclined to piety just before the light of the Gospel reached them than they were in previous eras. In fact, during that time, debauchery, excess, pride, and greed had reached such extreme levels that they could hardly get worse. Simultaneously, many nations were immersed in their barbaric vices and appeared more deserving of pity. However, if heavenly calling were determined by human reason and not God's secret purpose, it would seem unjust. Certainly, even before Saint Paul arrived, God had chosen many people in Corinth. God Himself attests to this in Acts 18:10. They lived in the midst of the filthiest and most impure city. For their sake, God sent such an excellent Apostle to Corinth at the appointed time. His clear Gospel preaching and miracles were instrumental in converting those chosen by God.

XXVIII. Ultimately, since no one, by their own nature and will, is disposed towards faith and conversion, and everyone is spiritually dead and incapable of responding to God's call, it is absurd to seek

for dispositions and inclinations towards life among the spiritually dead. It is also mistaken to believe that God's will to save us follows and depends on human free will.

XXIX. Blaming the sins of ancestors and assuming that God refrained from preaching His Gospel to a nation because their ancestors rejected God's grace a thousand or two thousand years ago is both absurd and irrelevant. The Romans and Corinthians in the time of the Apostle Paul were descendants of the same ancestors as those who lived thirty or forty years before Paul's preaching. Punishing the offspring for the sins of their ancestors is unjust, as stated in Ezekiel 18: "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father." Moreover, the law limits the consequences of the fathers' actions on the children to the third and fourth generations, even in cases where the children follow in the wicked ways of their fathers. Additionally, through wars, migrations, colonies, banishments, and marriages, human populations have mingled and mixed significantly. Within a single nation, there are individuals descended from diverse ancestors with differing behaviours. It is even possible for one person to have ancestors, some of whom rejected God's grace, while others did not. If God's decision to preach His Gospel to a nation or withhold it were based on the behaviour of their ancestors, it would lead to an impossible situation where God's wisdom is entangled in conflicting and ridiculous considerations and purposes.

XXX. Nevertheless, the Arminians persist stubbornly in their opinion. They are aware that throughout history, and even in our time, the name of Christ remains unknown to many nations. Yet, they obstinately cling to their beliefs. Arnoldus, on Page 97, denies that it can be said that God does not want the Gospel to be preached to all. He says on Page 397, "It is true indeed that the Gospel is not everywhere preached to all, yet it does not thence follow that God will not bring all men to faith, but this happens because by their own affected malice and perversity, they make themselves unworthy of that Grace." These words appear to imply a contradiction, for if the reason why the Gospel is not preached to a nation is their wickedness

and depravity, it is evident that God does not want His Gospel preached to that nation because this serves as punishment for their stubbornness and obstinacy. To believe that any punishments are inflicted on nations against God's will, especially in the work of our salvation, is to accuse God of cruel negligence and to desire to blind His providence. We have also extensively taught that all people are unworthy, and the Gospel is preached to the most unworthy and to the worst nations, as stated in Romans 10:20, "I was found of them that sought me not, I was made manifest to them that asked not after me."

XXXI. When confronted with this, they have devised another argument, which is exceedingly feeble. They claim that it cannot be said that God is unwilling for the Gospel to be preached to all nations. Instead, they argue that many nations remain in darkness because there are not enough people willing to preach to them. They argue that this happens due to the lukewarmness of Christians and the laziness of Church pastors who refuse to go and preach in those places. However, I must respond by saying that while Christians may not be faultless in this regard, these matters are ultimately governed by God's counsel and providence. If God truly desired to bring the light of the Gospel to the people of America, who have dwelt in ignorance for many ages, He would not have allowed them to remain unknown to the Christian world for so long. How can anyone be blamed for not preaching the Gospel to the Americans when they did not even know that such a people existed or that this part of the world was inhabited? It is not credible that God's intent and desire to save any nation could be thwarted by the negligence of a few ministers. It is also unjust for countless people to bear the punishment for the negligence of others. Furthermore, if God wanted His Gospel to be preached to people who are geographically distant and speak different languages, He would have bestowed the gift of tongues upon some of us so that they could be understood by those in distant lands. Presently, the people of America are indoctrinated into Popery and forced to learn the Spanish language, and so they reluctantly receive religion along with the language. To them,

knowing Christ is a form of punishment and part of their bondage, which the calling of God detests. These innovators, in their complacency, can easily discuss these matters in seclusion, but if they were sincere, they would immediately set sail in groups to America, Florida, or the inhabitants of the South continent and instruct them in the faith of Christ. Instead, they have caused so much trouble and torn apart the unity of their own Church while being forgetful of the cross of Christ and succumbing to their own desires for novelty.

XXXII. There is, however, a debate about whether the Apostles preached to all people. In my view, it seems unlikely that the Apostles ventured beyond the equator into the remote regions of Africa or arrived in America or any other unknown part of the world. The short lifespan of the Apostles was insufficient for such a task, and the routes to these places were unknown. Moreover, there would have been some traces and signs of Christianity in these regions. Saint Paul, whose travels and journeys were well-documented, would have falsely claimed in 1 Corinthians 5:11 that he had laboured more than all the Apostles if the others had gone to the Antipodes or to the Arctic and Antarctic Poles. Throughout history, it is well-documented that there have been more pagans than Christians, and even in the most flourishing Christian communities, the Church scarcely covered a tenth of the earth. While the Apostles were indeed instructed to preach the Gospel to every creature, this command was not exclusive to the Apostles alone but also to their successors. These successors, receiving the Gospel from their predecessors, would carry the torch throughout the world. The Gospel must be preached to all nations, but not simultaneously; rather, it must occur successively. Even if we interpret Psalm 19:3 as referring to Gospel preachers, it does not necessarily mean that this must happen all at once but rather in parts and successively. It is as if God is surveying the nations until there is no one left who has not received the message of salvation, similar to how the sun does not illuminate the entire globe all at once during the equinox but rather sequentially, completing its course. The end of the world draws near when the Gospel has

reached all people, as Christ himself attests in Matthew 24:14: "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." These words of our Saviour resolve this matter because it is evident that during the time of the Apostles, the Gospel was not preached to all nations since the end was not yet near.

XXXIII. However, you may argue that Saint Paul stated in Colossians 1:23 that the Gospel was preached to every creature under heaven. In response, I would say that the Apostles used a common scriptural form of expression, where the phrase "under heaven" does not mean every single individual creature absolutely and without exception, but rather a great number of them. We find a similar use of language in Acts 2:3, where it is said, "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, out of every nation under heaven." Were there really people from America, the Moluccas, or the South Continent, places whose names were not known at that time, coming to Jerusalem? Likewise, in Ecclesiastes 4:15, Solomon declares, "I saw all the living, which walk under the sun," even though he had seen only a small part of the earth. This usage can also be found in Ezekiel 31:6, 13, and Chapter 32:4. It should be understood that the word "all" is not consistently used to mean that no one is excluded but is often employed to represent a great number.

XXXIV. To keep my remarks brief, the truth regarding the question of whether God equally desires the salvation of all people and loves all equally is so evident that even the Arminians sometimes find themselves inadvertently aligning with our perspective. Arminius, in opposition to Perkins, page 24, states: "If anyone, with the help of particular grace, has apprehended offered grace, it is evident from this that God loves him with a greater love than another to whom He has only made His grace common but has denied His particular grace." Arnoldus, page 380, admits that Arminius acknowledges that the means to faith are not sufficiently offered to all people; therefore, not all people are loved equally. Arminians frequently assert that God calls some people at a congruent and appropriate time and

manner, by which those who are called certainly and infallibly follow His call, while others are called by incongruent and inappropriate means, by which they never obey God's call. It is beyond doubt that those to whom particular grace is given are loved more than those to whom it is denied. Similarly, those to whom sufficient grace for faith is given are more loved than those to whom it is not given. Those who are called by means that God knows to be congruent and effective are more loved than those called by incongruent means that God knows will never be effective. In Arminius' work against Perkins, page 16, he states: "God, by a certain decree, determined not to give faith and repentance to some people, namely, by granting them effectual grace by which they would certainly believe and be converted." The constant opinion of the Arminians is that God grants this effectual grace to all, which can be effective in action, without which no one believes or is saved. God only grants to a few the grace by which they have not only the ability but also the will and desire to be converted and believe. Therefore, God desires the salvation of these people more than others to whom He does not grant this blessing.

XXXV. Noteworthy among these admissions is the statement by Greinchouius, page 342: "Sometimes he helps greater sinners with His grace sooner than lesser sinners, for who can dictate a measure to God, preventing Him from sometimes, beyond the law He has established, bestowing greater gifts according to His generosity upon those who are worse?" I believe this confession is clear enough. If these statements are true, it cannot be denied that God, through His antecedent will, may love the worst individuals most, as through that antecedent will, He bestows more blessings upon them and grants them the grace that He withholds from those who are less sinful. It cannot be claimed that this grace is given to the worst individuals through a will that follows man's will, as no good will of man precedes the giving of grace. Perhaps some might argue that God does this rarely and, as Greinchouius says, beyond the law He has established. However, in reality, God does this frequently, following the rule outlined in the Gospel: "Where sin abounded, grace did

much more abound" (Romans 5). Through this, the glory and power of God shine more brightly as He overcomes the most challenging obstacles and prevails against all hindrances. He plants the Gospel precisely where it appears that human wisdom or deeply entrenched wickedness would obstruct its progress, and there it flourishes with greater success and effectiveness.

Chapter 32

Of Free-will: The opinions of the parties.

I. How much that purity and integrity in which man was initially created is marred by sin, and how the image of Satan has overlaid the image of God, we have explained in Chapter 7. Nevertheless, a freedom from compulsion and physical necessity has remained with the will. For if the will could be compelled, it would not be a will but unwillingness. Or if it were necessarily determined to one thing by an external principle, by a natural and unchanging law, it would not be a will, but either a violent impulsion or a natural inclination and propensity devoid of knowledge and judgment, such as the inclination of all heavy objects toward the center of the earth. Since there are three kinds of liberty: the first from compulsion and physical or natural necessity, the second from sin, and the third from misery; man, while in this present life, shall never be entirely free from sin and misery. But he shall attain these two liberties in the life to come. The liberty from compulsion and physical necessity is essential to the will and inseparable from it.

II. The seat of this liberty is in the will because it exercises dominion over voluntary actions. Although the will, in individual actions, follows the persuasion of the understanding, the understanding does

not judge or deliberate unless commanded by the will. Man applies himself to deliberation and the search for truth under the dominion of the will. In a similar way, a blind master obeys his servant in everything, with the servant leading and persuading him. The servant, however, does this in order to obey his master, who wants to be led and advised by him.

Since Scripture states that man is the servant of sin (Romans 6:17) and sold under sin (Romans 7:14), dead in sin (Ephesians 2:1, 5), and dead in trespasses (Colossians 2:13), it is worth the effort to understand how far this liberty of man's will extends, both in the state of sin and before regeneration, as well as in the state of grace and regeneration.

III. The will is the rational appetite, inherently inclined towards good, whether that good is true or merely apparent. It is impossible for someone to desire evil as evil; rather, they desire it under the aspect of good.

IV. The liberty of the will, enabling it to either will or not will something, is known as the liberty of contradiction. The liberty that allows it to will something or its opposite is called the liberty of contrariety.

V. There are only two things that we can will: the end or the means to the end. The former is called "the will" by Aristotle (Ethics, Book 3, Chapter 4), and the latter is called "choice." We absolutely desire the end, and we choose the means. If anyone absolutely wills some means to achieve the end without deliberation, they will that means not simply as a means but as the end itself. To obtain that, they choose other means. In making a choice, the will follows the judgment of practical understanding unless overpowering and disorderly actions obscure reason or resist its judgment.

VI. We term something involuntary if it is not only forced and compelled by external pressure but also if it is done out of ignorance.

VII. What is voluntary differs from what is spontaneous and done of its own accord, because that which is spontaneous extends itself further than what is voluntary. Everything that is voluntary is spontaneous, but not vice versa. Even cattle move of their own accord and have their spontaneous desires and inclinations. However, those actions are done voluntarily which are executed with some knowledge and reason, whether the reason is correct or only appears to be right and true.

VIII. Among those things that are done voluntarily, some are more voluntary than others. Some things are done willingly and unwillingly, and slowly, as if reluctant to perform them. For instance, when a sick person extends their arm to be amputated to prevent further gangrene or when a merchant throws their goods into the sea with their own hands. These actions are still done willingly because they are carried out for their own good. The lesser evil by which people attain a greater good takes on the form of good.

IX. We all necessarily will the ultimate and chief end, namely, happiness. The desire for the ultimate end does not involve deliberation, for no one can will themselves to be miserable. However, we freely will this end because we desire it without compulsion and with knowledge and judgment. Thus, this desire is not only spontaneous but also voluntary and, therefore, free.

X. Furthermore, there are various kinds of human actions. Some are purely natural, such as the involuntary motion of the arteries and the beating of the pulse, the digestion of nourishment, and so on. Since these actions are not within our control or at the discretion of humans, the will is neither concerned with them nor do they fall within the realm of choice or deliberation.

XI. Some actions are partly natural and partly voluntary, such as eating, walking, and so on. Although they have a natural aspect, they are directed by the will. In these actions, the will is free unless

external force compels them or an unavoidable necessity presses upon them against their will.

XII. There are also actions that are civil, such as selling, buying, bargaining, playing, building, and painting. In these matters, the human will is free and leans towards one option or another of its own accord. Even when someone performs these actions at another's command, they willingly obey the one who commands them. Therefore, they are driven to act not only by another's will but also by their own. The Apostle speaks of this liberty in 1 Corinthians 7:37 when he says, "He that standeth steadfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doth well." In this context, the Apostle does not mean that the action is in line with God's law but rather that it is done wisely and suitably to the present time and purpose.

XIII. Similarly, in actions that are morally upright, the human will is motivated by its own inclination. For example, when a non-believer helps someone who has fallen or shows the way to someone who is lost.

XIV. A similar freedom exists in the observance of ecclesiastical policies and in performing works commanded by God's law that pertain to outward actions. Even the most wicked individuals carry out religious rites and ceremonies, give alms, and hear or read the word of God.

XV. Especially in evil actions, man is free. He is not only inclined towards sin of his own accord, but when faced with two or more evils, he most freely chooses one and voluntarily commits himself to it as his mind directs. Therefore, since man, who is inherently sinful, is governed by his own evil will and is said to be free because he does as he pleases, it is evident that man is the servant of sin precisely because he is subject to his own will and sins willingly and freely. Man is a servant because he is free.

XVI. Those who assert that an unregenerate person, due to this servitude and natural depravity, necessarily sins should not be criticized. An unregenerate person must sin, just as the devils necessarily sin but do so freely. They sin without being compelled or determined by any external force. Instead, they are guided by their inherent wickedness and their knowledge, much like the glorified saints are necessarily and immutably good yet act voluntarily and freely. The glorification of the saints does not mean they lose their liberty. There is a kind of voluntary necessity, and liberty is opposed not to necessity but to constraint and servitude. Therefore, Saint Augustine, in his *Enchiridion* Chapter 105 and *City of God* Book 22 Chapter 8, teaches that in the necessity of not sinning that will exist in the saints, their free will shall be increased and confirmed rather than diminished. What is more free than God? Yet God is necessarily good and performs good deeds. As Thomas says in Book 8, Question 24, Article 3: "It is no part of free will to be able to choose evil." The same man states in many places that constraint, not necessity, is opposed to the liberty of the will, especially in Book 8, Question 10, Article 2, on the processions of the divine persons.

XVII. There are also habits and actions, namely virtues and deeds, that promote salvation and are proper to the faithful. These include genuine knowledge and fervent love of God, faith and repentance, and holy actions resulting from these virtues. In regard to these matters, the will of an unregenerate person, still in their purely natural state, is not free. There is no free will, inclination, or disposition here. It would be difficult to find in Paul, who persecuted the Church, or in the thief crucified for his crimes but converted by Christ in his final moments, any disposition or preparation for repentance.

XVIII. I do not deny that many things have been recorded about the actions of heathens that were done honestly and for the benefit of civil society, unity, and the defence of their country. However, since "Without faith, it is impossible to please God" (Hebrews 11:6), and since only actions done in faith are acceptable to God (for

"Whatsoever is not of faith is sin," Romans 14:23), and those actions are to be done for the glory of God, as commanded by the Apostle (1 Corinthians 10:31), it is evident that the virtuous deeds of the heathens were not without fault. They could not achieve salvation through such civil virtues, nor could they be prepared for faith or true repentance through them. The right external duties of civil virtues differ from the duties of faith and Christian piety. In my opinion, a heathen judge who renders a fair judgment and divides possessions justly is no more righteous before God's judgment than thieves who divide their loot equally and fairly. For anyone lacking faith in Christ is not a child of God and, therefore, cannot be an heir and rightful possessor of worldly goods, even if they excel in civil virtues. Some semblance of light and certain seeds of equity are left in man for the sake of civil society. Those who have received the light of the Gospel but abandon themselves to vices should be ashamed when faced with these examples.

XIX. However, once God has enlightened someone's mind with His light, touched their heart with repentance, and worked faith in Christ within them, then the will of man begins to move willingly and freely toward holy actions. It is not forced by physical or natural necessity but is turned by gentle and effective persuasion or influence. In this way, the will may freely and willingly follow God's call. For it would not be a good deed if one were compelled or constrained by necessity to perform it. He who does good unwillingly acts wickedly. Such a person is sufficiently rewarded if God forgives their obedience, for although God detests evil, He does not compel people to do good. A good deed is only good when it is done voluntarily.

XX. Even though man is freely moved to perform acts of piety, all the credit for the good work belongs to God, who works in us both to will and to do according to His good pleasure (Philippians 2). Similarly, although the infant in its mother's womb moves and contributes to its own birth, it possesses the power to move from God. Therefore, just as attributing the entire credit for forming and giving birth to the infant to God alone does not hinder the birth of the child or diminish

its vitality, attributing the complete praise for our regeneration and holy actions to God does not obstruct our efforts in performing good works, weaken the human will, or bind it with the chains of natural necessity.

XXI. Therefore, a distinction must be made here. If we are discussing the initial stages of conversion, the first steps of regeneration and faith, which involve the creation or formation of faith and repentance within our souls, we maintain that free will does not play a role here. In these beginnings, our souls are not only passive but also vigorously resist the work of God in forming the foundations and drafts of the new man. In this case, man is not free; his freedom lies in resisting God. However, once regeneration has begun and God has replaced man's heart of stone with a heart of flesh, then man freely motivates himself towards actions that are pleasing to God. Just as there are secret but definite advancements in regeneration, this liberty gradually increases, diminishing each day due to the resistance of our desires. In this manner, the human will cooperates and works in tandem with God. Nevertheless, all the good that is accomplished is owed to God alone. This is comparable to a scribe guiding the trembling hand of a child to help them write letters. While the child exerts effort to form the letters and strives with all their might, the accurate formation of the letters cannot be attributed to the child but to the scribe. This analogy appears most fitting to me because it teaches that God does not merely work alongside our will (as the Semi-Pelagian Synergists or advocates of our cooperation with God in our age would have it), but God works through our wills, bending them with an effective motion. The nature of this motion and the extent to which man may resist it will be explained later.

XXII. We maintain that the act of believing and repenting is to some extent the act of man because man himself believes and repents, not God. No one believes and repents without doing so willingly. However, we assert that the grace of God alone creates and initiates faith in us. It is a gift from God, and it is through the power of the regenerating Spirit that we believe and repent willingly and freely.

The question at hand is not about who believes, whether it is man or God, but rather about what produces faith in man and whether it is within the power of free will, with the assistance of grace, to believe or not to believe and to use grace or not to use it.

XXIII. Arminius and his followers hold a vastly different perspective from this doctrine (the foundations and proofs of which will be derived from Holy Scripture in the next chapter). They believe that an unregenerate person has the ability to believe and repent. The Arminian participants at the Hague Conference state that conversion precedes faith and that man contributes somewhat to their own conversion before having faith. Upon reviewing the writings of these proponents, I find that they affirm the corruption of human nature, acknowledging that man's understanding is darkened, and their affections are depraved. However, I cannot find in their writings that the will is naturally depraved and inclined towards sin. They attribute to the will a predisposition towards either good or evil and an equal inclination to both sides. Consequently, in the regeneration of a person, they insist that while their understanding is enlightened irresistibly and their affections are drawn (as they describe it), the will retains its liberty to believe or not believe, to repent or not repent. They do not consider the vivification and renewal of the will in our regeneration as a transformation from its inherent evil nature to goodness through the infusion of virtue. Instead, they maintain that through the illumination of the understanding and the reformation of the affections, the will becomes capable of exercising the faculty of willing or not willing, which is inherent in it. This is what the Arminians at the Hague Conference teach. Additionally, they assert, a little later on, "In our spiritual death, spiritual gifts are not properly separated from the will of man because they were never engrafted in it." These individuals appear to believe that Adam's will was not endowed with righteousness and holiness before the Fall. Indeed, it cannot be denied that these virtues are spiritual gifts, which is certainly a perplexing and unusual theology.

XXIV. These men assert that sufficient grace is given to all, including the unregenerate and heathen who have not heard the name of Christ. This grace supposedly allows them to attain faith if they choose to do so. They argue that an unregenerate person is not entirely dead in sin but retains remnants and vestiges of spiritual life and the ability to fulfil the law of nature. They believe that God demands nothing from man that He does not also provide the sufficient power for. They argue that God is obligated to grant all men the ability to fulfil His commandments and believe in Christ.

XXV. Arminius makes noteworthy statements in opposition to Perkins. He asks, "Do you deny that free will is flexible and pliant to either part?" He goes on to say that this flexibility exists even without grace because it is inherent to free will's nature. He claims that free will is inclined towards evil in the state of sin but is also capable of good. He insists that this capability is not granted by grace; it is inherent in human nature. However, he contradicts himself when he adds that free will is not inclined towards good without the grace of God. These statements appear contradictory, as he argues that free will can lean towards good without grace but then claims that it cannot do so without grace. It is futile to assert that something can be done when it has never been done or will never be done. This connects to his statement on page 257: "To be able to believe is in nature; to believe is of grace; therefore to be able to believe is not of grace." While it is true that there is a natural potential in man to possess or receive faith, it is not natural for man to have the ability to believe. These are distinct concepts. The first denotes the capacity and potentiality to receive faith, while the second signifies the active power and faculty of believing. This power does not naturally belong to man but is solely derived from grace.

XXVI. Arnoldus, on page 271, accuses us of a great error, claiming that we assert the regenerate person cannot perform any good unless they are prompted by grace. He likens this to the Apostle's declaration that we are not sufficient in ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; all our sufficiency comes from God (2 Corinthians

3:5). On page 447, Arnoldus suggests that the use of grace is subject to man's will, which can choose to use it or not according to their natural liberty. He later acknowledges that Arminius made the effect of God's mercy dependent on man, provided that man is already strengthened with grace. Arnoldus believes that using or not using grace, believing or not believing, is within the power of man's free will. Ultimately, Arminians assert that the efficacy, or the effectiveness and operative power, of grace depends on free will. Arnoldus, in his arguments against Bogermannus on pages 263 and 274, contends that while all the operations of grace that God uses for our conversion are accepted, the conversion itself remains entirely within our power. We can choose to be converted or not, to convert ourselves or not. Greinchouius, on page 198, claims that the effect of grace typically depends on some act of free will as a precondition, without which it cannot be effective. On pages 203 and 204, he asserts that there can be no other common cause for the differing effectiveness of grace in individuals than the liberty of the will. Perkins stated that just as no good can exist or be done without God's involvement, no evil can be avoided unless God prevents it. Arminius challenges this statement and alters it on page 113, changing "can be avoided" to "is avoided." He argues that all individuals possess the power to do good and avoid evil. A person can steer clear of evil and refrain from sin even if God does not prevent them. He suggests that the act itself is partly due to grace and partly to free will, which can accept or reject grace at its discretion. Arnoldus, on page 381, concludes that the proper use of free will primarily results from grace but is accomplished by man's own good use of their free will. They leave the liberty to use or not use grace to man. These sectarians are of the opinion that the power to believe is irresistibly given to all, and the act of believing is so aided by grace that it is left to man's free will to believe in action or not to believe, and to use grace either rightly or wrongly.

XXVII. They deny that faith originates from grace alone; rather, they contend that it arises partly from grace and partly from free will. Greinchouius, on pages 208 and 210, asserts that free will and

grace are co-causes to some extent. On page 211, he states, "We join grace and free-will together as causes in part." This view becomes necessary for those who claim that Election is based on foreseen faith because God could not be said to foresee what He alone is to do; such foresight would not be foreknowledge but a decree. This argument extends to the conditional decree of saving individuals if they believe, which implies that it lies within human power to believe. Arminius, in opposition to Perkins on pages 223 and 224, argues that the total cause of why one person believes and another does not is a combination of the will of God and human free will. Arnoldus, on page 228, claims that Arminius attributes the chief role in the work of faith to grace because he allows free will to play a part. Arnoldus further admits on page 125 that Arminius acknowledges that calling grace is not primarily dependent on human free will but on the will of God. In the conversion of individuals, free will would have the primary role if the Arminians' contention were true – that the effectiveness and working power of grace depend on free will and that the proper use of grace is subject to human will. Arnoldus' statement on page 444 that God works in man while man is not failing in his own part suggests that man can convert himself. Greinchouius, opposing Ames on page 205, argues that grace does not reach its conclusion without the cooperation of free will. He even suggests that the efficacy of grace, concerning its outcome, depends to some extent on free will. If the effectiveness of grace in achieving the desired result depends on human free will, then free will must play a significant role in conversion and regeneration.

XXVIII. This represents the malicious and sinister aspect of the Loligo fish's ink; it embodies their most harmful doctrine. One can easily deduce its nature from the statements found throughout the works of these sectarians. They claim that Lydia opened her own heart, even though, as Luke attests in Acts 16:14, it was God who opened Lydia's heart. They suggest that a person separates themselves, despite Saint Paul's question, "Who separates you?" as found in 1 Corinthians 4:7. They argue that an unregenerate person is not completely dead in sin and that God grants the power to

believe if one so chooses, while Philippians 2:13 makes it clear that God grants both the will and the ability to act. They assert that sufficient grace, given to all, including the reprobate, removes impotence and establishes the free will's liberty, as taught by Arminius in his dispute with Perkins on pages 245 and 246. The arrogant words of Greuinchouius on page 253 echo these sentiments: "I separate myself; for when I could have resisted God and His predetermination, I did not resist. Therefore, why should I not be allowed to boast in this as my own achievement? For my ability was a result of God's mercy, but my willingness, when I could have been unwilling, was my own doing." This boastful worm may swell to such proportions that it will burst. It is the mark of a magnanimous and noble-minded person not to feel overly indebted to God or burdened by His blessings. The sentiments expressed by the same author on page 279 are no less prideful: "You may argue that in this manner of working, God depends somewhat on the will of man. I concede this, at least in terms of free determination. Indeed, one thing was missing to complete the height of pride: that God should be said to depend on man."

XXIX. In the writings of these innovators, we encounter certain passages where they assert that in his corrupted state, man is entirely dead and unable to think, will, or do anything good of his own accord. However, these claims are merely a facade designed to deceive the unwary reader. They contend that a man cannot perform any good without grace, but by "grace," they mean universal grace, which is shared by all people and sufficient grace, even extended to those to whom Christ was revealed, encompassing the extent of human nature. They do admit that grace is the cause of belief, but they never assert that it is the sole cause. In the third and fourth Articles of the Arminian conferrers at The Hague, they appear to express similar sentiments to ours, claiming that man does not possess saving faith by his own merit and that the grace of God initiates, continues, and completes all goodness, attributing all virtuous actions to the grace of God in Christ. However, these crafty individuals, when stating that man does not possess faith by his own

merit, imply that he does not possess it by his merit alone. When they claim that every virtuous act should be attributed to grace, they are cautious not to say to grace alone. They cunningly introduce a distinction between grace and the use of grace, asserting that while grace originates from God, the use of grace lies within the realm of human free will. They employ similar cunning when they say that the power to believe originates from grace, only to later retract by asserting that the act of belief itself is within the realm of human free will and that grace is bestowed upon man for belief, should he choose. Whenever they attempt to associate a kind of special grace with universal grace, they make the use of this special grace contingent upon free will. Despite their efforts to mimic truthful discourse, their true Pelagian tendencies and errors occasionally become apparent. Even though they craftily imitate the language of truth, their disguise often slips, and their underlying Pelagian beliefs emerge. Even though they imitate the speech of truth, their masks often fall off inadvertently, and when their errors are exposed, they emit a foul stench.

XXX. Vorstius, however, diverges from his master in this regard. While Arminius asserts that no one is converted and actively believes solely through universal grace, which is common even to the reprobate, but that some special grace is also required, Vorstius, on the contrary, maintains in his dialogue with Piscator on page 57 that some individuals are converted by universal grace (which he refers to as the lesser mercy) – that is, without special grace, which he describes as grace more than sufficient and superabundant assistance. Therefore, if we were to believe him, some people attain salvation through universal grace alone, which is common to all heathen men.

Chapter 33

It is proved from the Holy Scripture that an unregenerate person is entirely devoid of the power and liberty of their will in matters related to faith and salvation.

I. If we turn to the judgment of the Holy Scripture on this matter, there can be no room for doubt. Concerning an unregenerate individual in their natural state, the Scripture declares the following: Genesis 6:5 states, "Every thought of the heart of man is only evil continually." This sentiment is reiterated in Genesis 8:21. Jeremiah, in his seventeenth chapter, concurs with this assessment, stating that "the heart of man is wicked and unsearchable." Romans 3 reinforces this perspective, asserting, "There is none righteous, no, not one: They are all gone out of the way and are become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." Romans 7:18 adds, "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." Furthermore, Romans 8:8 declares, "The wisdom of the flesh, that is, whatsoever a carnal man understandeth or perceiveth, is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." When we compare these scriptural passages with the doctrine of Arminius, who believes that an unbelieving and unregenerate person possesses sufficient power to believe and fulfill the law, we find a stark contrast. The Apostle maintains that our flesh is not only not subject to the law of God but is inherently incapable of being so. The same Apostle, in 1 Corinthians 2:14, asserts that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them." This aligns with what is stated in Ezekiel 36, where it is mentioned that the human heart is stony and, therefore, naturally unable and ill-suited to receive the impression of God's law unless God Himself, as in the past, writes it upon that heart. Similarly, in Ephesians 2:1,5, the Apostle asserts that not only the Ephesians before their calling but all of us were dead in sins. The same language is used in Colossians 2:13. Furthermore, Jesus Himself acknowledges this reality in John 14:17

when He states, "The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him." In these words, Christ plainly recognises that there is no free will or inherent power in humanity to receive the Spirit of truth but rather a natural aversion and incapability.

II. Therefore, the Scripture refers to the transformation of a person through the process of regeneration in various ways: sometimes as a new birth (John 3), sometimes as the creation of a new man (Ephesians 4:24), and at times as a resurrection from the dead (Revelation 20:6, Luke 15:32, John 5:25). These descriptions are not meant to equate creation and resurrection entirely with regeneration and the transformation of the soul. Instead, they draw a parallel only in the specific context being discussed here. Just as a lifeless carcass cannot prepare itself for resurrection, and something that is not created cannot contribute to its own creation, similarly, in the state of sin and prior to regeneration, a person lacks anything by which they may prepare themselves or contribute to their own regeneration and spiritual rebirth.

III. The Arminian disputants at The Hague, as stated on Page 279, openly acknowledge that, due to our spiritual death, the freedom to do good or evil has been separated from the soul. Consequently, I ask whether an unregenerate person, supplied with that sufficient and universal grace, even granted to the Reprobates, possesses the free will to do good or evil in matters pertaining to salvation? If not, why do the Arminians argue that they do? If they do, it is evident from their own admission that such a person is not dead in sin.

However, there is a special significance in the word "born." For if there were any seeds and remnants of spiritual life in an unregenerate person, as Arnoldus believes, there would be no need to be "born again," and for the new man to be formed. Instead, we would need to pray to God to revive those sparks and remnants of spiritual life and ask Him to kindle and increase them, as if adding fuel to a fire.

IV. In addition to these considerations, we must take into account the passages that teach us that without faith, it is impossible to please God (Hebrews 11). Since not everyone possesses faith (2 Thessalonians 3), as it is the gift of God (Philippians 1:19, Ephesians 2:8), we can conclude that in matters concerning salvation and the worship of God, anyone lacking faith commits sin. This includes all the heathens and unregenerate individuals. In the context of Romans, the Apostle is speaking about the use of certain foods, which he advises us to consume with faith – that is, with a sure knowledge that such consumption aligns with God's will and His Word. Therefore, even in matters that are inherently indifferent, we sin when we engage in them without such faith. Hence, it is reasonable to assume that heathens sin in every action related to salvation and the worship of God because they lack this faith.

These observations align with passages that teach us that God is the author of every virtue and good work performed by us. As stated in 2 Corinthians 3:5, "We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything, as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." Jesus Himself declared in John 15:5, "Without me, ye can do nothing." In the same passage, we are likened to branches cut off and destined for the fire unless we have been grafted into Christ, through whom we find life and bear fruit. Ephesians 2:8 reaffirms that salvation and faith do not originate from ourselves but are a gift from God: "For by grace ye are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." This stands in stark contrast to Arminius, who contends that faith's total cause is not grace alone but grace and free will. To address any potential objection that Arminius' followers might raise, claiming that the power of belief is given to all irresistibly while the act of belief is aided by grace and also stems from free will, the Apostle Philippians 1:29 preempts this with the statement, "It is given to you, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake." This passage makes it clear that not only is the power to believe granted but also the actual act of believing. This aligns with John 6, where "coming" is equivalent to actively believing and not just possessing the capacity for belief, which is

brought into action by free will. The Apostle further confirms this in Philippians 2:13, where it is stated, "It is God which worketh in you both to will, and to do, of His good pleasure." Here, "to will" refers to actively willing and not just having the potential to will. God Himself declares in Ezekiel 36:27, "I will put My spirit within you, and will cause you to walk in My statutes." Thus, God not only provides the power to walk in His statutes but also causes us to genuinely walk in them and works in us the very act of walking, including the act itself. The question of how the elect may resist the efficacy of the Spirit will be addressed later. For the present question, it suffices to establish that God not only grants the capacity for belief but also actively works in us to believe.

We encounter passages in which the Arminians assert that not only the capacity for belief but also the act of believing itself is granted by God. However, they argue that God bestows this act by providing knowledge to the mind and awakening the languishing affections, thereby prompting the will to believe. They claim that this is accomplished through moral persuasion, in a manner similar to how we are influenced by external stimuli. Yet, this does not constitute the direct impartation of faith and the act of believing. Indeed, the one who persuades, presents objects, and encourages the appetite to move forward does not grant the inherent ability for the action to occur. Consequently, the Arminians reject the notion that faith itself is infused or imprinted on the heart by God. Instead, they maintain that the will is merely enticed to believe through moral persuasion and kindly allurements.

In a similar vein, they employ a deceptive tactic to appear as though they attribute something significant to God. They claim that God grants the capacity for belief irresistibly. However, when they expound upon how these capacities are supplied, it becomes evident that they do not believe God bestows the power of belief upon humanity. They contend that God imparts these capacities by illuminating the understanding with knowledge and rousing the appetites. Yet, this does not constitute the direct conferment of the

power to believe. To illustrate, one who provides light to a lost traveler in the darkness with a torch and encourages them to proceed does not thereby grant them the inherent ability to walk.

VI. To prevent any man from arrogating praise for the knowledge he has acquired or the love he feels, Christ humbles all pride. He speaks to Peter in this manner: "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 16:17). Furthermore, in Matthew 11:25, Christ gives thanks to His Father for concealing these things from the wise and understanding while revealing them to babes.

VII. Particularly when referring to God's love and obedience to His commandments, Scripture instructs us to acknowledge that every good deed performed by us is received from God. We love God because He loved us first (John 4:19). One of the effects of God's love toward us is that it instills a love for Him in our hearts. God Himself says, "I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts" (Jeremiah 31). And in the same vein, Moses provides the reason why the Israelites did not repent in the face of God's law, despite numerous threats and miracles: "The Lord has not given you a heart to perceive, nor eyes to see" (Deuteronomy 29:4). Let Arminius tell me whether these individuals possessed sufficient power to believe or sufficient grace that, with the assistance of free will, they could have properly utilised if they so desired. This is a false notion. Nonetheless, God was not the cause of the impenitence and blindness of these people, for He who does not heal the blind is not responsible for their blindness. God did not implant wickedness in man, but He knows upon whom He will bestow mercy, and He has valid reasons for His actions. To question these reasons would be not only rash but also perilous.

VIII. Saint Paul states in Galatians 3:26 that we become the sons of God through faith in Christ. Therefore, if it is within the power of free will, with the aid of grace, to believe or not to believe, to use that grace or not to use it, it must also be within the power of free will,

aided by grace, to effect that we may become the sons of God or may not. This notion contradicts both piety and common sense. Who ever brought about their own paternity? Or who can attribute any part of their own generation to themselves?

IX. The same Apostle says in Romans 9 that it is not by the will or effort of man, but by God's mercy. He uses "him that willeth" and "him that runneth" to signify someone who works, excluding the consideration of works from election or, as Arminius prefers, from a man's justification. Arminius deviates from this rule, for according to his doctrine, a man's conversion by faith, as well as his righteousness and salvation, are a result of the will, effort, and works of the individual. This implies that, with the assistance of free will, a person uses universal grace correctly and believes because, by the aid of grace, they have empowered their free will to obtain faith. As I have previously stated, the Arminians attribute the cause of faith to the combination of grace and free will, which they believe must be exercised to obtain faith and convert oneself. This can certainly be equated with "willing" and "running." Therefore, the Apostle ought to have said, "It is by him who wills, runs, and by God who shows mercy," in order to emphasise the role of free will alongside God's mercy. If, as Saint Augustine aptly notes, it can be argued that "it is not by him who wills, runs" because conversion and salvation do not result solely from man's free will, why can't it also be argued that "it is not by God who shows mercy" because conversion is not achieved by God's grace alone but also requires free will? It does not matter that Saint Augustine used this argument against Pelagius, who denied that we were preceded by grace. It holds the same weight against the Semi-Pelagians, who combine free will with grace. Saint Paul clearly does not say, "It is not solely by him who wills," but rather, he completely excludes free will.

X. Finally, this argument has troubled Arnoldus, as mentioned on Page 445. to the extent that he seems to lean towards our perspective. He states that it is not within our will to obey God's call, and this is also from God's mercy. However, this cunning individual

is careful not to say anything that would harm his own cause. When he says it is not within our will, he means "alone." Therefore, he does not firmly assert that it is solely within God's mercy but rather cautiously says it is within God's mercy. He might, indeed, and should have mentioned free will to align with his own views, for he believes that it is not solely within the grace of God or free will alone.

XI. Jeremiah teaches that man cannot be converted unless God converts him, and that all credit for our conversion belongs to God. This is evident in Jeremiah 31:18: "Convert me, and I shall be converted," which is also repeated in the last chapter of Lamentations. I am dismayed by the feeble interpretation given by the Arminian conferers at The Hague, who on Page 266. would have "converted" interpreted differently. There is nothing so clear and straightforward in Holy Scripture that cannot be misinterpreted with a foolish and rash interpretation. These individuals, with limited knowledge of Hebrew, are unaware that the verb "shub" signifies to be turned, not to be punished. Therefore, in the Hiphil conjugation, it means to cause someone to be converted, not to punish them. Who does not recognise the absurdity of individuals afflicted by suffering praying for more suffering? It's akin to someone who has been severely whipped desiring further flogging. But Jeremiah clarifies and explains what it means to be converted when he adds, "being converted, I will repent and acknowledge myself." This, indeed, is what conversion entails. Therefore, since those who are already willing acknowledge that they owe everything good they do to God and that without His grace, they cannot progress any further, how much more should it be understood that we cannot become willing if we are unwilling, or alive if we are spiritually dead, unless God draws us and brings us to life?

XII. To counter the notions held by sectarians who believe that an unregenerate person, by making good use of universal grace and natural light, can prepare themselves for regeneration, Ezekiel 36 holds significant weight. God declares, "I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony

heart out of you, and I will give you a heart of flesh; I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes." Since God Himself testifies that in matters pertaining to the worship of God and salvation, a person naturally possesses a stony heart that needs to be removed and replaced with another by God, in which the character of faith and repentance is imprinted, it is evident that an unregenerate person cannot prepare themselves for regeneration. If something must be removed and replaced with something else for us to be regenerated, it certainly does not promote or prepare us for regeneration, as doing so would mean being aided by the very impediments themselves.

XIII. Arnoldus, on Page 461, argues that the phrase "stony and fleshly heart" is figurative and symbolic and that divinity cannot prove anything from it. In response, I assert that figurative expressions carry the same weight as literal ones when they are explained by Scripture itself and when it is clear for what purpose and in what sense they are used. In the same passage in Ezekiel, there are many words that are straightforward and not figurative, which clarify the meaning of this figurative language. For in the same passage, God promises to give them a new spirit by which He will lead them in His ways.

XIV. Therefore, Arnoldus, with excessive diligence and without relevance, compiles differences between the heart and a stone. A stone lacks life, while the heart possesses it; a stone cannot be softened without the removal of its substantial form, but the heart can; the stone cannot resist its own softening, whereas the heart can. Besides the material differences, the comparison is most fitting in this particular aspect under consideration. Just as a stone cannot soften itself and requires the power of an external agent, the unregenerate heart cannot convert itself or prepare for regeneration; it is only accomplished by the efficacy of the Spirit of God. One who seeks comparisons beyond this will find countless differences, such as a stone being engraved, broken, extracted from quarries, and used in construction, whereas the heart cannot.

XV. The words of Saint Paul trouble these Semi-Pelagians when he states that man is dead in sin, referring to the unregenerate. To evade and invalidate the point of this statement, they painstakingly list differences between a dead body and an unregenerate person. These differences aim to prove that an unregenerate person is not entirely dead in sin and, as Arnoldus claims, possesses some remnants of spiritual life. To these natural remnants and remains of universal and sufficient grace, which they claim are given to all individuals, including the unregenerate and reprobates, allowing everyone to fulfil the law and attain faith, they add. Consequently, they argue that there is a significant amount of life in an unregenerate person, with little or no resemblance to a dead individual. These sectarians focus their efforts on demonstrating that Saint Paul's words are not as precise as they should be. Arnoldus presents these differences on pages 466 and 468. In resurrection, the soul is infused, but in regeneration, it is merely changed. In resurrection, there are no prior dispositions or preparations, while regeneration follows some preparatory dispositions. Additionally, our resurrection occurs instantaneously, but regeneration takes place gradually. Resurrection is a necessity, while regeneration is accomplished with free will intact. In a dead body, there are no remnants of life, but in an unregenerate person, there are remnants of spiritual life. God does not speak to a lifeless corpse, but He addresses those who are spiritually dead in sin and presents His word to them. A dead individual cannot resist their resurrection, but an unregenerate person can. I do not deny that this analogy does not align perfectly in all respects, and undoubtedly, Arnoldus could have identified many other differences, such as the resurrection of the body occurring only on the last day and being announced by the trumpet of an angel. However, it suffices that this analogy aligns well with the primary matter and the subject of our dispute: specifically, that just as a lifeless body is entirely incapable of movement and cannot prepare itself for resurrection, so the soul of an unregenerate person, dead in sin, lacks all sense and motion in spiritual matters related to salvation and cannot prepare or dispose itself for regeneration. This occurs until the spirit of regeneration descends

into the heart, stirring new movements and initiating the first stages of the new life. By sense in spiritual matters, I refer to zeal, and by motion, I mean good works. Indeed, these things seem contradictory to me, namely, to be dead in sin as Saint Paul asserts and to possess remnants and vestiges of spiritual life as Arnoldus claims. For spiritual death entirely excludes spiritual life. I readily acknowledge that there are some inclinations toward truth, faint sparks of light in an unregenerate person, and dim traces of the image of God. However, these remnants do not constitute any part of spiritual life and regeneration. Even the devils themselves possess greater light and understanding, yet they remain entirely dead in sin.

XVI. Not all of the differences they present are accurate! First, we deny that God takes into account the dispositions of free will or that a person, through free will, can prepare themselves for regeneration. Certainly, God, at times, uses a person's misfortunes, their deliverance from them, and examples of His vengeance on the wicked to create a path for their regeneration. Also, a person may be effectively troubled by a servile fear and dread of punishment. However, I maintain that these inner movements become praiseworthy and acceptable to God only when they are prompted by the Holy Spirit, and not before. When this occurs, I declare that such motions are a part of regeneration, the initial movements and impulses of the new self, though weak, they are sure beginnings of the new life. They are not preparations of free will that precede regeneration and compel God to grant a greater measure of grace. It is far from the truth that God should consider foregone dispositions when initiating regeneration; on the contrary, those who are the farthest from the kingdom of heaven and engulfed in the deepest darkness are called. Let the Thief on the cross serve as an example, as well as the Romans, the people of Alexandria, Antioch, Corinth, and Ephesus. Among these, there were none more wicked in lust, more indulgent in luxury, more ignorant, or more deeply enmeshed in idolatry. Yet, God, in His effective call, led them to Christ, sending His apostles to them, that where sin abounded, grace might abound all the more.

XVII. The example of the converted Thief shows that regeneration is not always a gradual process. In a moment of profound spiritual agony, he traversed an immeasurable distance. On the contrary, Ezekiel teaches that the resurrection of the body can occur gradually in Chapter 37.

XVIII. What they claim, that free will persists in regeneration, is not true. If free will indeed persists in regeneration, it must necessarily precede regeneration. However, in matters that pertain to the spiritual and salvation, there was no free will before regeneration.

XIX. Their assertion that there are remnants of spiritual life in an unregenerate person is of the same kind, indeed even worse. They request the very thing to be conceded to them, which is the very question at hand, and which we have already proven to be false.

XX. Furthermore, their statement that God does not speak to a dead body is also incorrect. Christ spoke these words to the deceased Lazarus: "Lazarus, come forth" (John 11). In Ezekiel 37:4, God similarly addresses long-dead bones: "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." God calls into existence things that do not exist as though they did, but in calling them, He makes them exist. The words of Christ in John 5:25 are directly relevant to this point: "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." Just as God illuminates the blind with His light, granting them sight, He speaks to the dead in a way that His words make them alive.

XXI. The wit of the Arminian discussants in The Hague is indeed remarkable, as they attempt to prove that there is some remaining ability in a spiritually dead person because we acknowledge that a person can resist grace. This argument is eloquently stated, but it essentially asserts that a person is not spiritually dead in sin because they can resist the Spirit of God. It's as if they suggest that the remnants of our spiritual life are located in the faculty of resisting God, when, in fact, a person is spiritually dead in sin precisely

because their only response is resistance. So, their argument effectively concludes that a person is not spiritually dead in sin because they are spiritually dead in sin.

XXII. What they claim, that someone who is dead cannot resist their resurrection but someone unregenerated may resist their vivification, actually supports our position and burdens the cause of these innovators. Consequently, it follows that death in sin is the worse form of death, and someone who is dead in sin is bound by stronger chains if they resist their own resurrection, not only in the initial stages of their regeneration but also in its progression. In fact, that very inclination to resist God constitutes the chief part of that death and inherent corruption.

XXIII. In the meantime, the reader should observe how artfully Arnoldus conceals his argument when he says that someone who is dead cannot resist their resurrection, but someone who is dead in sin may resist their vivification. The opinion of the Arminians is that an unregenerate person possesses free will, by which they can either make use of sufficient grace or not, believe or not believe. Arnoldus should have framed his comparison as follows: "He who is dead cannot hinder or facilitate their own resurrection, but someone who is unregenerate may hinder or facilitate their own regeneration." However, Arnoldus avoids mentioning this aspect, likely to avoid arousing suspicion of Semipelagianism, a position with which he might be uncomfortable. This is a tactic often employed by those who are ashamed of their own opinions.

XXIV. It is essential not to overlook what the Arminians of the conference in The Hague state on page 81. There, they distinguish between two kinds of unregenerate individuals: some who, having been left without any calling from God, walk in the vanity of their thoughts. They acknowledge that these individuals are dead in sin. However, there are others who have already been called and stirred by the grace of God. Their understanding has been enlightened, and their affections have been inflamed, motivating their will to

apprehend the truth. They deny that these are dead in sin because their understanding and appetites have been quickened, even though the will has not yet been drawn. Several absurdities arise here. First, they believe that some unregenerate individuals have already been quickened and brought to life, even though vivification and regeneration are synonymous. If one's mind is quickened, it must inevitably be regenerated. Secondly, they fall into a similar error by placing vivification where there is no faith, despite the Apostle's testimony that the just shall live by faith. Acknowledging any vivification in an unbeliever and unregenerate person is impious. Thirdly, they argue incorrectly when they suggest that it is possible for the understanding to be enlightened with knowledge of the truth and the appetite inflamed with love for it, yet the will remains averse to this truth. It is inconceivable that a person may be quickened in their mind and affections while their will remains lifeless. What would cause the will to turn away when both the mind and appetites incite and stimulate it? The will is never in doubt except when reason prompts it in one direction, and the appetites draw it in another. The will is pulled in opposing directions by the conflicting suggestions of the mind and appetites. Fourthly, they are inconsistent among themselves when they claim that some are left without any calling from God, considering that they fervently argue that all individuals are called to salvation, not only by an external but also by an internal calling, and that sufficient grace is granted to all. Fifthly, I inquire where they found these two categories of unregenerate persons. If their source is Scripture, then they should provide the relevant passages. If they are based on conjecture, we cannot accept their claims.

XXV. Arnoldus, in his response to Tilenus on Page 134, claims that it might happen that out of two men equally supported by grace, one may be converted while the other may not. However, he should also clarify whether it might occur that out of two equally wicked individuals, both equipped with the same grace (that is, having sufficient and universal grace and receiving an equal Gospel call), one could be converted while the other is not. If such a scenario is

possible, I ask: what accounts for the difference? Was one given greater grace? No, he stated that the grace was equal. Is it because one is better than the other? No, the issue concerns those who are equally wicked. Even if it were so, the conversion of one would not be solely attributed to grace but also to free will. Arnoldus does not object to this notion, as he adds, "Although God, who primarily works faith in man, separates the faithful from the unbeliever, because He does not work faith and conversion in man without man's will, He does not separate man without man." Shortly after, he continues, "Man separates himself by his own will." Thus, it's clear that Arnoldus acknowledges God as the primary cause of faith but not the sole cause, and he claims that man separates himself by his own will. This contradicts the Apostle's statement, "Who separates you?" attributing this credit solely to God. According to Arnoldus, the reason why one follows and another refuses the call, even when equally called, lies in one's free will. In one, free will is the complete cause of unbelief, while in the other, it is a partial cause of faith and conversion. Consequently, man has reason to boast, as he is the one who separates himself, and salvation depends on man's will and effort as well as God's mercy.

To defend against Saint Paul's statement, "Who separates you?" these innovators argue that Paul is referring to the separation where those who have received many gifts are set apart from those who have received fewer. This argument is acceptable. If, by the grace of God alone, those endowed with greater gifts are separated from the faithful with fewer gifts, how much more can those furnished with numerous gifts be separated solely by God's mercy from those completely devoid of faith and knowledge of God?

XXVI. Therefore, Saint Paul's statement in Titus 3 remains steadfast: "Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled." He is not merely discussing food but also the use of food, which is pure according to the purity of conscience. This clarifies that

the passage addresses the purity of actions, not just the purity of food.

XXVII. In conclusion, all Christian virtues, including Faith and Charity, either exist in us by nature, are obtained through practice and diligence, or are placed and cultivated in our hearts by God. Pelagius himself did not dare to claim that these virtues are naturally inherent. That they are not acquired through practice and diligence is evident from the example of the thief who, without any prior practice or effort, obtained faith in a single moment. Therefore, the only remaining explanation is that these virtues are instilled in us by God, and faith is solely a gift and grace from God, not a result of free will.

Chapter 34

The reasons of the Arminians are examined, by which they maintain free will in an unregenerate man, concerning things that are spiritual and belonging to salvation.

I. Against the doctrine of the Orthodox Church, which removes all free will from man in the work of salvation, being supported by the word of God and demonstrated by reason and experience, the Arminians vigorously oppose and advocate free will in those who are unregenerate.

II. They consistently bring up the passage from Saint Paul, Romans 2:14, "The Gentiles which have not the Law, do by nature those things contained in the Law." I respond that the Law commands the love of God with all one's heart and strength, which cannot be accomplished unless all actions are directed towards His glory, and unless one possesses faith, because whatever is not of faith is sin.

Anyone who examines the virtues of heathen people according to these principles will find that in their most virtuous deeds, many elements were lacking, and there was much sin. Hence, it becomes clear that Gentiles indeed perform those things externally that are required by the Law. Saint Paul's words should not be stretched any further. The true nature of righteous works, which lies in the inner conformity and agreement of the mind with God's law, has always been absent in infidels and heathen individuals. Doing things in accordance with the law is one thing, and fulfilling the law is another. The former pertains to obeying the law concerning the external aspects of the work, while the latter means obeying the law in the manner, mindset, and purpose commanded by the word of God.

III. They present certain arguments, such as Isaiah 55:1, where those who thirst are invited by God, signifying those who desire reconciliation with God and salvation. Also, in Matthew 11, the heavy laden are called to come to Christ. They argue that those who are laden are those burdened by their sins and weighed down by their conscience, suggesting that they were already desiring salvation and feeling the weight of their sins before they were called, and that regeneration follows the call. Therefore, they claim that in the unregenerate, there can be a saving sorrow and a desire for forgiveness of sins. However, I affirm that those who thirst and are burdened in this way are not unregenerate. The very desire for salvation, the grace of God, and the pangs of conscience, struggling beneath the burden of sin, which compel us to seek refuge in Christ, are all part of regeneration. Even the initial fear, if it is acceptable to God, is an effect of the Holy Spirit moving the heart. What prevents someone who thirsts for God's grace from having already tasted it, as if having licked it with their lips? What prevents someone commanded to come to Christ from already stirring themselves and beginning to move, albeit at a slow pace? Does Christ, whenever He commands people to believe in Him, speak only to unbelievers? No, this exhortation to believe and come to Him especially applies to those whose newly born and weak faith contends with the doubts of the flesh.

IV. Arminians frequently cite the words of Christ from John 7:17: "If any one will do the will of him that sent me, he shall know of my doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." They use this to argue that one may do the will of God before knowing Christ and His doctrine. This is a distortion of Scripture and an attempt to twist it to suit their agenda. They claim that Christ meant, "He who fulfills the commandments of God will later understand whether my doctrine is from God, etc." Furthermore, they interpret "doing the will of God" to mean acknowledging their sins, fearing God with a servile fear, earnestly desiring God's grace and forgiveness of sins, and obeying the commandments of the law, among other things. This interpretation is incorrect. In this context, "doing the will of God" simply means believing in Christ when He speaks. Christ emphasizes that the Father's will is for us to believe in the Son. Therefore, it is not to be assumed that one does the will of God before believing in His Son. Though it is true that the one who is moved lives, it does not necessarily mean that motion precedes life. Similarly, when Christ says that whoever does the Father's will shall know that His doctrine is from God, it does not imply that one must first do the Father's will before knowing that Christ's doctrine is divine. If there is any chronological order here, it must be that one must first recognize that Christ's doctrine is from God before believing and obeying it. No one believes in something they do not, at least in part, understand. Christ follows this order, as stated in John 17:8, "They have known that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." Additionally, in John 14:17, He mentions that the world does not receive the Spirit of truth because it does not know Him, indicating that knowledge precedes reception.

V. Arnoldus' assertion on page 409 that "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom" (Proverbs 1) and "The Lord revealeth his secrets to them that fear him" (Psalm 25) is problematic. I disagree that the fear of the Lord mentioned in these verses can be attributed to unbelievers and the unregenerate. Solomon's statement that the fear of the Lord is the "beginning" of wisdom means that it is the primary and essential part, as clearly signified by the Hebrew word

"Reshith." Those who fear God and to whom He reveals His secrets are not unregenerate individuals but truly godly people, to whom God continually grants increased wisdom and true knowledge of Him.

VI. Arnoldus, on page 397, argues with the words of Psalm 51, "A contrite spirit is an acceptable sacrifice to God," and Isaiah 66, "God will dwell in a contrite spirit," attempting to demonstrate that these passages apply to unregenerate individuals who confess their sins, experience grief, and begin to fear. However, this argument is misleading or deceived. In these passages, David, while lamenting his sins and offering a profound confession, comforts himself with the hope that his contrition will be a pleasing sacrifice to God. Anyone asserting that David speaks here of the contrition of an unregenerate individual implies that David himself was unregenerate. It is evident that Isaiah is referring to those who are truly faithful, characterized by a filial fear and contrition, not the fear that might exist in the unregenerate or in heathens who have not heard God's word. The prophet specifically mentions those who have been instructed in God's word and, moved by a holy fear, are inclined to listen.

VII. Arnoldus previously listed the good works that an unregenerate individual can perform, such as following the commandments of the law, possessing some sparks of light and knowledge in their heart, grieving for their sins, and seeking the grace of forgiveness and the new spirit. However, many nations do not understand the concept of this "new spirit" and have never heard about the grace of forgiveness of sins. The question arises as to whether these deeds performed by the unregenerate, without faith, are genuinely good. If they are truly good, it would imply that one can perform genuinely good deeds without Christ, His Spirit, or faith. If they are not genuinely good, it would raise questions about why something considered just and good by God alone, which He supposedly only requires from the unregenerate, remains not truly good or just when performed in the absence of faith.

VIII. Shortly thereafter, he states that the same work cannot be performed as perfectly in its essence without the faith of Christ. He distinguishes between works done before regeneration and those done after it, categorizing the former as imperfect and the latter as perfect. These distinctions are reminiscent of the two types of merits commonly discussed in the Papist schools: merits of congruity and merits of condignity, albeit presented under different terminology. It is important to note that the Arminians posit that regenerated individuals can achieve perfect works and perfect love for God. Arnoldus, following Arminius' view, states this on pages 492 and 399. According to Arminius, there are two spirits: one that precedes regeneration, called the spirit of bondage to fear, and another that regenerates and perfects it. In response, I do not contest Augustine's view that a person may live without sin in this life. It is certainly a bold claim. The Arminians, however, seem to surpass even the Apostle James, who acknowledges in James 3 that everyone stumbles in many ways. They also surpass Saint John, who warns in his confession that if anyone claims to be without sin, they deceive themselves. Moreover, they surpass all the Apostles who prayed for forgiveness of their trespasses daily. The Arminians' assertion that the regenerate can fulfill the Law is remarkable, especially when they claim that the Law of nature can be fulfilled by the unregenerate and even heathen individuals who have not heard the Gospel. This Law of nature demands that a person refrain from lying and love God with all their heart and strength. Yet, even the regenerate have never achieved these commands themselves. How can the unregenerate, who are spiritually dead, fulfil something that the living have never accomplished? If this doctrine is admitted, it would necessitate the abandonment of Christian religion in favour of another Gospel.

IX. To address the notion of the double spirit of God, Arminius and, according to him, Arnoldus, propose two spirits or, more accurately, two actions of the same spirit. One of these spirits is believed to be common to all people, including the unregenerate and even heathens who have not heard the Gospel. They argue that God works in all individuals through this spirit and is not idle in any of them. This

spirit is referred to as the spirit of bondage, as mentioned in Romans 8:15. It is opposed in this passage to the spirit of Adoption, which is reserved for true believers. The Arminians claim that the spirit of bondage is effective not only in the written law but also in the natural law imprinted on people's hearts. They believe that unregenerate individuals can experience a saving fear, acknowledge and confess their sins, implore God's grace, and strive to obey the law of nature through this spirit. According to them, these actions serve as preparations and dispositions for regeneration, provided that free will properly utilises the universal and sufficient grace available to all individuals. These doctrines espoused by this new sect are fraught with complexities and delicate nuances.

X. In Holy Scripture, I find references to the spirit of adoption, the first fruits of the spirit, and the spirit of sanctification. However, I find no mention of a spirit of God bound by the law and common to all individuals. It seems utterly inconceivable that the spirit of God working in our hearts could be separated from knowledge of Christ without significant wickedness. I cannot fathom how individuals described by Saint Paul in Ephesians 2 as "dead in sin," estranged from the life of God, and without God in the world, can possess spiritual life or have the spirit of God residing in their hearts, motivating and affecting them unto salvation. Certainly, the Apostle would not have referred to the law separated from the Gospel as a killing letter if the spirit of God were always connected to the law or if the spirit of God worked in people's hearts, preparing them for faith and conversion without knowledge of the Gospel. The Law does not serve as a schoolmaster to Christ until the grace of Christ is offered to us because it is only then that the Law, through its terror and threats, compels us to accept the offered grace.

XI. However, the most dangerous notion the Arminians insinuate but dare not explicitly state is that the Holy Spirit naturally resides in every person. If the spirit of God is effective through the law, and the law is inherently written in every individual, it logically follows that the spirit of God naturally dwells in every person. Consequently, all

the Scripture mentions regarding the second birth through the spirit, the creation of the new man, and spiritual resurrection would lose significance and become absurd. Why would there be a need to infuse a new spirit for regeneration if the same spirit of God already resided in the hearts of the unregenerate?

XII. They misrepresent the passage from Saint Paul, Romans 8: "Ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear." Saint Paul never referred to the spirit of God as the spirit of bondage, for such a statement would be a reproach to the spirit of God. Instead, he simply states that the spirit given to them is not servile, one that would strike their hearts with a slavish fear. Where the spirit of God exists, there is liberty (2 Corinthians 3). To illustrate, if I were to say that we have not received from God the spirit of falsehood, would I imply that there is a spirit of God that compels lying? Would the spirit of God contradict itself, with one aspect called the spirit of bondage and another the spirit of liberty? The Apostle's words convey a straightforward meaning: "You have received the spirit of God, not one that terrifies your consciences with servile fear, leaving you uncertain and doubtful before the grace of God and the adoption of Christ were revealed to you, etc."

XIII. Their assertion is exceedingly misguided when they include the fear and terror produced by the law (devoid of the spirit of regeneration and knowledge of Christ) among the effects of the spirit of God. The law, received in this manner, can only curb unruly passions through the fear of punishment and foster external obedience. It will never cleanse internal impurity or instil a single drop of genuine repentance. In fact, it tends to stir up inner lusts by resisting them, as it is ingrained in every person, encouraging them to pursue what is forbidden. Whenever the prospect of impunity is presented, people, having broken their restraints, tend to engage in even more audacious misconduct. This aligns with what the Apostle expresses in Romans 7:5, 7:8 – "The motions of sins by the law worked in our members, and sin, taking occasion by the commandment itself, wrought concupiscence." Redemption from

this bondage of deadly sin only occurs when the spirit of life, found in Christ, liberates us from the law of sin and death, as stated in Romans 8:2. In other words, the powerful influence of the life we receive from Christ frees us from the grip of deadly sin.

XIV. Their objection based on the comparison of unregenerate human corruption to sleep and an ulcer is futile and groundless. While it is true that this corruption is likened to sleep, it is specifically described as a deathly slumber from which individuals cannot awaken or rouse themselves. Furthermore, the ulcer mentioned in Isaiah 53:1 and 1 Peter 2 does not represent sin itself but rather the consequences and punishment of sin. Therefore, these references have no bearing on any remnants or vestiges of spiritual life in an unregenerate man.

Chapter 35

The objections borrowed by the Arminians from the Pelagians and Papists are addressed.

The questions of whether an unregenerate man necessarily sins, and whether necessity excuses the sinner, are discussed. Also, the matter of whether God commands things that cannot be accomplished by man is examined. I. Having removed these thorns and difficulties, we can now address the arguments, or rather declamations, that they employ to unfairly burden our position. They claim that according to our doctrine, an unregenerate man necessarily sins, and can do nothing but sin. They argue that it is not the sin committed out of necessity, which cannot be avoided, that incurs guilt. Arminius, in opposition to Perkins, on page 106, states that the necessity and immutability of sinning excuse the sin and exempt the act from

punishment. Arnoldus, on page 188, similarly asserts that necessity excuses sin. They argue that commanding something impossible to obey is in vain. Arnoldus even claims that God requires nothing of us for which He does not provide sufficient power. He goes so far as to say that if God were to demand something from man without granting sufficient power to accomplish it, He would be gathering where He has not scattered. Vorstius echoes these sentiments on page 28 in his Collation with Piscator.

II. These Pelagian arguments are repeatedly presented by these sectarians, and a thousand times they sing one and the same song, so we must thoroughly examine them, although they seem to boast of these claims more for show and to confuse those with weaker intellects than out of genuine belief in them.

III. Firstly, we assert that the necessity of sinning does not excuse sin if it is voluntary, and if this necessity is brought about by one's own fault. Aristotle, in his Ethics 3.7, states that initially, unjust and intemperate individuals had the power not to be such. However, once they had willingly made themselves such, they cannot avoid being such, nor are they to be excused. He also mentions that it is shameful if someone, through their drunkenness, causes blindness upon themselves. If this holds true for bodily vices, into which a person falls due to their own fault and wishes they had not, how much more so for vices of the mind, which are loved by those who willingly choose evil through habit and inclination? Herein lies a significant part of the problem: the fact that the wicked often love their vices and resist improvement. This voluntary necessity is thus free. It is insufficient to argue that such a necessity is spontaneous and of one's own accord since even animals, guided by instinct, act of their own accord and without knowledge. However, someone who is necessarily evil is not only acting of their own accord but also voluntarily, as it is done with judgment and knowledge. God is necessarily good but also free, and Satan is necessarily evil but with the utmost freedom. The saints in heaven are freely good and yet necessary, for it is not believable that they have lost their liberty

through glorification. One cannot claim that saints in heaven cannot sin because there is no occasion or temptation to sin. The angels, before their fall, had no greater opportunity to sin, yet their abundant gifts from God led them to become enamored with themselves, making them less inclined to contemplate God and resulting in pride and rebellion. The necessity of the perseverance of the saints must therefore be based on another foundation: God's election. He predestined those He appointed to Christ from eternity and provided them with the necessary gifts and means to persevere in the state to which they were assigned. Furthermore, there is a particular vision of God in which the creature, when admitted, is necessarily transformed into the likeness of God, just as glass burns when exposed to the sun. This vision is mentioned in 1 John 3, where it says, "We shall be like him because we shall see him as he is," and in Psalm 17:15. In conclusion, if someone who sins necessarily and yet voluntarily, having brought the necessity of sin upon themselves by their own fault, is unjustly punished, then someone who cannot sin and is necessarily good will also receive benefits and glory unjustly, as we have demonstrated the angels and saints in heaven to be.

IV. Saint Augustine has not hesitated to assert in numerous places that there is a necessity of sinning in man. In his Dispute 2 against Fortunatus, he states, "After man sinned by his free will, we, who descended from his stock, are necessarily fallen into a necessity of sinning." In his book *De Perfecta Iustitiae, Ratio 9*, he says, "Because the will sinned, there followed the sinner a hard and forcible necessity of sinning." Arminius disagrees with him and makes the following statements against Perkins on page 106: "It is impossible that what one does freely should be done necessarily." Moreover, on page 144, he boldly declares, "God, by all His omnipotence, cannot make that which is done necessarily be done freely." This man is accustomed to making laws for God's justice and setting limits to His omnipotence. If Arminius is of the opinion that God is necessarily good and not free, and if it is unquestionably more excellent to be good freely rather than unfreely, then, without a doubt, man shall be

better than God. Seneca's blasphemy in his 53rd Epistle, where he claims that a wise man goes ahead of God Himself because man is wise by the benefit of nature while God is wise by His own, would have to be subscribed to. Therefore, just as God is freely good and yet cannot help but be good, and Satan is necessarily evil but also free and voluntary, so too is a person dead in sin necessarily sinful but also voluntary and, therefore, free.

V. In this matter, the force of truth is so great that it often unintentionally escapes them. Arnoldus either unknowingly or intentionally acknowledges this necessity of sinning on page 394, where, according to Arminius, he states that a person under the state of sin can understand, will, or do nothing that is good. Hence, he necessarily sins unless God graciously removes that necessity. Thus, he confesses that a person sins necessarily before God removes the necessity of sinning and that a person sins necessarily even when they sin freely. As Arminius admits, it wouldn't be sin if they didn't sin freely. However, perhaps Arminius and Arnoldus believe that God removes that necessity of sinning from everyone. Let us then consider what Arnoldus adds in the same place. He says that Arminius determines that God is prepared, for His part, to take away that necessity of sinning. In these words, he does not obscurely confess that God does not remove that necessity from everyone but is prepared to do so if they cooperate. That God does not remove it from everyone is our own fault, as Arnoldus himself acknowledges on page 398. In the same vein, on page 399, according to Arminius, he says that God, through the grace of His spirit, gradually frees people from this necessity of sinning. Therefore, it is not instantly removed but always remains in those in whom the grace of the Holy Spirit either does not work or does not prevail. On page 406, the same man acknowledges that there is an impotency and inability in man to resist sin. What else is this impotency if not the necessity of sinning?

VI. Furthermore, the Arminians claim that God irresistibly hardens some individuals. I use their own words. Now, nothing is more evident than that someone who is irresistibly hardened necessarily

sins. Hence, we have the admission from these Sectarians that some people sin necessarily, and this necessity of sinning does not excuse them from their sin because they have brought this necessity upon themselves through their own fault.

VII. It is therefore a marvel that the Arminians, who are otherwise intelligent, stumble over this straw and prefer to support and maintain Pelagius, borrowing weapons from him, rather than yielding to Scripture and the evidence of truth. For in the same way, Celestius, a Pelagian, argues in Saint Augustine's book *De Perfecta Iustitiae-Ratio*, 2. He says, "Again, it is asked whether sin is of the will or of necessity. If of necessity, it is not sin. If of the will, it can be avoided." Therefore, in Arminius, we see Pelagius revived.

VIII. We, therefore, determine that the necessity of sin excuses from sin if the one sinning has not brought this necessity of sinning upon themselves through their own fault. Likewise, if necessity, compulsion, or a greater external force imposed by an agent is understood, or a natural necessity ordained by the Creator, devoid of knowledge, such as the natural inclination of heavy objects toward the Earth's center, then it does not excuse sin. But necessity does not excuse sin when the sinner has procured this necessity of sinning themselves, sins knowingly and willingly, and takes pleasure in this inclination to sin.

IX. The assertion made by the Sectarians, that there is no room for punishment if man lacks the freedom of their free will, may be accepted if, by the freedom of free will, one means *εκ παραδοσεως*, that which is voluntary. Many of the ancients, especially before Saint Augustine, defended the freedom of free will in this sense. For whoever sins, sins voluntarily. However, if the freedom of free will implies an inclination that is equally free, either toward good or evil, in matters related to faith and salvation, I consistently maintain that man is deserving of punishment even if they lack this freedom. It is sufficient for punishment that they not only sin voluntarily but also

knowingly and willingly bring about their own necessity of sinning, taking pleasure in this voluntary necessity.

X. Yet the Arminians persist obstinately and argue that it is futile to command if we do not have the power to obey. They claim that exhortations, promises, threats, and counsels are all in vain if none of them can be perceived or performed by man. This would be as futile as singing a song to a deaf person, commanding a blind person to see, instructing a fettered individual to run, or speaking to the dry bones of the dead, saying, "Be converted, be converted, and see." This is an old objection of the Pelagians, as seen in Saint Augustine's work, *De Civitate Dei*, Book 5, Chapter 9. There, Caelestius the Pelagian argues: "Again, it is asked whether man is commanded to be without sin. For either he cannot, and it is not commanded, or because it is commanded, he can. For why should that be commanded which cannot be done at all?" This is stark Arminianism. Caelestius borrowed this argument from Cicero, as witnessed by Saint Augustine in Book 5, *De Civitate Dei*, Chapter 9, where he states that Cicero, by denying God's foreknowledge, attempted to make men free but made them sacrilegious.

XI. I respond to these points by stating that precepts, threats, counsels, etc., are in vain if a person lacked the capacity for understanding and for willing or choosing something of their own accord, based on reason and judgment. However, an unregenerate person possesses understanding and a will that operates autonomously and willingly, guided by prior knowledge and practical judgment. It is not always true that precepts given in vain cannot be fulfilled. For example, the intemperate person, who through habit has rendered themselves insensible and unable to control their desires and excesses, is still bound by the laws of sobriety and temperance. Likewise, it is beyond doubt that the devil, who is inherently evil and incapable of obeying God, is obligated to obey God; otherwise, he would not sin by being an enemy of God. Therefore, from a debtor who has lost a significant sum of money through gambling, a debt that was borrowed at interest, what is owed

is not in vain or unjustly demanded, nor can the creditor lose their right due to the debtor's wrongdoing. Therefore, since humanity, through their own fault, brought upon themselves the inability to perform what God would have them do, God does not vainly or unjustly demand obedience from them. It is not fair for human sin to benefit them, allowing them to act lawlessly because they corrupted themselves with wickedness and incurred the inability to repay to God the debt of nature that God requires from them, not as sinners, nor as just individuals, but merely as debtors, as creatures subject to and bound by obedience. When God gives His law, He regards humanity in this manner, and that is how He considers them when adding promises and threats to the law, saying, "Do this, and you shall live," and "Choose good, that you may live," etc. Moreover, in the same manner, He says, "Make for yourselves a new heart, for why will you die, O house of Israel?" (Ezekiel 18). He who thinks that God's commandments measure our strength is mistaken because they serve as the rule of our duty. The law does not teach us what we are capable of doing but what we ought to do. It does not concern itself with what we are currently able to do but what we were able to do previously and from what height of righteousness we fell through Adam's fall.

XII. Scripture provides compelling evidence for this. Saint Paul, in Philippians 2:12, commands us to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. However, to prevent the misconception that we can accomplish this because it is commanded, he adds immediately, "It is God who works in you both to will and to do, according to His good pleasure." Similarly, in Ezekiel 18:31, we read, "Make yourselves a new heart, and a new spirit." Yet, to avoid thinking that this is solely a matter of free will, in the thirty-sixth chapter of the same prophecy, God says, "I will take away the stony heart and give you a new heart of flesh." Likewise, Joel 2 exhorts, "Be converted to me with your whole heart," yet in Jeremiah 31:18, it is acknowledged that the conversion of a sinner is God's gift: "Turn me, O Lord, and I shall be turned." In the closing verses of Lamentations, we find the plea, "Turn us, O Lord, and we shall be turned." In Deuteronomy 10:16,

God tells the people to "circumcise the foreskin of your heart," but in the same book, in Chapter 30:6, it is revealed that God is the one who works it: "The Lord your God will circumcise your heart." In John 14:1, Christ commands us to believe in Him, yet He also states that no one can come to Him unless the Father draws them (John 6:44), and it is clear that by coming, He means believing, as He teaches in John 6:35: "He who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst." In Philippians 1 and Ephesians 2, we learn that faith and the act of believing come from God. Finally, while Scripture instructs that people should earn their bread through the sweat and labor of their hands, we are also commanded to ask God for our daily bread because bodily sustenance is a gift from God but given to those who work for it. God's blessings do not come to idleness but to labour. To keep it concise: Does God not require perfect obedience from the unregenerate? Yes, even from the heathens who have never heard of Christ. Nevertheless, if someone were to claim that unbelievers could be perfectly just and completely free from sin, they would attribute to unbelievers something that never happened to any faithful individual. Does not Arminius himself acknowledge that some are irresistibly hardened, yet God still demands perfect obedience from them?

XIII. God's commands are not in vain, and His precepts serve a purpose. When God commands, exhorts, threatens, etc., He instills in humans a sense of their sin, teaches them about their debt, reminds them of what they were once capable of, and from where they have fallen. His commands also establish a standard of justice, preventing anyone from claiming ignorance as an excuse for their sins. Additionally, God combines the power of His Word with the efficacy of the Spirit, effectively sharpening it. Commanding someone who is bound to run is not in vain if that command releases their bonds. Similarly, instructing a blind person to see is not in vain if those words enable the blind to see. God's words both command and empower us to act, as seen in His creation, where God's command aligns with His provision. It is beneficial for humans to

feel the weight of the Law, which surpasses their strength, to better appreciate the remedies offered through Christ. Saint Augustine aptly expresses this in his book "On Correction and Grace," Chapter 3, saying, "O man, in the commandment, know what you ought to do; in the word of correction and reproof, know that through your own fault, you lack what you ought to have; in prayer, know from where you may receive what you desire." In his work "On the Spirit and the Letter," Augustine emphasises that God does not measure His precepts by human strength; instead, when He commands what is right, He freely provides His elect with the ability to fulfil it.

XIV. The comparisons used by these sectarians to cast doubt on our beliefs are flawed and irrelevant. They argue that it is pointless to blame a blind person for not seeing, even if they have gouged out their own eyes, or to encourage someone to work who has severed their own hands. Concerning the blind person, I respond that this example is used improperly. Whether a person is blind due to their own fault or another's, they are not obligated to see. However, someone who, through their own fault, has become wicked and unable to obey God is still obliged to obey Him. No one is compelled to perform natural functions once they have ceased, but the bond between the creature and the Creator, which the creature is obliged to honour and love, cannot be annulled by any circumstance, let alone human wickedness. If a blind person were to prefer blindness over sight and reject offered remedies, would they not deserve blame? This is the condition of humanity in a state of sin, for they are not only inherently evil but also unwilling to be good, delighting in their wickedness.

XV. The comparison involving someone who has willingly cut off their own hands also has flaws. Furthermore, it should be noted that while hands can be severed, the will represented by the hands cannot. Every wicked person possesses a will with which they are always obligated to worship and love God, even though they have corrupted it. In conclusion, analogies drawn from natural and civil matters are often unsuitable and absurd when applied to moral and

religious matters. Similarly, the analogy of a person speaking to dry bones is invalid because these bones are not compelled to move, whereas an unregenerate person is obligated to believe and obey.

XVI. Arnoldus, on page 136, states, "We see that the Scripture often says that he who believes and is converted separates himself from evil, purifies, enlivens, sanctifies, saves, and circumcises himself, gives himself a new heart, puts on the new man," etc. From this, he concludes that it may be said that man separates himself, although the Apostle asks, "Who has separated you?" with the implied answer being God. Arnoldus cites Ezekiel 18:31, James 1:27, 1 Peter 1:22, 2 Timothy 2:21, Luke 17:33, and Deuteronomy 10:16 as evidence for his argument. However, these references do not support Arnoldus's interpretation. They merely command these actions but do not assert that they are achieved by us. It is perplexing how someone of such keen intellect could overlook this point. Furthermore, even if these passages were to suggest that man gives himself a new heart, sanctifies himself, and saves himself, it would not logically follow that these actions are performed by our free will. The Bible often speaks of things done by us that are actually wrought by God through us. For example, man opens to God when He knocks (Revelation 2:20), the Apostles raised the dead, Pastors of the Church forgive sins (Matthew 18), and save souls (1 Timothy 4:16), although they cannot claim to be the Saviors of souls without arrogance, as this title belongs solely to Christ.

XVII. Whether this doctrine, which appears to be drawn from the ideas of Semi-Pelagians and suggests the concurrence of free will with grace, a faculty that enables man to believe and use grace if he chooses, or not believe and reject grace, assigning the complete cause of faith not solely to grace but to grace in conjunction with free will—whether, I say, this doctrine leads in that direction can be easily determined. It tends toward the inclusion of man's merits through subtle means. Although these sectarians may, at first glance, appear to despise merits, in many instances, they establish them. The Epistle against the Walachrians states on page 44, "Those whom God

calls and to whom He grants the grace of preaching beforehand, we confess, for the most part, to be such men that their virtues deserve nothing less than this free bestowal of gifts." Thus, there are some individuals who deserve the gifts of God even before regeneration. Arnoldus, on page 328, asserts that God gives to creatures who obey that which is rightfully theirs. Arminius, against Perkins, on page 218, claims that God gives life to those who work, as a promise and a due debt. Arnoldus, on page 433, speaks of some who, with the help of grace, do not render themselves unworthy and do not deserve that the Spirit should cease working in them.

XVIII. As a corollary, I would like to present the renowned statement of Saint Augustine from "Ad Simplicium, Question 2": "This is clear, that we will in vain unless God shows mercy; but I do not see how it can be said that God shows mercy in vain unless we will, because if God has mercy, we are willing, since it is a part of that mercy that we should be willing. For it is God who works in us to will and to do, according to His good will." In the same place, he adds, "The result of God's mercy cannot be subject to man's power so that God should show mercy in vain when man is unwilling, because if He has mercy on them, He can call them in such a way that is appropriate for them to be moved, to understand, and to follow."

Chapter 36

Of the outward and inward calling, and whether the one is without the other.

I. Although the works of God, which are everywhere before our eyes, abundantly testify and even against men's wills reveal the infinite power, goodness, and wisdom of God, yet this light is dim and closer

to darkness compared to the light of the Word of God. Through it, He not only assures us of His omnipotence, majesty, and providence, but also discloses His will. Contemplating the creations of nature does not awaken a sense of sin in people or show them the path to salvation and reconciliation with God. There can be no profitable and saving contemplation of nature unless those things, which are barely discernible and almost illegible in the uncertain light of creation, become clear and distinct to us through the Word of God, as if viewed through spectacles. Only then can we behold heaven with filial eyes, seeing it as the entrance to our Father's house, when God, through His Word, has dispelled the mist from our minds and revealed sure signs of His fatherly love.

II. Furthermore, even though knowledge of the natural world is insufficient for salvation, the Gentiles, who were instructed by no other teacher than nature, are inexcusable for not making better use of these limited aids as they could. They attempt to suppress or distort those natural notions of goodness and equity, those sparks of goodness placed in them by nature. Therefore, only those who benefit in piety from the instruction of creation and are stirred by the pricks of conscience to fear God profit from this, to whom God has granted the privilege of His Word.

III. However, not everyone who hears the Word of God attains salvation. Only those in whom the preaching of the Gospel penetrates deeply and takes root experience a change of heart and the illumination of heavenly light in their minds. These salvific effects are not to be attributed to the eloquence of men's persuasion but to the secret efficacy of the Holy Spirit, the true teacher of our souls and the finger of God, who engraves the law on the stony tablets of our hearts. Thus, the Gospel is referred to in Scripture as a two-edged sword, a hammer that breaks the stone, the arm of God, and the power of God for salvation. Without the efficacy of the Holy Spirit, preaching remains a lifeless letter and an empty sound that strikes the ears, serving only to heighten the condemnation of stubborn and rebellious listeners.

From this arises a twofold calling: an outward one, accomplished through the public proclamation of the Gospel, and an inward one, achieved through the powerful drawing and transformation of the heart by the Holy Spirit, through whom the Word becomes effective. This inward transformation consists of two parts: the enlightenment of the mind and the change of the will, with the latter being superior in dignity despite occurring later in time. In such a way, the illumination of the mind without the renewal of the heart leads to greater condemnation. In Scripture, this inward transformation is referred to as conversion, regeneration, the new birth, creation, and resurrection.

IV. Here, we have a dispute with the Arminians, and there is a significant controversy between us. They claim that the Word of God, whenever and to whomever it is preached, is never without its life-giving power, and no one is outwardly called without also being inwardly drawn. Therefore, they reject the distinction of calling into outward and inward. Arminius expressed these views against Perkins, Page 57: "The Word is unprofitable without the Holy Ghost; therefore, it has the cooperation of the Holy Ghost always joined to it." This statement comes after he had said a little earlier, while discussing the Word and the cooperation of the Holy Spirit: "These two are almost always joined together," implying that they are not always joined. Arnoldus also suggests that Arminius may have doubted this point; on Page 432, he states: "It may be doubted whether Arminius thought that the inward assistance of the Spirit was always present with the outward preaching." However, Arnoldus himself openly affirms that the inward calling accompanies the outward calling, as found in Chapter 4: "The opinion of Arminius is that the efficacy of the Holy Ghost is present with all those who are initially called." In their Epistle against the Walachrians, the Arminians labour to teach that even in those who are not converted, the Word is not devoid of the quickening Spirit (Page 49). Arnoldus (Page 464) teaches that this life-giving power is not only associated with the preaching of the Gospel but also with the preaching of the law. This change is brought about by the Spirit through the Word of

the Law, preparatorily and in a preparatory manner. In this action, the Spirit carries itself entirely passively. Through this action, Arnoldus claims, the Spirit allures assent, while the liberty of the will remains intact. Arnoldus places this Holy Spirit's work, even in unbelievers and those who are not yet regenerated. Although it is not the Spirit of regeneration, it disposes them to regeneration.

V. This doctrine is contrary not only to the Holy Scripture but also to experience and common sense. We see many hearers of the Word who are not affected by its preaching any more than if lessons were sung to the deaf. Their minds wander elsewhere and never return, mired in such apathy that they have no taste for the Gospel, no feeling for it, and no agreement with it, even though they are not sluggish in other matters. Many also receive the Gospel with mockery and laughter, considering it absurd, much like the Athenians in Acts 17:32. For Christ preached is a stumbling block to the Jews and foolishness to the Greeks. They take offense at it, while others ridicule it. I have seen those who, when asked what they took away from the sermon or what they remembered, earnestly replied that they could not tell whether the preacher spoke French or Latin.

VI. The Arminians argue that even in such individuals, including unbelievers who are instructed only in the law, the Spirit of God works and necessarily and, as they say, irresistibly imparts a sense and feeling of true doctrine, though He does not grant agreement and consent except through free will. Therefore, according to the Arminians, almost everyone, including the faithful and unbelievers alike, to whom the Gospel is preached or the Law without the Gospel is presented, will be drawn by the Holy Spirit and feel the life-giving Spirit within them. This notion does not greatly differ from the fanatical enthusiasm and inspiration of the Anabaptists, except that the Anabaptists claim this sense and feeling to be unique to themselves, while these innovators assert it to be common to all, whether they receive the Gospel or the Law without the Gospel.

VII. It is futile to cite Scripture passages to refute this opinion. All the passages we have presented in Chapter 34 to demonstrate that an unregenerate person and an unbeliever are incapable and unsuitable for every good and salvation-profitable work fall under this category. All of these would be false if the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit dwelt in unbelievers and unregenerate individuals, and if all people were inwardly drawn through an internal calling.

VIII. To this end, consider those passages that teach us that only those come to Christ whom the Father draws (John 6:44). However, according to Arminius, all individuals are drawn and inwardly affected by the Holy Ghost. As the wind blows where it wishes, so does the Spirit (John 3:8). Therefore, the Spirit does not breathe everywhere. Among the multitude, God opened Lydia's heart before the others. When the apostles were astonished, the thief believed amidst the cries of the raging crowd and numerous impediments to belief. A single call from Christ moved Matthew to leave his tax booth and follow Christ. In contrast, the people of Capernaum, despite witnessing many miracles and receiving good teachings, hardened their hearts against the Gospel. Hence, it is evident that some individuals are drawn by the efficacy and power of the Spirit, while others are left in their natural wickedness. What accounts for this difference? If we consider merit, who among the unregenerate is not undeserving of God's grace, given that all people have stony hearts and are dead in sin? However, if we consider prior disposition, why were the people of Capernaum called by the Gospel rather than the people of Tyre, especially since Christ attested that the people of Capernaum were worse disposed and less inclined to repentance?

IX. Arnoldus, on Page 445, contends that Lydia's heart was opened because she was well-disposed and that God opened her heart because she opened it herself. In that place, she is referred to as one devoted to the worship of God even before she believed Paul. One might argue that many worship God in a wicked and improper manner. However, I am more inclined to believe that Lydia, a Jewish woman, possessed the spirit of regeneration, had true piety, and

believed in the promised Messiah, even though she did not yet know that Jesus, the Son of Mary, was the Christ, as He had not been preached to her. Such individuals include the Ethiopian eunuch and Cornelius, whom Acts 10 refers to as a devout man, praised for his prayers, alms, and piety even before hearing about Christ. These were among those, as Saint Luke states in Chapter 2:25, who expected the consolation of Israel. It would be wrong to count these individuals among unbelievers, along with other Jews who blasphemed and rejected Christ's preaching. Therefore, Lydia, as one of these believers, had her heart opened by God to pay attention to Saint Paul's words and learn that the Christ she awaited had already come, and the prophecies of Him by the prophets had been fulfilled.

X. The Arminians present some arguments against these ideas, but they are so insubstantial that they can be dispersed with a breath. Arminius, in opposition to Perkins on Page 57, asserts that Stephen, in Acts 7:51, reproached the Jews for always resisting the Holy Ghost. From this, one might infer that these rebellious Jews were inwardly affected by the Holy Ghost. However, the subsequent words clarify what it means to resist the Holy Ghost. Stephen adds, "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" That is, to persecute the prophets who spoke by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost and resist the Spirit speaking through them was to resist the Holy Ghost.

XI. I acknowledge that there are individuals who resist the spirit of grace, as the Apostle mentions in Hebrews 10:29. They contend against the inner prompting of the Holy Ghost. However, the Apostle in that passage speaks of a few who, after joyfully accepting the Gospel and receiving some knowledge of God's Word, later turn away from God with a determined and obstinate mind. They cast out God's grace with disdain and deliberately sin after having acquired knowledge of the truth, as stated in verse 26. These individuals are the same as those who sin against the Holy Ghost, as evidenced by the Apostle's assertion that their salvation is beyond hope. He also states that there remains no sacrifice for their sins and no hope of reconciliation. Nevertheless, this pertains only to a few who have

been made aware of either the law alone or the Gospel with the law. These sectarians claim that all such individuals are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost and possess an understanding of the true doctrine. I do not believe that the gifts of the Spirit received by such individuals include the gifts of regeneration, the spirit of adoption, or a genuine, justifying faith. Instead, they are merely the promptings of the Spirit moving the heart. The will, warmed only slightly rather than inflamed, attaches itself to the Gospel. However, when the dulled desires sense that a battle is brewing, they exert greater force. Consequently, they expel that superficial piety from the heart, turning it into hatred. As a result of these incitations to piety, their concealed poison bursts forth more vehemently.

XII. In the same place, Arminius supports their wavering cause with a passage from the Prophet Isaiah, Chapter 55:11, which reads: "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." Surely this is hitting the nail on the head. Isaiah's meaning is clear; he asserts that the promises and threats presented in the word of God will be fulfilled, and nothing spoken in vain will go unfulfilled. There is no mention here of the quickening efficacy of the Spirit affecting people's hearts, nor, even if there were, could it be proven that the Spirit of God works in all, but only in those whom He has decreed to save.

XIII. Arnoldus, on Page 443, provides a multitude of passages from Scripture, but he does not prove what he intends to prove by them. The passage from Matthew 23:37, "How often would I have gathered thy children?" does not prove the point. We have already shown in the fifth chapter that these children were gathered together. Moreover, if they were not gathered, it does not follow that they were called in any way other than by an outward calling.

XIV. The passage from Isaiah 65:2 also does not prove it: "I have spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people." Nor does the passage from Proverbs 1:24, "I have called and ye refused." These

passages speak of the outward calling and not of the efficacy of the Spirit working in people's hearts.

XV. The passage from Psalm 81:14, "O that my people had hearkened, that Israel had walked in my ways; I would soon have subdued their enemies," means nothing more than what it plainly states: that God would have defeated the enemies of Israel if Israel had obeyed God. There is no mention here of the inward efficacy of the Spirit.

XVI. The passage from Ezekiel, Chapter 18, verse 31, "Make ye a new heart, and a new spirit," does not prove that man makes himself a new heart, especially when in the 36th Chapter of the same prophecy, God says, "I will give you a new heart and a new spirit." It is even less proven that the Holy Ghost works in all men.

XVII. Nor do the words of Saint John, Chapter 5:34, "I seek not the testimony of men, but these things I say that ye might be saved," and verse 40, "Ye will not come to me that ye might have life," prove how the quickening power of the Holy Ghost works in all men. I confess, in my dullness, I cannot conceive how this can be derived from these words.

XVIII. It is not proven by the words of Saint Paul in 1 Timothy 2:4, "God would have all men be saved." We have extensively discussed the meaning of these words in Chapter 29: that God invites men of all kinds and every condition to salvation.

XIX. Nor is it proven by the passage from Peter in Ephesians 2:3:9, "God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." This passage does not establish that the Holy Ghost inwardly works in all men, even in those to whom the Gospel is not preached. It only signifies that God is not the cause of anyone's downfall and that He does not take pleasure in the destruction of man as a human being. However, when the same individual is a sinner, God loves the execution of His justice.

XX. Nor is it proven by that passage from Ezekiel, Chapter 12:2, "Son of man, thou dwellest in the midst of a rebellious house, which have eyes to see and see not, they have ears to hear and hear not." By "eyes and ears" in this context, we do not understand sufficient grace for salvation, either directly or indirectly, nor do we infer that the Holy Ghost operates in the reprobate. Instead, it signifies a knowledge in their hearts, by which, even against their will, they acknowledged the correctness of what was taught by the Prophets. They were admonished through clear instructions and stern threats, leaving no room for them to claim ignorance. This knowledge was imparted to them not by supernatural grace working internally or by sufficient grace common to all, enabling them to believe and convert if they chose to, but through the instructions and teachings of the Prophets and the knowledge of God's law in their minds, which they willingly hardened their hearts against.

XXI. He joins these corrupted and flawed interpretations of Scripture with equally flawed arguments. He claims that God would deceive and mock men if He offered them salvation, expressed a desire for their salvation, and yet did not call them to be saved. My response is that when God calls people through the Law or the Gospel, He does not intend for those He calls to remain unsaved. God's purpose is to demand from humans what they owe: obedience to God's commands and faith in His promises. There is no doubt that God sincerely calls people, for in His call, He genuinely declares what pleases Him, what humans owe, and what He will grant to those who believe and obey. However, we do not share Arnoldus' belief that God is obligated to restore the faculties humans lost and remedy the disabilities they brought upon themselves. Furthermore, it is audaciously presumptuous to try to dictate to God the means He must follow; otherwise, He would be deemed unjust, as if He were required to present His case before a human tribunal.

XXII. Arnoldus continues, asserting that God teaches the same thing when He explicitly states that He will not be burdened with the unjust suspicion that He would demand something from us for

which He would not provide sufficient power. I disregard the unrefined mode of expression and language that is not fitting for God, suggesting that God fears unjust suspicions from humans. Instead, I address the content of this doctrine, which is profoundly wicked and almost unrivaled in its wickedness. Given that God requires unregenerate individuals and unbelievers to fulfill their natural obligation, namely, the perfect observance of the Law, Arnoldus' argument implies that unregenerate individuals and unbelievers possess the power to perfectly fulfill the Law and live without sin even without knowledge of Christ and faith. The Arminians themselves claim that God irresistibly hardens some people. Yet, despite their hardening, God continues to demand perfect obedience from them just as before their hardening. Creatures are never exempted from their subjection to their Creator, not even through eternal punishment. There is no doubt that even the devils in eternal torment are obligated to believe in God, for they are punished precisely because they do not love Him. Furthermore, if someone is punished for past disobedience, it does not exempt them from the obedience they owe for the future. This perverse doctrine, which attempts to determine the extent of human capabilities based on God's commandments and asserts that God commands nothing for which He does not provide the requisite abilities, is thoroughly refuted in Chapter 35.

Chapter 37

Of the distinction of grace into sufficient, and effectual grace.

I. The distinction of grace into sufficient and effectual grace is an old and well-worn distinction in the Schools. However, effectual grace can be understood in two ways. First, it can signify grace that is

capable and suitable for achieving an effect or working, similar to when we call a medicine "effectual" or a remedy "potent," even if it is not taken by the sick person but is capable of healing. Second, we can refer to grace as effectual when it actively produces an effect. In this sense, "effectual" is used interchangeably with "efficient," and "efficacy" can refer to either the effect itself or the efficiency.

II. The Papists argue that there is sufficient assistance for conversion given to all people. They believe that with this assistance, individuals can cooperate with their free will and be converted even if no other effectual aid is provided. They understand effectual grace as the grace that actively brings about its intended effect.

III. The Arminians, who modify and adapt Popery in their discussion of grace and free will, also frequently employ the distinction between sufficient and effectual grace. However, they use ambiguous language and speech that makes it difficult to ascertain their precise understanding of effectual grace. For instance, Arminius, in his argument against Perkins, page 245, claims that effectual grace is grace that genuinely produces the desired outcome. He provides examples such as, "God was able to create many worlds, but He did not do it effectually," and "Christ was able to save all people, but He did not do it effectually." This statement is undoubtedly absurd and worthy of ridicule because it suggests that God did something ineffectively, as if He created many worlds ineffectively. Instead of saying "to do effectually," he should have simply said "to do" or "to create."

IV. However, Arnoldus, like Diomedes, the better son of his father, disagrees with Arminius. On page 397, he states, "That which is called effectual is not something that produces an effect, but something that possesses the power to do something, just like an effectual remedy or a potent means." Thus, even proponents of erroneous doctrines cannot agree among themselves. Nevertheless, in this case, I am inclined to support and defend Arminius against his student. If effectual grace is understood as that which actively

produces an effect, then the distinction between sufficient and effectual grace can be accepted. This is because there are many things with sufficient power to act but do not necessarily do so, such as an absent physician or a sleeping philosopher. However, it is illogical to claim that one grace is sufficient to act while another is only suitable or capable of acting. Such a claim would be exceedingly absurd, as anything that is an efficient cause must inherently possess sufficient power to act.

V. According to Arminius, the means to faith and salvation are provided to all sufficiently but not effectually and efficiently. On the other hand, according to Arnoldus, God administers these means to all people both sufficiently and effectually. He prefers to interpret efficacy as aptitude and readiness to work rather than as efficiency and the actual working itself. By doing so, he argues that the efficacy of grace does not depend on free will. If he had understood efficacy as efficiency, he would have had to claim that the efficiency of grace depends on free will. The followers of Arminius insist that the effect or efficiency of grace depends on free will. God indeed grants grace and sufficient power for conversion, but whether a person is actually converted or not is within the realm of free will. Arnoldus elaborates on this, stating, "We determine that the use of grace is subject to man's will, so that man may use it or not use it according to his natural liberty." He also asserts that the effect of God's mercy is within the power of man. Additionally, he teaches that if efficacy is understood as efficiency, man renders grace ineffective. Arnoldus refrains from explicitly stating that man makes grace effectual or ineffectual, but other passages from their writings express similar ideas. For instance, he claims that man can convert himself if he does not neglect his part. In essence, this doctrine implies that the effectiveness (i.e., efficiency) of God's grace is contingent on human will. In simpler terms, they suggest that God saves a person if that person wills it, equating this with depending on human will.

VI. The Orthodox Churches significantly differ from this doctrine. How can we be converted by the grace of God if it depends on our

will when even the desire to be converted is a result of God's grace? Anyone who genuinely desires to turn to God is already experiencing some degree of conversion. We have discussed these matters extensively, and more will be covered when we delve into how God's grace effectively produces conversion in us, a concept the Arminians label as "irresistibility," using a term they find objectionable and crude.

VII. When it comes to the notion of sufficient grace, the Arminians not only differ from each other but also contradict themselves. They argue that sufficient grace for belief and the power to believe are given to each individual. However, they also claim that no one can believe in practice or use this universal grace effectively without receiving special grace. Their consistency is truly remarkable. Can grace truly be deemed sufficient if it never yields the desired effect for which it was given unless additional special grace intervenes? Can something be considered a sufficient cause if it never operates in isolation? Does anything defy reason more than what Arminius suggests: that there is one kind of grace, sufficient for converting sinners, even though it does not convert them, and another kind, effectual in converting them? Is it not the same capability and potential to be able to do and to actually do, to be able to see and to actually see? There seems to be a degree of confusion afflicting these individuals as they strive for subtlety.

VIII. I would be surprised if Vorstius did not discern this inconsistency. In sections twenty and twenty-one of his work "Collat. cum Piscat.," he introduces two types of grace. One is sufficient and entirely necessary, which God bestows upon all those who are called. The other is extraordinary, abundant, and unique, and it is the one through which people are genuinely converted. He refutes those who claim that no one is converted at all by the former grace. He argues that God has not promised to convert everyone who receives this more than sufficient help and superabundant grace.

IX. However, we interpret the term "effectual grace" as grace that is suitable and capable of achieving its intended purpose, and we do not acknowledge any "sufficient grace" that is not effectual in this sense. It should be apt to achieve its designated purpose, whether it accomplishes this on its own or in conjunction with other factors. I purposely include this clarification because often several causes converge to produce one effect. For instance, in the acquisition of knowledge, factors such as nature, art, and practice work together. Similarly, in the fertility and productivity of the land, the quality of the soil, sunlight, rainfall, and appropriate cultivation all play a role.

X. In the complex interplay of causes that contribute to a single effect, there are certain causes that not only work alongside others but also enhance the effectiveness and power of the adjacent causes. In the conversion of a person, the Holy Spirit and the preaching of the Word work together, but it is the Spirit that imparts efficacy to the Word. Mere exposure to the Word is in vain unless God opens the heart and infuses His hidden power through the Word.

XI. We acknowledge that there is no grace that is absolutely sufficient for conversion, faith, or salvation without the spirit of regeneration and knowledge of Christ. We condemn the teaching of the Arminian school, which asserts that all people, even the heathens who have not heard the name of Christ, possess sufficient and saving grace to come to faith and through it to attain salvation.

XII. Nevertheless, the external means of salvation, which are abundantly provided without the inner efficacy of the Holy Spirit, can, to some extent, be referred to as sufficient grace. This is not only because they are sufficient to render individuals without excuse but also because these means should be sufficient for achieving salvation if humanity were as it should be. If anything is lacking in this grace, the deficiency lies with the one who is called, not with the One who calls. According to the principles of justice, God is not obligated to supply inner dispositions because humans are responsible for providing them from within themselves. God is not obligated to

restore these dispositions to humans after they have lost them through their own fault. Therefore, God justly asks in Isaiah 5, "What more could I have done for my vineyard that I have not already done?" This is a rhetorical question expressing God's expectation based on justice. God is said to have done what justice requires, and if He had not done so, there would be grounds for questioning His actions. However, in this passage, God is referring to the external means, as He compares the blessings bestowed upon Israel to the planting of a vineyard in fertile soil, diligent care, protection, and provision of resources. There is no mention of the secret processes of growth, the favourable qualities of the environment, or timely rainfall, which are more related to inward and hidden power. Furthermore, the question of whether God gives sufficient grace to various individuals is not properly addressed by this passage. It does not pertain to the "sufficient grace" that God offers or gives to different individuals but rather to the grace given to an entire nation. The gift of the Spirit and the ability to believe, which Arminius claims are given to individual people separately, is a gift bestowed individually, not upon an entire nation collectively. A separate treatise is needed to address this notion of "sufficient grace" more thoroughly.

Chapter 38

The Arminian Perspective on Universal Grace, Also Known as
Sufficient Grace.

I. In the sequence of the four decrees that encapsulate the entirety of Arminian Predestination doctrine, the third decree is as follows: they assert that God decreed to provide and furnish the means necessary for faith and repentance sufficiently to all individuals. Arnoldus

contends that these means are effectually supplied to everyone because he interprets efficacy as signifying suitability and capability to produce effects.

II. It's important to note that these sectarians do not claim that the means to faith and salvation are distributed equally to all. They argue that these means are provided more sparingly to some and more generously to others, yet they are supplied to all to an extent sufficient for belief if they choose to do so. According to their view, all individuals are disposed towards spiritual revival, and God does not impede this by allowing all to have faith and, through faith, achieve salvation.

III. Furthermore, they believe that God irresistibly grants all individuals the capacity to believe, although not the actual act of belief. While God provides sufficient grace to all for this purpose, they argue that it remains within the domain of free will to either employ or disregard this grace, to believe or not to believe. According to their perspective, God does not supply these sufficient means with a specific intention to save any particular person. Instead, God administers these means to all individuals individually, demonstrating His earnest desire for the salvation of all people and that no obstacle is posed by Him preventing the salvation of anyone.

IV. Furthermore, they assert that some individuals receive this sufficient grace in a more limited manner, yet God is prepared to grant them more means if they utilize what they have effectively. Arminius expresses this viewpoint in his words against Perkins on pages 259 and 260: "Even when the Gentiles were deprived of the knowledge of God, God did not abandon them without a testimony. During that time, He revealed some truths about His power and goodness to them, and He preserved the law inscribed in their minds. If they had used these blessings correctly, or at least followed their conscience, He would have bestowed even greater grace upon them, following the principle 'to him who has, more will be given.' They do not hesitate to claim that the Gentiles, lacking knowledge of

the Gospel, can attain the same blessings offered in the Gospel as those to whom the Gospel is preached. Listen to Arnoldus on pages 105 and 106, whose words left me astonished: 'Although many nations lack the regular preaching of the Gospel, they are not categorically excluded from the grace of the Gospel. The good things presented in the Gospel are always equally offered to them as they are to those who enjoy the privilege of hearing it preached, provided they fulfil the terms of the covenant.' Oh, the audacity of both God and man! Has Satan gained such influence that, in the light of the Gospel, people openly teach and write under the guise of piety, claiming that entry into heaven is open and that salvation is presented to heathens and unbelievers, who have not even heard the name of Christ, as it is to those to whom Christ is preached? But we will address these matters in more detail later. In the meantime, it should be noted how this individual contradicts his own assertions and, by adding an absurd and impossible condition, undermines what he has previously argued. He claims that salvation is equally offered to heathens as it is to Christians, provided they meet the terms of the covenant. These terms are faith and repentance. However, how can one believe in Christ if they are ignorant of Him? How can one repent if God has not granted them the spirit of regeneration? The reader is being led astray in plain sight.

V. What can we make of the fact that they not only affirm that God grants sufficient grace and the capacity to believe to all individuals but also contend that God is obligated and bound to provide this grace? They even establish laws for God Himself, suggesting that there is a risk of filing an unjust action against God or that His justice lacks reason unless a member of the Arminian sect offers Him profitable counsel. Arnoldus expresses this forcefully on page 262: "When God presents the new covenant of grace and promises forgiveness of sins under the condition of new obedience, He is, above all, obligated to provide the power by which man can fulfil that condition. Otherwise, it cannot be concluded that God is genuinely offering this grace." This is stated with great boldness and imperiousness. He justifies this assertion on page 443, stating, "God

shows that He will not be burdened with the unjust suspicion that He requires something from us for which He does not provide sufficient power." He claims that this is evident when God teaches that He does not gather where He has not scattered.

VI. The audacity of Vorstius is no less pronounced in this regard, as seen in *Collat. cum Piscat. Sect. 8*: "By the law of His nature, that is, His natural justice, goodness, and providence, God is always bound, at the very least, to will those good things for humans without which they cannot be considered humans, or to achieve the ultimate end set for them by God." Behold, these individuals are ready to pass judgment on God Himself if He were to undertake anything perceived as unjust or contrary to the principles of justice they have established. It is impossible to express how different these views are from Christian modesty. Certainly, if their claims were true, it would be the duty of pious and prudent individuals to refrain from making such assertions, lest they appear to be prescribing something to God regarding the work of salvation or reminding God of His responsibilities.

VII. This doctrine is founded on two false principles. First, that God requires nothing from man that cannot be accomplished by man. Second, that the condition of the new covenant, namely, faith, is not mandated by the law, is not a natural obligation, and that the power to believe was not lost due to Adam's fall. The former of these principles has its roots in Pelagianism and has been refuted in our 44th and 35th Chapters. The latter has been thoroughly debunked in Chapter Eleven. The law represents man's natural obligation: it commands the love and worship of God and also commands belief in His words and promises. Thus, when man lost the ability to obey God and love Him due to Adam's sin, he also lost the capacity to believe in His promises. When God demands faith from man, He is merely requiring what man owes, and He is not obligated to restore the lost capacity for belief. He cannot be accused of injustice for failing to restore it, nor is He subject to the judgments of the Arminians in this regard, nor does He fear their opposing opinions.

VIII. However, when they attempt to explain the nature of this universal grace, they differ very little from the Pelagians. Pelagius, in order not to appear hostile to grace, attributes every good work performed by man to grace, but he considers grace to be nothing more than nature itself, since it was created and fashioned by God. According to Arminius, nature and universal grace are distinct, yet he maintains that sufficient grace is given to all individuals. He argues that nature does not exist in any person to whom God does not grant sufficient grace to attain faith and salvation. Consequently, in Arminius' view, sufficient grace extends as far as nature. Pelagius confuses nature with grace, but Arminius combines nature and grace so that nature does not exist in anyone unless grace is granted. However, the Arminians equate the right use of this grace with the correct application of the natural light and knowledge inherent in everyone, gained through the contemplation of creation and adherence to natural law. Thus, they view the function and role of grace and nature as essentially the same, whereas Scripture teaches that the proper use of grace involves a transformation of nature. If these assertions are accurate, then all the arguments put forth by both us and the ancients, demonstrating that the grace of God differs from nature, and that nature is endowed to all while the grace of God is the privilege of some, crumble. According to Arminius, sufficient grace for faith and salvation is universal to all humanity.

IX. Arnoldus, on page 418, refers to the grace given to all men as supernatural grace to distinguish it from nature. Yet shortly afterward, he adds that it is worth asking whether this grace is not present in all individuals, allowing them to properly use the remnants of that natural light, which, as remnants and vestiges of that light, allows them to worship God to the extent that these remnants permit. Do you hear that all individuals possess the grace by which they may rightly employ their nature and worship God? This grace is present in all individuals, including unbelievers, the unregenerate, and those who are ignorant of Christ. The power of this grace, common to all, is rooted in the proper use of nature. The same individual, on page 405, states that it is a characteristic of

general grace that people can rightly use these gifts, and he is referring to the gifts of nature.

X. On page 112, the same individual, when discussing universal grace, states that there exists a certain calling that is common, as well as common guidance and instructions from nature. Through these, God calls all individuals to some level of self-knowledge and provides them with gifts corresponding to their calling.

XI. However, he denies that it necessarily follows from this common grace, given to all, which enables individuals to properly utilise the gifts of nature, that grace and nature are of equal extent. He says, "For although it is within the power of general grace for all individuals to properly employ these gifts, they can only do so in practice with the assistance of another subsequent and following grace, which is special and not granted to everyone." This learned man has indeed provided a reasonable explanation for why this common and sufficient grace does not extend equally as far as nature, namely, because common grace requires the assistance of special grace. This is akin to suggesting that a deficiency in some aspect prevents something from being as extensive as nature. Almost every natural ability relies on the assistance of another ability or some form of internal or external aid. Therefore, according to this reasoning, hardly anything in man can be considered entirely natural. Furthermore, it is worth noting that Arnoldus contradicts himself when he asserts that sufficient grace does not function without the help of some other special grace, effectively denying its sufficiency.

Chapter 39

Universal Sufficient Grace is Refuted by Various Passages of Scripture.

I. This doctrine, which places in an infidel and unregenerate person the grace that may suffice, either directly or indirectly, to obtain faith or salvation, without any knowledge of the Gospel or faith in Christ, uproots Christian religion and is contrary to Scripture and experience.

II. Above all, it is crucial that any doctrine related to our salvation, which does not rest itself on the testimony of Scripture, must be rejected. However, Scripture does not assert anywhere that God is obligated to provide increased grace to those who have rightly used natural understanding and insight. It does not state that a person can worship God properly without faith. It does not declare that God is bound to grant to all individuals, whether directly or indirectly, the power to believe and fulfill what is commanded in the Gospel. It does not affirm that supernatural grace is universally given to all, enabling them to properly use natural understanding. It does not proclaim that the Gentiles who are ignorant of Christ are led by the Holy Spirit. These are inventions of idle individuals, driven by an unhealthy desire for intellectual novelty and a bad habit of contentious argumentation.

III. This doctrine is contradicted by all those passages of Scripture that demonstrate that an unregenerate person lacks free will in matters related to salvation. These passages establish that an unregenerate person does not possess the ability to believe, worship God acceptably, or prepare themselves for regeneration.

IV. Consider the testimony of the Apostle in Ephesians 2:12, where he speaks of the Gentiles before they received the knowledge of God's

word. He states that they were without Christ, without hope, and without God in the world. It is clear that those without Christ do not have God. How, then, can these sectarians claim that those without knowledge of Christ possess sufficient grace to believe, worship God, and use natural light correctly? These claims are irreconcilable.

V. The same Apostle, in Romans 10:14, says, "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" With these words, he clearly teaches that the Gentiles who had not heard of Christ could not believe. However, Arminius asserts that the power to believe is granted directly or indirectly to every individual.

VI. The Apostle continues: "How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?" Let us carefully consider these words. Saint Paul believes that Christ cannot be believed in unless the Gospel is heard, and the Gospel cannot be heard unless preachers are sent. With this established, I assert that God does not act in vain. It would be in vain for Him to grant the power to believe in the Gospel to all unless He sent those who would preach the Gospel. Now, He does not send preachers of the Gospel to the majority of people; therefore, He does not grant them all the power to believe or sufficient grace to believe.

VII. The same Apostle, in 2 Timothy 1, states that God has called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace. Therefore, the Arminians falsely believe that God gives supernatural light and knowledge of His Gospel to those who, through free will, have rightly used sufficient grace and the light of nature. If this were true, our calling would be entirely based on works and according to works, as the Arminians claim that God calls people by the Gospel due to their proper use of sufficient grace and natural light. In fact, they suggest that God sends His word according to man's hidden reasons rather than any divine decree. They attribute the cause of God sending His word to some rather than others to man himself rather than God's sovereign pleasure. This

view clearly implies that one is called based on works and according to one's disposition and readiness to obey the call. However, it is evident from experience that the most unworthy and ill-disposed individuals are often called by the Gospel, as seen in the cases of the Romans and Corinthians, among others. Romans 5 also emphasizes that grace abounds where sin abounds, so that it may not depend on human will or effort but on God's mercy (Romans 5:20).

VIII. Christ Himself says in John 15:5, "Without me, you can do nothing." What is said to the Apostles applies to all; as many as are without Christ can do nothing. These sectarians violate Christ's statement when they teach that those who do not know Christ and lack faith can still believe, worship God acceptably, and do the Father's will.

IX. Those whom God hated from the womb are not granted sufficient and saving grace, for to grant them such grace would be an act of love. However, God hated Esau from the womb (Romans 9:13); therefore, He did not grant Esau sufficient and saving grace. While Malachi may speak of this hatred in a temporal sense, Arminius admits that Saint Paul presents it as a type of spiritual rejection. Consequently, some individuals experience spiritual rejection by God before they have done either good or evil. Therefore, God does not grant them sufficient means to attain faith or salvation, as this would contradict His hatred.

X. Were those Israelites provided with sufficient grace to whom God Himself said in Deuteronomy 29:2 that despite witnessing many miracles, He had not given them a heart to understand or eyes to see? "God hath not given you a heart to perceive, and eyes to see, and ears to hear unto this day." This passage has led Arnoldus to perplexity, and he seeks to evade it with audacity. He claims that the words, "I have not given you a heart to perceive," mean nothing more than "you do not have a heart." He completely disregards the words, "I have not given you." However, he later abandons this interpretation, possibly due to embarrassment, and adds, "Although

God has not given them such eyes and ears, it does not follow that God was unwilling to give these things to them. God was willing to give these things to them, but they were lacking in themselves due to their pride, ignorance, and sluggish dullness." This only further entangles him. I must ask, did they possess a heart to understand and ears to hear before they showed themselves rebellious and stubborn? If they never did, then our argument is victorious, for this provides a clear example of people to whom a heart and eyes were never given, and hence, they did not receive sufficient grace. However, if Arnoldus claims they initially possessed these faculties but later lost them, he would be accusing God of falsehood because God explicitly states that He never gave them a heart or eyes to see to this day.

XI. Was sufficient grace given to the men of Tyre and Sidon, to whom Christ did not want His Gospel preached, even though they were not as far from repentance as the men of Capernaum, to whom Christ Himself preached the Gospel?

XII. In the meantime, the reader should note the absurd cleverness of this man as he avoids confrontation. He claims that God was willing to give the Israelites a heart to understand and eyes to see, and that He was prepared to give them these things. However, he suggests that the Israelites prevented God from granting them these faculties. According to him, the Israelites were capable of obeying God before He gave them a heart. But obedience itself requires having a heart. Thus, he implies that they could have a heart before they had a heart, which is a contradiction. He is essentially saying that God did not give them a heart because they were already without a heart. This is like a physician refusing to heal a blind man because the blind man did not see the physician coming.

XIII. If, as the Arminians believe, God commands nothing that He does not provide sufficient grace for, then I would like them to explain whether God gave Pharaoh sufficient grace to obey His command to release the Israelites. On the contrary, the Scriptures

testify that God hardened Pharaoh's heart so that he would not let the people go.

XIV. Since there are some whom God hardens, even irresistibly as the Arminians claim, does God grant those who are thus hardened sufficient grace to fulfill the Law, to which every person is bound? Does He give every person sufficient grace to perfectly fulfill the law? Certainly not, for why would Christ have subjected Himself to the law if we could fulfill it ourselves (Romans 8:3)?

XV. In Matthew 11, Christ speaks to His disciples, saying, "It is given to you to know the secrets of the Kingdom of heaven, but it is not given to them." Does He not state that the grace to know the secrets of the kingdom of heaven is not given to some at all? And yet, without this grace, all other grace is futile for salvation. Therefore, I ask, could those to whom this grace was not given know these secrets? Christ's words indicate that they could not. However, these same people are commanded to learn and know these secrets and to believe in them, as they were the ones to whom the Gospel was preached. If they could not know these secrets because it was not given to them, then it is clear that sufficient grace to know and learn these things was not granted to them.

XVI. The Apostle in Acts 14 says that in times past, God allowed all nations to walk in their own ways. Psalm 147 declares, "He has shown His statutes to Israel; He has not dealt so with any nation; and they have not known His statutes." Matthew 4 states that the Gentiles, to whom the Gospel had not yet shone, sat in darkness and in the shadow of death. Who would dare to claim that these men were given sufficient grace to attain faith? For example, did God, during the time of the Maccabees, grant sufficient grace to the Moors and Americans to believe in Christ and obtain salvation? By what testimony or reasoning could anyone prove that these nations were endowed with sufficient grace and received a saving call? They had the book of nature before their eyes, with some notions of what was right and good imprinted on their hearts but obscured by a great

mist. Yet, neither through these means nor with the aid of that grace, destitute of faith, did any of them ever come to faith or salvation. The Arminians have not provided an example of anyone who, by these aids, came to faith. Nevertheless, Vorstius, in his shamelessness, claims in Section 26 of "Collat. cum Pis." that these people were not simply lacking necessary help and that God granted them some crumbs of heavenly bread, which were mediately sufficient. This man, with his distorted wit, scatters the crumbs of his modest eloquence and dresses his new doctrine in unfamiliar terms. Since he insists that these terms should be accepted without proof, we reject them just as easily as he affirms them.

VII. The statement of Christ in John 6:44 is of significant importance and should not be read carelessly. It says, "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him." This is in agreement with verse 65, which states, "No one can come to me unless it is given to him by my Father." From these passages, we can reason as follows: Whoever is not drawn in such a way that they come to Christ is not provided with sufficient grace to come. However, many are not drawn in this way. Therefore, many individuals are not provided with sufficient grace to come. The major premise is proven by the words of Christ: "No one can come to me unless the Father draws him." If one must be drawn to come, it is clear that those who are not drawn lack the grace and power to come, and therefore they are not provided with sufficient grace. That there were many who were not drawn is also evident from the words of Christ, as He provides the reason why the people of Capernaum could not come or believe – because they were not drawn. Therefore, when Arminius, in opposition to Perkins, on page 219, raises the doubtful question of "What if all men are drawn?" he is mistaken. Introducing various forms of drawing is irrelevant to the matter at hand, as long as it is clear that by none of these forms does anyone ever come to Christ. Additionally, it is acknowledged even by the Arminians themselves that no one is converted by that sufficient and auxiliary grace unless another special grace accompanies it. Therefore, it follows that this general grace is not sufficient.

Chapter 40

The same sufficient and universal grace is challenged by arguments and reasons.

I. Firstly, this belief in sufficient grace openly misrepresents God by suggesting that He genuinely and wholeheartedly desires to save all individuals and, for that purpose, provides them with sufficient grace for conversion and belief. However, this grace is administered so sparingly to the majority of humanity that it is impossible to name a single individual in the entire world who has been saved by this sufficient grace. This is because no one, lacking faith and knowledge of the redeemer, has ever rightly utilised their natural gifts or worshipped God in a manner pleasing to Him. The Arminians have yet to provide any examples, and even if they could present one or two instances, they could not thereby remove the blemish they place upon God. For it reflects negatively on God when someone teaches that He earnestly desires the salvation of all but provides sufficient grace so sparingly that out of infinite millions, barely one or two individuals have converted themselves and come to faith.

II. What's more, this doctrine with reckless audacity attempts to set laws for God Himself and prescribes to Him the manner and extent by which He should bestow His gifts and provide increases of grace. According to the Arminians, if anyone rightly uses the gifts of nature with the help of sufficient grace, God is obligated to grant that person greater grace. Because they have made good use of the light of nature, God is required to give them supernatural light and knowledge of the Gospel. However, I believe that the Creator is not bound by any obligation to the creature. Even if He were bound, it is not our place to impudently dictate to Him what He should do, nor

to remind Him of His duty as if there were any danger of Him tarnishing His reputation or violating the laws that bind Him. Furthermore, this diminishes and trivialises the benefits bestowed by God. If we believe these sectarians, then God, by granting a person the ability to believe, does nothing more than what He is obligated to do and provides nothing beyond His binding obligations.

III. The same doctrine asserts that sufficient grace is given to the Gentiles who have not known Christ so that, according to its measure, they may worship God. This implies that there is a form of worship that can be acceptable to God without Christ and without faith. Arnoldus makes this point explicitly when, on page 409, he speaks of the heathens who led austere lives in their service to God. He asks, "Whence will you prove that such men either perish or remain devoid of Christ?" In trying to encourage hope for the salvation of heathens who led austere lives, even though they were entirely ignorant of Christ, Arnoldus simultaneously diminishes and devalues Christian faith as unnecessary. He subtly insinuates that one can be saved by Christ without actually knowing Christ. Despite these sectarians protesting when the corrupt aspects of their doctrine are exposed, those who carefully read the entire discussion in Arnoldus' writings will discern the implications.

IV. Similarly, the Arminians fall into error by believing that the power of believing and acquiring faith is given to humans without the spirit of regeneration and adoption. Since we become the sons of God through faith, if a person has the power to believe without the spirit of regeneration, then they also have the power to make themselves the sons of God without the same spirit.

V. It is also absurd and worthy of ridicule to claim that the power to believe in Christ is given to a person without the spirit of regeneration, but that the act of believing itself is not possible without the spirit of regeneration. This implies that the ability to believe comes from one source, but the actual use and execution of that ability come from another source. It is as if having the ability to

do something and actually doing it are separate faculties. They argue that a separate special grace is required for belief, and therefore, sufficient grace is not sufficient for active belief. These notions appear to me to be akin to the dreams of the sick.

VI. How absurd and contrary to God's wisdom is it to suggest that God is prepared to give greater grace and the light of His Gospel to those who have made good use of the light of nature? By doing so, it implies that God is ready to do something that He knows He will not do, under a condition that no one has fulfilled or will fulfil. For no one who lacks faith, knowledge of the redeemer, and the spirit of regeneration has rightly utilised the light of nature or worshipped God in a manner pleasing to Him. This is because anything without faith is considered sin, and whoever does not have the Son does not have the Father. They are essentially without God in the world, as the Scripture teaches.

VII. In fact, if one were to examine the historical records, they would find that even the wisest among the heathens, who lived temperate lives, had milder desires, loved justice, and expressed many profound thoughts about God, were still far from the kingdom of Heaven. Experience has shown this to be true. When the Gospel began to spread among the nations, the philosophers became some of the fiercest adversaries of Christian Religion. They employed their intellectual subtlety to denigrate the message of the cross of Christ and incited cruelty and persecution against others. Paradoxically, those who sought the praise of civil virtue and possessed extensive learning often viewed the simplicity of the Gospel with disdain and were offended by the scandal of the cross of Christ.

VIII. It is perplexing to comprehend how anyone can be prepared for faith and regeneration through natural instructions and the light of nature, considering that human nature is inherently inclined towards idolatry. People are naturally inclined to have a visible object on which to fix their gaze while offering prayers. Human wisdom has often trampled upon religion.

XIX. Moreover, since (as Arnoldus admits) the first effect of grace is for a person to recognise that they are spiritually dead in sin and naturally subject to eternal damnation, and this knowledge can only be acquired through the word of God, any talk of universal and sufficient grace by the Arminians crumbles. Such grace cannot lead one to the starting point and primary element of conversion, from which grace must necessarily begin. Indeed, if one were to examine the writings of the heathens, they would find no mention of spiritual death in sin, no reference to spiritual rebirth and regeneration, and no understanding of the necessity of supernatural grace. The best among the heathens regarded following nature as their guiding principle, while the true work of God's grace is to restore and transform nature.

X. However, when it comes to specifying the timing of when this sufficient grace is initially bestowed upon every individual by God, they fail to provide a clear explanation. If all individuals have this grace from birth, then it is not effectively distinguished from nature, as something natural is ingrained in every person from their birth. But if this grace is only given to those who have reached a certain age, at what age is it granted? Is it given to everyone at a specific and uniform age, or are some given it sooner while others receive it later? If it is bestowed upon someone at the age of ten or twelve, what should be said of those who die at the age of seven or nine? What about those who pass away a day or two before receiving this grace? Moreover, if someone dies shortly after being given sufficient grace, before having the opportunity to make good use of it, what will be their fate? Will they be excluded from the kingdom of heaven due to the brevity of their time? Certainly, by attempting to bind God to laws, they entangle themselves in unbreakable bonds.

XI. Furthermore, when the Arminians claim that sufficient grace, which is common to all individuals, including the unregenerate and unbelievers, is supernatural, it is perplexing that someone who experiences this supernatural and beneficial prompting initially would not sense it. Or if the initial stages of this experience are

uncertain and indistinct, then at the very least, it should become apparent over time. However, none of the heathens have ever professed to have felt this grace, nor is there any mention of it in their writings.

XII. It would also be worthwhile to understand the process by which a heathen residing in the southern regions or the innermost part of Tartary, while making good use of natural instruction, may eventually come to have faith in Christ. These Sectarians must resort to fanciful ideas and indulge in unfounded conjectures and inconsistent recklessness. They must suggest that either Oracles were divinely revealed to that individual, or angels were dispatched to them, or a prophet transported from elsewhere was miraculously sent to instruct them in the Christian faith. In the absence of scriptural support, audacity must fill the void left by scripture.

XIII. Ultimately, one can judge the nature of this sufficient grace based on the inconsistency of the Arminians themselves. They construct it with great vigour only to tear it down. While they assert vigorously that God bestows sufficient grace upon all individuals, they later claim that God is willing and prepared to give it to everyone but is hindered by human resistance. Furthermore, they teach that no one can be converted without special grace, thereby acknowledging that general grace is insufficient. Finally, when they divide grace into that which is sufficiently mediated and that which is sufficiently immediate, they admit that some grace is sufficient when mediated, but insufficient when immediate. They create numerous degrees of sufficient grace, yet fail to explain how many there are and what they entail.

Chapter 41

The Arguments by which the Arminians maintain universal sufficient Grace are refuted.

I. The arguments put forth by the Arminians to support Universal Sufficient and Helpful Grace are almost identical to those they usually present in favour of the free will of an unregenerate person. Since these arguments have already been thoroughly refuted in Chapter 34, there is no need for an extensive examination. However, let's address a few of the arguments they most frequently use to establish the idea of sufficient grace common to all individuals.

They assert it based on a passage from the Apostle Paul in Romans 1:19, where he speaks about the Gentiles: "That which may be known of God is manifest in them, for God hath shown it unto them." There is no mention of sufficient grace in this passage, as the Arminians believe it to be supernatural. Here, the Apostle is referring to the light of nature and the knowledge of God through creation, which can be obtained without supernatural grace. Paul does not say that man has the power to believe in Christ or that he can prepare himself for regeneration. He simply states that the power and deity of God were evident to them through creation so that they would be without excuse. They are inexcusable not because they have misused the grace that was sufficient, whether immediately or mediately, for salvation, but because they have not utilized the natural light available to them to the fullest extent and have attempted to suppress the innate light within them.

II. They also cite the words of the same Apostle in Romans 2:14: "The Gentiles which have not the law do by nature the things contained in the law." However, this passage cannot be used to establish sufficient grace, as these Sectarians claim it to be supernatural. It only refers to natural inclinations towards equity and goodness and outward actions that are morally upright, which are performed under the guidance of nature. Saint Paul makes no mention of grace here. Furthermore, the things contained in the law can be done by someone who violates and disobeys the law, as external actions

commanded by the law can be performed without fulfilling the law's requirements, which include faith and doing these actions for God's glory.

III. Their objection from Acts 14:17 is irrelevant to the matter. In this passage, Saint Paul speaks about the heathen people, saying, "Nevertheless, he left not himself without witness." However, the witness mentioned here is not the supposed sufficient saving and supernatural grace or the law naturally engraved in their hearts that these Sectarians believe it to be. The Apostle explains the nature of this testimony in the following words, stating that God provided them with rain from heaven, fruitful seasons, and filled their hearts with food and gladness. There is no mention of supernatural grace here. It is also inaccurate to claim that the law written or imprinted on the heart can act as a Schoolmaster to Christ for those who are completely ignorant of Christ. The law does not lead us to something unknown. Instead, after the grace of Christ is offered through the Gospel, the law, through threats and terrors, compels us to embrace it. What we cannot attain through the law, we find in Christ. Therefore, the moral law could serve as a Schoolmaster to Christ for the Israelites because Christ was foreshadowed to them through the ceremonial law and prophesied about in the Scriptures.

IV. Regarding the sense in which Isaiah 5:4, "What was more to be done to my vineyard, that I have not done?" should be understood, we have already explained in Chapter 37. Nothing from this passage can be extracted to support the idea of sufficient grace that is common even to those to whom the word of God has never been preached. This vineyard refers to the Jews, to whom the word of God was preached, and the means of salvation were abundantly provided. Isaiah is not speaking of grace given to individual people but rather to an entire nation as a whole. The means Isaiah enumerates are external, not internal, as is evident in the same passage where God is likened to a vine dresser who planted a vineyard in fertile soil, dug a trench around it, set up a hedge, built a winepress, and a tower. However, He did not infuse growth and vital juice, nor did He send

the sun and timely rain. Therefore, God states that He externally provided everything that could be administered for conversion, and it is the responsibility of man to bring forth inward dispositions. God is not obligated to restore to man the dispositions that were lost due to his own fault. God does say in that passage that He looked for grapes but found wild grapes. This expectation is attributed to God in a human manner, signifying that God requires something from man and delays punishment if the due fruits are not produced immediately, rather than instantly uprooting the unfruitful fig tree, as Christ teaches in Luke 13:7, 8, and 9.

V. They often refer to the old and worn-out argument: "To him that hath, it shall be given," from Matthew 25:29. They claim that by these words, Christ implies that God will bestow greater grace upon those who have made good use of the light of nature. They stretch the Scripture in order to extract whatever meaning they desire from it. In this passage, Christ tells the parable of the talents and says that the talent hidden by the wicked servant was taken from him and given to the servant who had increased his master's estate by doubling the five talents. Christ states, "To him that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not shall be taken away, even that which he hath." The talents represent God's gifts, particularly the knowledge of God through the Gospel. The servant who hid the talent is the one who withholds the truth in unrighteousness and suppresses the known truth. This talent, therefore, cannot be the supposed sufficient grace that occurs in the lives of infidels and unregenerate individuals. Instead, it represents the grace that God bestows upon His faithful servants. "Him that hath" does not refer to a person in their natural state or to a heathen person equipped with sufficient grace but to someone who possesses knowledge of the Gospel. This knowledge is given so that, by edifying their neighbour, they might spread the Gospel's knowledge widely, increasing it daily like money invested for growth.

VI. Arnoldus, on page 368, states: "It is consistent with the justice and goodness of God that He should give, or be prepared to give, the

necessary means for faith to all those for whom He gave Christ to die and from whom He requires faith, so that there is nothing on His part preventing all people from coming to faith." To this, we respond that God does not require faith in Christ from all people, only from those to whom the Gospel is preached. He is not obliged to provide the necessary means for faith to all those to whom the Gospel is preached because humanity lost those means through its own fault. God, when demanding from humanity what is owed, is not obligated to restore the power to fulfil those demands, considering that humanity lost these abilities through its own fault. While Arnoldus claims that the wrath of God remains on unbelievers, there is no one who would believe if God were to change their heart through the spirit of regeneration. Arnoldus is indeed fabricating a new Gospel by suggesting that anyone can believe in the Gospel without the spirit of regeneration.

Chapter 42

The Agreement of the Arminians with the Semi-Pelagians is Explained.

Saint Augustine wrote books against Pelagius, Coelestius, and Julian in which he upheld the orthodox faith concerning Original sin, Predestination, Grace, Freewill, and Election in accordance with the purpose of God. Pelagianism, shaken by his arguments drawn from the holy Scripture, was, as it were, struck down with mighty battering rams and never lifted its head again. Therefore, next to God, we owe the removal of this deadly plague from the bosom of the Church to the industry and intellect of such a great man.

However, after Satan was ousted by his toil and diligence, he devised other tactics by which he fought for grace while secretly opposing it. In various places, especially in Aquitaine and the region of Massilia, there were individuals who, though professing to differ from Pelagius, still criticized the writings of Saint Augustine and inveighed against his doctrine of absolute Election. They claimed that it made people's consciences sluggish, causing them to wallow in vice, and that it loosed the reins on all wickedness. They argued that if the number of the elect was determined by God's purpose or if some were elected to faith and salvation while others were appointed to damnation by God's unchangeable decree, then precepts, exhortations, and threats were unnecessary. They believed that free will was bound by necessity, as those who were elected could do nothing but persevere. Thus, they sought to take a middle path between Pelagius and Saint Augustine.

They taught that the sin of Adam was passed down to his descendants, that human nature was corrupt, and that, by the powers of nature alone, salvation was unattainable. However, they also taught that the grace capable of healing this nature was present in all people. They claimed that all individuals, either through the natural law, the written law, or the Gospel, were called in such a way that it was free for anyone to accept or reject the offered grace, to believe or not to believe. According to them, Christ obtained reconciliation for all, and God elected those He foresaw would believe in Christ and persevere in the faith from eternity. Therefore, they believed that the number of the elect was not determined by God's decree, but rather, our election became certain as our life unfolded.

These individuals are commonly known as Semi-Pelagians. They differ from Pelagius in that they acknowledge the depravity of human nature due to Original sin and distinguish nature from grace. However, there exists a secret agreement with Pelagius because they insist that grace should extend equally as far as nature. They also consider grace to be of such a nature that its use depends on free will.

To thoroughly understand the views of these individuals, one should read Prosper's letter to Saint Augustine, which can be found in the Seventh Volume of Saint Augustine's works. It is highly recommended to read it attentively. Prosper, a great admirer of Saint Augustine, found himself accused by these Semi-Pelagians and sought Augustine's assistance. There, you will clearly see the vain arguments of the Arminians, and Arminianism vividly portrayed. If not for the title of the letter and the letter itself bearing witness to its author and the era it was written in, one might mistake it for a letter written by someone provoked by the Arminians, seeking help from someone more learned. It leaves no doubt about where they drew their opinions from and which ancient heretics they sought to emulate.

I will not delay the eager reader much longer, but I shall present the words of the Semi-Pelagians themselves as recounted by Prosper. This is their declaration and profession: every person sinned when Adam sinned, and no one is saved through their own works but by the grace of God. Yet, the atonement offered in the Sacrament of the blood of Christ is presented to all individuals without exception. Whoever desires to come to faith and baptism may be saved. God foreknew, even before the creation of the world, who would believe and persevere in that faith, aided later by the grace of God. He predestined those to His kingdom whom, having freely called, He foreknew would be worthy of Election and would depart from this life with a good end. Therefore, everyone is admonished by God's ordinances to believe and work so that no one despairs of attaining eternal life since the reward is prepared for voluntary devotion.

However, they argue that God's calling, by which the difference between those who will be elected and those who will be rejected is said to have been determined, either before the world began or at the creation of mankind, removes from those who have fallen the concern to rise again. It also provides an occasion for the saints to become lethargic since, on either side, effort is in vain. If the one rejected cannot enter through any industry and diligence, and the

one elected cannot fall away through negligence, then, regardless of their conduct, nothing can happen to them except what God has decreed. Under such uncertain hope, constancy in one's course cannot be maintained. The intention to strive becomes futile if the Election determined by predestination dictates otherwise. Consequently, all effort is nullified, and all virtues are stripped away if God's appointment supersedes human will, introducing a kind of fatal necessity under the guise of predestination. These words of the Semi-Pelagians bear a striking resemblance to Arminianism and are of the same nature.

Consider the following as well: They assert that the gift of salvation is universally extended to all people, either through the natural law, the written law, or the preaching of the Gospel. This universal call ensures that those who choose to believe may become the children of God and that those who refuse to be faithful will be without excuse. This is seen as God's justice because those who do not believe will perish. His goodness is evident in that He desires all people to be saved and come to knowledge of the truth. They maintain that our Lord Jesus Christ died for all of humanity, and no one is exempt from the redemption of His blood, even if they live their entire lives with a different belief.

A bit later, they also express their disagreement with the idea that the predestined number of the elect cannot be increased or diminished. They argue against this notion, claiming that it would eliminate the need for exhortations to infidels and those who neglect predestination. They affirm that the election of God is based on foreknowledge, meaning that God made some vessels of honour and others of dishonour because He foresaw the faith of each individual. This indeed closely resembles Arminianism, though the Arminians tend to present their views more elaborately, using different terminology and being more sparing with the term "merit," which was commonly employed by both the Semi-Pelagians and Orthodox writers (albeit in a different sense than contemporary Papists).

Essentially, they offer their guests old and rejected delicacies with a new sauce.

In addition to this letter, there is another on the same topic by Hilary, the Bishop of Arles, written to Saint Augustine. In it, he attributes the following beliefs to the Semi-Pelagians: God elects faith through His foreknowledge, selecting those whom He foresees will believe and to whom He will give the Holy Spirit so they may obtain eternal life. They interpret foreknowledge as individuals being foreknown for the faith they will eventually embrace. According to them, no one is granted such perseverance that they cannot deviate from it; rather, individuals are free to fall from it or weaken it through their own will. They argue that whatever is given to the predestined can be either retained or lost based on their own will. This contradicts the idea that some individuals have received perseverance to the extent that they cannot help but persevere. Consequently, they do not accept the notion that the number of the predestined and the number of the rejected is predetermined. These individuals held greater authority in Arminius's eyes than Saint Augustine or even Saint Paul himself, as Arminius drew most of his opinions directly from the Semi-Pelagians.

Chapter 43

The Arminian View on the Operation of Grace, Irresistibility, Moral Persuasion, and the Power and Act of Believing.

The secret workings of the Holy Spirit, the extent of its efficacy, the gradual process of regeneration, the obstacles posed by human agency, the conflict between the flesh and the spirit, and the struggle of the new man against the old, are matters that I believe cannot be

fully comprehended by anyone. Even the little we grasp through experience cannot be adequately expressed in words. Indeed, Christ's comparison of the Spirit, the agent of regeneration, to the wind, which blows where it pleases, with its sound heard but its origin and destination unknown, is a fitting analogy. The experience of this phenomenon is to be desired more than an exhaustive explanation of its efficacy. Many who attempt to dissect the nature of the Holy Spirit's operation find themselves led astray by a reprobate spirit. They discuss the efficacy of the spirit of peace while being prone to discord and consumed by pride, revealing that they are influenced by the spirit that works effectively in the rebellious, as described in Ephesians 2.

Despite these complexities, and the fact that it is safer to follow God's call than to inquire into the mechanics of His calling and drawing us, we are compelled to address these issues due to the stubbornness and recklessness of those we contend with. These innovators have borrowed certain terms like "resistibility" and "unresistibility" from the Spanish Jesuits, terms that serve to entangle the minds of men. Their purpose is to equip the human will with the means to resist the Holy Spirit, no matter how effectively it works in the hearts of individuals. This allows them to attribute their conversion to their own strength and power, causing their confidence in salvation, supported by a frail foundation, to waver and fall into despair.

Arnoldus's words against Tilenus, found on page 125, are explicit: "We deny that the difference in the call of Grace is placed as much in the free will of men as in the will of God." They all affirm, with one voice, that God does not absolutely will that a particular individual should believe. Instead, He gives sufficient grace and the power to believe, which individuals may choose to use or not, according to their free will. They argue that grace and the power of the Holy Spirit working in the heart are resistible, even in the most holy individuals and the elect, and that the final outcome can be obstructed by human agency. Consequently, they conclude that those who are elected may ultimately be reprobated. They concede that the power to believe is

given irresistibly, and the understanding is so enlightened and the affections so stirred that resistance is impossible. However, they maintain that the act of belief itself can be resisted, and it is within the power of free will to either use or not use grace, to believe or not to believe. They believe that the liberty of free will cannot be upheld unless the elected individual can ultimately resist grace and be reprobated. Arnoldus against Bogermannus, on pages 263 and 274, states: "All the operations of grace being granted, which God uses to effect conversion in us, conversion itself remains so free in our power that we may or may not convert ourselves." They teach that the effect of grace depends on man's free will and that free will is a partial cause of our conversion. To the extent that Greinchouius against Ames is bold enough to state: "You will say that in this mode of operation, God, in a way, depends on the will of man. I grant it, regarding the act of free determination." Truly, this diminishes God and subjects Him to the control of human free will. They do not hesitate to assert that God, despite earnestly desiring the salvation of a particular individual, can be thwarted in His desire. As we have previously demonstrated, they contend that God grieves and bears the burden of unfulfilled promises. With these arguments, these well-meaning individuals undermine Christian faith, teetering on the brink of apostasy.

And the manner in which the grace of God and His Spirit work in us, they determine as follows: They assert that the understanding of man is irresistibly enlightened, and his affections are irresistibly stirred up, but the assent of the will remains free. They also believe that God irresistibly grants man the power to believe and to convert himself, but the actual acts of believing and self-conversion can be done or hindered by man's will. They claim that the sensation is irresistibly given, but not the assent. They argue that within the will, there is an inherent indifference and lack of determination, swaying neither way; it did not lose any spiritual gifts due to Adam's fall because it did not possess these gifts before the fall. In The Hague conference, page 307, they state, "Although it is determined that the infusion of abilities is done by an irresistible power (so that the matter does not

become infinite), it cannot happen that the actual act, that is, to believe and be converted, should be wrought irresistibly."

They plainly deny that actual faith and the act of believing are the gifts of God. Despite sometimes appearing to acknowledge this and proclaiming with full voices that faith is from God, their entire argument reveals that they are far from holding this opinion. They deny that faith is infused by God into the hearts of men; instead, they argue that God provides the power and capacity to believe. According to their view, God does not give the act of believing in any other way than by endowing the mind with knowledge and arousing affections that stimulate the will. Their opinion makes it clear that God does not grant the power to believe in Christ; instead, He merely enlightens the mind to know Christ and entices the appetites with gentle persuasion. By their interpretation, God shows the light and encourages the traveler to move but does not provide the power to act. This is the stance of the Arminian conferrers in *The Hague*, page 275, who declare, "We deny that faith is the gift of God in respect of the actual infusing of it into our hearts, but it is so called in respect of the power to come to it. This, indeed, is plain speaking, as they argue that God does not infuse faith into our hearts but grants the means to come to faith, which we may choose to use at our discretion since it falls under the jurisdiction of free will."

These same individuals, on page 306, profess to believe that the very act of believing comes from God. However, shortly thereafter, they retract their earlier concession and undermine all those passages of Scripture that demonstrate that faith and the act of believing are from God. They contend that John 6:65, "No man can come to me unless it be given him by the Father," speaks only of the faculty by which one may believe and does not address the essential point that the act of believing is God's gift. If they truly believed and earnestly professed this, they would not require proof or argumentation from us. Their insincere confession becomes evident, leading them to alter and retract it shortly after. They also distort the well-known passage from St. Paul in Ephesians 2, "By grace you are saved through faith,

and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God," where both salvation and faith are referred to as the gift of God. They deny that faith is called the gift of God in this passage but rather argue that salvation is the only aspect designated as God's gift. This attitude displays a deep-seated malice and a transparent confession that they do not believe faith is God's gift. They similarly twist the words of St. Paul to Timothy in his Second Epistle, Chapter 2, verse 25, "If God will give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth." We cited this passage to demonstrate that conversion and the act of repentance come from God. However, these sectarians, in a mocking tone, dismiss this passage as speaking of repentance as an uncertain event that may or may not occur. Clearly, the Arminians do not want to accept that the act of conversion is God's gift. While they use ambiguous and deceptive words to claim that repentance is God's gift, they believe it cannot be proven by any passage of Scripture. Yet, Scripture clearly states, "It is God who works in us effectively to will and to do" (Philippians 2), and "It is given to us to believe in Christ" (Philippians 1). These words, "to will," "to do," and "to believe," explicitly refer to the actual acts of willing and believing, not just the capacity to will or not will, to believe or not believe.

But they most clearly reveal their meaning when they deny that faith is infused into our hearts by God, asserting instead that individuals are merely encouraged and gently persuaded to have faith. They call this persuasion "moral and resistible," comparing it to how a boy is lured by an apple or a hog enticed by bran. If this is indeed the case, and if the efficacy of the Holy Spirit in imprinting faith depends solely on persuasion, then it is evident that faith cannot be considered God's gift. One who persuades to believe does not actually give faith but rather attempts to convince. Arminius, in opposition to Perkins, on page 57, states, "That faith and repentance cannot be had but by the gift of God is most plain in the Scriptures. But the same Scripture and the nature of the gift of either of them most clearly teach that the gift is given by the manner of persuasion. These two assertions cannot coexist because nothing is given through

persuasion. He who incites me to run does not give me the act of running or the power to run."

The same individual, on page 211, asserts, "God has determined to save those who believe by His grace, that is, through mild and gentle persuasion, suitable and agreeable to their free will, not through an omnipotent action or motion that they neither desire nor can resist or wish to resist." Vorstius, in his Commentary on Piscator, page 4, adds, "Those things that God desires us to do freely and contingently, He cannot desire more powerfully or effectively than through a wish or desire." The Arminian conferrers in The Hague, in defence of their fourth article, claim they will not define how God works in us and will not delve into these secrets. However, they consistently interpret all the passages of Scripture that speak of being drawn by God or of God working in us effectively and powerfully as mere persuasion or allurements in the manner of an object. Greinchouius, on pages 232 and 233, acknowledges no other form of motion than moral persuasion.

Another decree of the Arminians is that a person is initially quickened by the ministry of the law and subsequently by the ministry of the Gospel. They believe in a form of quickening that occurs without faith in Christ. They also assert that no one is called externally without a corresponding inward call, and that it is within the free will of man to open the door to God knocking or not to open it.

Despite believing that no grace of God can go unresisted by man, they concede that God calls certain individuals in such a manner and with such timing, efficacy, and illumination that they are infallibly converted. Arminius, in opposition to Perkins, on page 67, claims that the inward persuasion of the Holy Spirit is present in all to whom the Word is preached. He distinguishes between two types of persuasion: sufficient and effectual. This division suggests that the first persuasion, while sufficient, lacks sufficient efficacy. He proceeds to explain that this sufficient persuasion is applied by the

decree of providence, with certain foreknowledge that it will be rejected by human free will. The other persuasion is administered by the decree of predestination, with certain foreknowledge that the recipient will both will and believe and be converted, because it is applied in a manner that God deems congruent and agreeable for persuading and converting that individual. Arnoldus, in opposition to Tilenus, on page 79, echoes this sentiment. In conclusion, it is common for the Arminians to teach that some are called by God in an incongruent manner, resulting in those called never following, despite their ability to do so. Others are called in a congruent manner and time, ensuring that those called will certainly follow, all due to the decree of predestination, which cannot be deceived. This contradictory stance ultimately reinforces the irresistibility that they oppose with such fervor.

This theological debate has caused considerable intellectual turmoil and has become a widespread topic of discussion not only in the academies of the Low Countries but also in the streets, barbershops, and taverns. The effort required to rid oneself of this venomous proliferation of errors is comparable to the labour involved in cleansing the Augean Stables. Although we have examined a significant portion of this matter in the preceding chapters, the remainder will, God willing, be addressed in due course.

Chapter 44

The opinion of the Orthodox Church concerning the conversion of man and the manner and certainty of Conversion.

Our stance is not what these Sectarians falsely attribute to us, as they are troubled that we do not utter absurd and impious statements,

which would provide them with more opportunities to criticise us.

In their defence of their fourth Article, the Arminians in The Hague falsely accuse us of believing that God is willing to save some men, whether or not their free will consents to it. This is a base calumny, for whoever God saves, He inclines their will to act of their own accord and obey Him. On page 268, they misrepresent us as if we were teaching that faith is wrought in us by God without our participation and that our wills are coerced, and we are drawn like lifeless blocks during our conversion. These are, in their customary fashion, attributed to us quite liberally, as they attempt to alter the genuine and proper state of the question, knowing that our stance cannot be undermined unless it is first distorted.

Here is how we define it: God's election is immutable, and those inscribed in the book of life cannot be removed, nor can God's decrees be nullified. Therefore, whomever God has chosen for salvation, He has necessarily chosen for faith and repentance, as these are indispensable for salvation. Consequently, it is impossible for the elect not to attain faith and undergo conversion. While this happens sooner in some and later in others, and various labourers are called to the Lord's vineyard at different times of the day, it is certain that anyone who has not at least believed in Christ by the time of their death was not elected. This forms the foundation of truth for us, a foundation that cannot be overwhelmed by any artifice or shaken by any force. Those who are called by God's purpose must inevitably follow, lest God's purpose should fail. Those whom God has predestined, He called, and those whom He called, He justified, and those whom He justified, He glorified (Romans 8).

Therefore, if it is necessary that all those who are elected must come to faith in Christ, the basis for this certainty is not man's free will but the will of God. An immutable and eternal thing cannot rest on a shifting and unstable foundation. Nevertheless, we do not assert that man is drawn by God with an irresistible force. Irresistible force is that which, even if one wanted to resist, one could not. How can we

be drawn by God's irresistible grace when the very act of not resisting, but willingly obeying Him, is itself a grace of God? Therefore, when we all freely and yet necessarily desire to be happy, no one in their right mind would claim that we are compelled to do so by an irresistible force. We do not assert that the elect, even if they were to resist God's call, could not resist. Rather, we affirm that the elect do eventually and certainly, of their own accord, follow God's call, thus fulfilling God's Election. The question at hand is whether it is possible for someone who is elected to never convert and persistently resist God's call or resist God's grace to the point of ultimately falling away.

Neither is there any need to engage in careful disputes here about whether the elected can resist grace, as they cannot resist grace, and whether they are unwilling to what they will. We don't have the time to be so acute in our discussions. To defend the certainty of election, it suffices to establish that it is impossible for the elected not to be converted and to ultimately resist. If we can secure this concession, we can allow the Arminians to skirmish and engage in academic exercises at their leisure. They can debate whether something may be done that has never been done and never will be done, or whether the tormentors could break the thighs of our Saviour, which was impossible because of God's decree. These are the idle wranglings of those who create work for themselves in order to cause annoyance and trouble to others. The wills of men are so mysteriously turned by God that it is impossible for a man to will to do those things which his natural powers are capable of doing. While man may naturally resist, it is impossible for him to will to resist finally. Certain things may definitely and unavoidably occur, even if they are done willingly, knowingly, and with the natural ability to resist. Therefore, we are not debating the power to resist grace, which we find through experience to be present in the godly and faithful to our detriment. Instead, we are discussing the impossibility of the outcome, and we firmly assert that it cannot be that the elected should ultimately resist and, through their unbelief, strive against God until the end of their life.

The Scriptures affirm and experience confirms that things done by men willingly, without coercion, without natural necessity, and without external forces compelling their free will, necessarily happen by the decree of God. For the Arminians acknowledge that the death of Christ was decreed by God, and it could not be otherwise but that God's decree would be fulfilled. Yet, that death occurred due to the wickedness of the Jews, who committed this wicked act willingly. Proverbs 21 tells us that God turns the hearts of kings and leads them as He pleases, just as a watercourse is guided by its conveyer. God changed the minds of Esau, Saul, and the Egyptians without coercion (Genesis 33, 1 Samuel 19:23, Psalm 105:25). Although these events occurred unavoidably, they happened willingly and not by an irresistible force, with the liberty of man's free will remaining untouched. If this is true for wicked individuals, it is even more applicable to good and faithful individuals. Are those to whom God gives a heart of flesh instead of a stony heart drawn against their will? Or those to whom God promises that He will cause them to walk in His ways (Ezekiel 36:37)?

We would easily accept the terms "resistibility" and "irresistibility," although they may be rough and unattractive, if they were not distorted from their original meanings. They label as "resistible" that which can be obstructed, averted, or overcome, whereas resisting and overcoming are not the same thing. Irresistible force refers to that which cannot be opposed or resisted, not that which cannot be overcome. Resistance implies a struggle, not necessarily victory. As far as we know, no one has ever denied that the efficacy of the Spirit can be resisted by man. No one, not even those deeply rooted in piety, can deny experiencing inner conflict and being torn by conflicting desires. However, to assert that the elected can resist grace to the extent that they may never accept it, or having once accepted it, may wholly and finally reject it, would require undoing the decrees of God. We do not base the invincible power of the faith given to His elect on the decree of faith or the perfection and strength of that virtue, but on the certain and sure help of God, which He provides to His elect according to His purpose. No matter

how well-developed or strong our faith is, it would fail if God were to withdraw His assistance, just as a two-year-old child taking their first steps relies on their father's hand. Although the child may be fearful, they will not fall because their father firmly supports them. When God occasionally allows His elect to stumble and fall, He promptly raises them up. Consequently, they become more cautious, acknowledge God's care over them, and gain strength through their very falls, just as a broken bone heals and becomes stronger than before as the fractured parts grow together and are covered by a tough layer. Additionally, even if our faith is weak, but sincere and struggling with doubts, our generous Father assists our weaknesses and does not break the bruised reed. Just as those with poor vision or blindness in one eye were healed by beholding the bronze serpent, no less so than those with clear vision in both eyes, because their healing was not due to the power of their sight or the clarity of their eyes, but the divine power that God exercised through the image of the serpent. Therefore, we are saved not by the merit of perfect faith but by God's grace in Christ, our Redeemer.

But the nature and extent of that soul-bending and persuasive power of the Holy Ghost working in the hearts of the elect, and by what means, occasions, and degrees He furthers His work, are beyond expression by those who feel it. It is akin to how a pregnant woman does not understand how the living fruit is formed and grows within her. Nonetheless, the Scripture attests to the great power of the Holy Ghost, as shall be demonstrated later.

However immense this efficacy may be, God does not draw us like logs, but like human beings. He draws us when we are unwilling so that we may become willing, and He follows us when we are willing so that our willingness is not in vain. When He transforms us from unwilling to willing, He not only does not take away the freedom of our will but restores it. For serving God willingly and joyfully is true freedom. He fosters the growth of faith and regeneration in such a way that we often do not perceive our growth until some time has passed. It is like how we do not see plants as they grow but realize

they have grown over time. The ordinary means by which God affects the hearts of people and initiates and advances regeneration is through the reception of the Gospel's word into the ear and its conception in the heart. In this way, He instills hidden powers into it for those whom He has decreed to save. Saint Peter calls it the incorruptible seed, Saint Paul describes it as the power of God for salvation, the Apostle to the Hebrews refers to it as a two-edged and sharp sword at the beginning of Revelation. Jeremiah likened it to fire and a hammer breaking the rock because it breaks the hardness of our hearts and directs our captive thoughts to obedience to Christ (1 Peter 1, Romans 1, Hebrews 4, Revelation, Jeremiah 23:29). The sparks of this new life, falling from heaven into our hearts, are stirred up by the Spirit of God as if with bellows. He draws out unutterable groans, strikes and wounds the heart with secret pricks, enlightens the mind, controls the appetites, and bends the will. The will, whether Arminius desires it or not, must also be reshaped, like a crooked piece of wood, bent in the opposite direction because it does not equally incline to good and evil, as these sectarians suggest, but entirely leans toward evil in unregenerate people.

Since this transformation can only be achieved through contrary habits, it is necessary that, in place of the vices naturally ingrained, contrary habits such as faith, hope, charity, humility, patience, etc., should take their place. These habits are not acquired through practice and actions, as the Arminians argue against the Walachrians. Instead, they are imprinted and infused by the Spirit of God, who stirs up holy actions and motions that strengthen and increase faith and charity through exercise. Man, aided by the Spirit of God, does not bestow faith or charity upon himself or acquire them through practice and industry. Rather, they are given by God and nurtured and increased through voluntary and spontaneous actions inspired by God.

And that the will is more the seat of virtues than the sensitive appetites, reason itself proves: It is more likely that the rational appetite, peculiar to humans, is adorned with virtues rather than the

appetite shared with animals. If the latter were the seat of virtues like righteousness, holiness, and charity, then virtue would cease with the cessation of the sensitive faculty after death. The will of the separated soul would be completely devoid of righteousness and holiness. If someone supposes that the appetites can be called just subjectively, and that they are the subject of righteousness and holiness because they obey the God-enlightened mind, then there is no reason why the will, freely subjecting itself to that persuasion, should not also be called just and holy in the same manner, and the subject of righteousness and holiness. Considering that the rectified will of a wise and pious person usually governs over the affections and compels them into order, who cannot see that virtue resides more in the part that, when rectified, governs the affections than in the affections themselves, which often reluctantly obey this holy command? I admit that Christian virtues partly pertain to the sensitive appetites, but in the same way that the art of training a horse, which properly resides in the horseman, partly involves the horse, which the rider's skill has taught to move in an orderly manner. Could there be a more convenient means of maintaining the liberty of human will than by stripping it of all virtue? Indeed, the Arminians appear as staunch advocates of free will by divesting the will of virtues, so it may remain free and unburdened by the constraints of holy habits. They teach that the will, before the fall, was not endowed with spiritual gifts to avoid tainting it with vices and to prevent contrary vices and natural depravity from replacing the lost spiritual gifts. Similarly, they deny that the habits of faith, charity, etc., are infused into the will by God, fearing that the will, altered by such infusion, might lose the power to ultimately resist the Holy Ghost. They believe that an injustice is done to the will if its liberty to cast itself into hell is taken away—an unfortunate liberty that these sectarians should not zealously defend, as it is not in our best interest to resist God to the end and destroy ourselves. There was no reason to depict the will as such a simple and malleable thing, neither inherently virtuous nor vicious, but capable of being turned and twisted in any direction like prime matter, especially when the will of humanity is naturally inclined towards evil, as we have

extensively shown. Accordingly, individuals are either good or evil based on their will, especially.

Therefore, we assert that Christian virtues are not acquired through practice and effort but are infused by God into the mind and will. He not only grants the power to believe but also faith in Christ itself and works actual faith in us. God, through His certain and absolute purpose, decrees to grant faith to those He has decreed to save, for their salvation. We maintain that the effect of this grace does not depend on human free will, and it is not within our power to believe and be converted if we so desire. On the contrary, God grants the elect the will to be converted and to believe, giving them both the will and the ability to act according to His good pleasure.

Chapter 45

The Question of Moral Persuasion Examined and Debated, and Whether Every Persuasion Can Be Resisted.

The Arminians assert that the efficacy of the Spirit of God working in our hearts is in the form of moral persuasion. They deny that habits of Faith, Hope, and Charity are infused into the hearts of people by God. They do this to protect the freedom of free will and to avoid making conversion occur through an irresistible and unavoidable necessity. Instead, they believe it happens through a gentle invitation, which a person may choose to resist or obey.

Their opinion is based on a false premise: that there is no persuasion that cannot be resisted to the point where its effect can ultimately be hindered. We argue that this premise is false. There is a persuasion so effective that it necessarily leads a person to consent. While you may resist it if you wish, you cannot be willing to do so. For instance,

if someone were to offer a sweet and refreshing drink to a thirsty person during a scorching drought, and with friendly persuasion invite them to drink without any discouragement or hindrance, it is impossible for the thirsty person not to accept the offered drink. Similarly, if a person has fallen into the hands of enemies who have put them in chains, cast them into prison, and brought them close to punishment, and then someone else enters the prison, loosens the chains, opens the gate, shows them a sure way to escape, and urges them to flee and save themselves from imminent danger, it is highly unlikely that the person would be able to resist such persuasion. In human affairs, there are many such persuasions that people cannot bring themselves to resist. Therefore, how much less can the persuasion in question be resisted, especially when it is backed by the evidence and certainty of the persuasion, the excellence of the heavenly blessings offered by the Gospel, the knowledge of the present danger, and the divine power of the Holy Spirit, whose efficacy cannot be explained? Indeed, there is a persuasive necessity and a persuasion more potent than any command, which so inclines those who are willing that they would rather endure anything than not desire what they seek.

Reason itself supports these ideas, as the nature of the human will is inclined to move itself according to the prescriptions and persuasions of the mind, except when indomitable passions resist reason. But whenever reason aligns and harmonizes with the affections, it becomes impossible for the will not to move itself in the direction the mind suggests, and the appetites incite. What could divert it, given that it can be influenced by no other impetus?

Furthermore, there is no doubt that God, who fully understands our souls and the most suitable occasions during which the soul, being apprehended, cannot resist His call, knows in which part it is more pliable. He is fully capable of illuminating the mind, impressing upon the imagination (which naturally has control over the appetites) a clear image, terrifying the conscience with the presentation of punishments, stirring it with the promise of eternal rewards, gently

inviting, and persuading it so effectively that all resistance immediately ceases, and all opposition crumbles away.

Wherefore, Arnoldus spoke thoughtlessly against Tilenus when he said that the liberty of the will consisted in this: when all the necessary conditions for an action were present, the will might suspend and halt the action. He should have said that the liberty of the will consists in its capacity to move itself freely and spontaneously towards those things which reason and the appetites persuade. Or, if reason and appetites disagree and present different options, the will can, through free choice, move itself in the direction it wishes to go. Consider the souls in heaven who behold God as an example; they have everything needed to inspire the will to love God. Yet, their will cannot suspend that action or prevent the act of love with which they love God. It cannot be said (although it may be irrelevant to the present topic) that they cannot hate God because there are no opportunities for hatred or temptations to sin. For the angels, before their fall, had no greater opportunities, and yet they fell due to the same temptations. The same opportunities for sin that led to the angels' downfall were always present. Excessive self-admiration, excessive self-love, diminished contemplation, and diminished love for God led these most excellent creatures astray and incited them to rebel.

Indeed, the will is inclined toward two or more things, and between two presented objects, it can freely choose, except when the last and best end is desired. However, it often becomes so strongly attached to one thing that it cannot resist itself. If the efficacy of the Holy Ghost, working in the elect, also intervenes, directing the reins of their affections in such a way that the will follows of its own accord, it's no wonder that such a rider cannot be ultimately shaken off, even though the appetites resist and reluctantly relinquish their control, which they have wrongly seized.

All of these points serve to illustrate that we can teach that the outcome of conversion is not uncertain, or, as these innovators

claim, resistible, even if God moves the heart through moral persuasion and entices the will through a fitting and appropriate invitation.

However, anyone who examines the Scriptures or looks to examples and experiences will find that the efficacy of the Holy Ghost working in people's hearts should not be limited to moral persuasion. It's difficult to imagine what persuasion God used in the conversion of Saint Paul, who was struck down as if by lightning, and whose stubborn resistance was broken.

The same can be said of the Thief, into whom God infused faith in an incomprehensible manner in the midst of torment and the agony of death. Can these Sectarians believe that he gained faith through repetition and frequent acts of piety? Surely not, for in one moment, he transitioned from the depths of incredulity and utterly wicked conduct to a strong faith. Was he enticed by gentle persuasion? No, for everything presented before him served as discouragement and was so powerful that it even caused the faith of the Apostles to falter. The torments endured by the wretched man at that time could have easily extinguished any allure or persuasion, had it not been for the secret power of the Spirit of Christ overcoming all obstacles.

Would the Apostle Paul say in Ephesians 1:19-20 and Colossians 2:12 that the power of God, by which He effectively works in the hearts of believers, is the same power by which He raised Christ from the dead if He only converted hearts through moral persuasion and gentle invitation?

Saul, fully determined to kill David, came to Naioth, where David had fled (1 Samuel 19). Yet, as soon as he arrived, he was seized by a prophetic inspiration, without any moral persuasion or invitation. Therefore, if God can change the minds of wicked people without moral persuasion, why would He not exercise the same power on His elect?

I fail to see how the phrases used in Scripture to describe our conversion, such as "creating a new heart," "raising from the dead," and "giving new life," can be applied to denote moral persuasion. The new man is not created through persuasion but through the infusion of new life. It is necessary for something supernatural to occur, which cannot be explained by human means.

Furthermore, if God were to allure people to believe through mere persuasion and invitation, God would not be the efficient cause of faith. For one who merely exhorts and persuades us to believe does not grant belief itself, nor does one who suggests the abilities to believe, as we have mentioned before. Rather, they metaphorically and intentionally move us, as we are moved by objects and known ends.

That there is something more than persuasion involved can be deduced from the fact that some people are deeply moved by a slight persuasion, while others, who know the truth, remain unaffected and cold despite the most convincing and certain persuasions. Throughout history, we have seen many martyrs who were uneducated and had only a basic understanding of Gospel doctrine. Yet, even someone as knowledgeable and industrious as Origen, who had an intimate knowledge of Scripture, could not endure martyrdom and chose to offer incense to the Devil instead. There are those who remain incredulous even in the midst of miracles and the Gospel's radiant light, as witnessed by the people of Capernaum. Some are enslaved to their appetites and gluttony, as our daily experience attests. This does not happen because certain unregenerate individuals are more receptive to moral persuasion than others; rather, all people are inherently averse to God and dead in their sins. You can also observe that some of the most wicked and ill-disposed individuals have been converted to the faith of Christ, such as the Romans and Corinthians. God chooses the foolish things of the world, and where sin abounds, grace abounds even more. On the other hand, there are many less wicked individuals, such as the people of Tyre and Sidon, who have not been called through the

preaching of the Gospel, despite it being the most wholesome persuasion. There are times when the gates of the Church stand wide open, and there is a great influx of people, as the Apostle teaches in 1 Corinthians 16:19: "A great door and effectual is opened unto me." And in 2 Corinthians 2, he says, "When I came to Troas to preach the Gospel, a door was opened unto me of the Lord." Conversely, there are occasions when access to the Church seems restricted, and the efficacy of the Gospel appears diminished. During these times, Church pastors encounter much stubbornness among the people, as if a callous skin covers their consciences, blunting the impact of preaching. This isn't because people in certain eras are born better or because God employs different methods and instructions for teaching them compared to others. Rather, it is because God has chosen to soften the hearts of some and reveal to them His arm and the power of salvation. He embeds the sword of His word more firmly in their minds according to His good pleasure and election of grace, by which all those appointed to eternal life believe (Acts 13). Through this motive, God Himself stirred the mind of Saint Paul while he was in Corinth, encouraging him to speak boldly: "Fear not," He said, "but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set upon thee to hurt thee; for I have much people in this City."

Chapter 46

The certainty of the conversion of the Elect is proved, and that Grace cannot be overcome.

I. The chief foundation of our opinion regarding the certainty of the conversion of the elect and the inseparable grace of God lies in the immutable certainty of God's election. Since God, by His definite and

determined decree, chose specific individuals for salvation, as we have extensively demonstrated, it follows that those He appointed for the end were also appointed to the means through which no one is saved—namely, Faith and Repentance. This decree, being unhindered, assures us that the faith of the elect cannot be so obstructed that they will ultimately fall away. When these Sectarians oppose the truth of this doctrine, they introduce absurd and erroneous notions, such as claiming that Election is not irrevocable or final before death, that the elected may be reprobated, that the number of the elect is not predetermined by God's decree but can increase and decrease, and that all individuals are conditionally elected. These concepts, filled with intricate subtleties and baseless speculations (to put it mildly), are, in my opinion, sufficiently refuted by us.

II. We have heard Saint Paul in Ephesians 1:3-4, teaching that the grace of God is given according to election. Therefore, it is evident that the grace of God given to the elect cannot be hindered any more than election itself. The effects of an unchangeable cause must necessarily be most certain. Election would be in vain and empty if it were devoid of the means essential for salvation. Note that Saint Paul speaks of the holy and faithful Ephesians, so that no Arminian can argue that the Apostle is speaking of universal Election. Indeed, numerous passages in Scripture affirm that belief is a result of Election, that only those given to Christ by the Father are those elected for salvation in Christ (John 6), that all those predestined are called, justified, and glorified (Romans 8), and that God has elected us to holiness (Ephesians 1), not by holiness or for holiness. These passages all demonstrate that faith and holiness are so interconnected with Election that it is inevitable for the one elected to eventually be converted. The faith of the elect cannot be entirely obliterated and permanently extinguished, for then the election of God would also have to be erased and perish. Whoever God calls by His purpose will undoubtedly come, for God never fails in His purpose.

III. Corresponding to these points are the words of the same Apostle in Romans 8:14: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God." I ask, is it possible for someone who is a son of God to become a child of the devil? If they retain any modesty, they dare not openly affirm this, even though it logically follows from their opinion that the elect can be reprobated. Therefore, if it is established that the sons of God cannot become the children of the devil, I inquire about the source of this impossibility of falling away. Why can someone led by the Spirit of God, often referred to as the Spirit of adoption, not become a child of the devil? The cause of this impossibility must be either God's election or human free will. However, as we have thoroughly demonstrated, it cannot be attributed to human free will. Therefore, it is God's election that ensures the impossibility of the faith of the elect being ultimately lost and extinguished.

IV. The Apostle teaches us in Ephesians 1:19 how effectively God works in people's hearts when he wishes the Ephesians to understand "the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power." The Apostle deliberately employs emphatic and meaningful words to convey a sense of power and efficacy vastly different from the phrases used by Arminius, who often posits that God will not employ His omnipotence for human conversion but only a gentle invitation in harmony with free will. Lest anyone attempt to limit this power to an effective persuasion, the same Apostle, in the same Epistle, reveals that this power is the same as that which raised Christ from the dead—a context devoid of persuasion. He immediately adds, "according to the working of His mighty power, which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead." Similarly, in Colossians 2:12, when speaking of our regeneration through faith, he states, "With Christ, you are risen by the faith of the operation of God, who raised Him from the dead." This indicates that Christ's resurrection and our regeneration are brought about by the same force and power.

V. In 2 Thessalonians 1:11, the same Apostle prays for God to fulfil the work of faith with power in the Thessalonians. Romans 1:16 describes the Gospel as "the power of God to salvation" because it reveals God's saving power. In 2 Corinthians 10:4, the Apostle asserts that our weapons, represented by the Word of God combined with the efficacy of the Spirit, are powerful for demolishing strongholds, overthrowing arguments, and every lofty thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to obey Christ. Observe how frequently and earnestly the Apostle extols the power God employs for human conversion, using select and potent words to inspire admiration for this marvellous and hidden power. In line with this, Jesus in Luke 11:22 describes the expulsion of Satan, who had gained control over a person, and the superior power of the Spirit of God thrusting him out: "When a strong man armed keeps his palace, his goods are in peace; but when a stronger one than he comes upon him and overcomes him, he takes from him all his armour in which he trusted and divides his spoils."

VI. These Sectarians allege and fabricate many things here. First, they assert that this power, no matter how great, is resistible, and we do not deny it. However, the question is whether it can ultimately be overcome. It seems unlikely that God would exert such great power and efficacy toward the salvation of a person only to be overcome by that person, making them more powerful than God. Indeed, in the very passage from the Apostle, 2 Corinthians 10, where he extols this power with eloquent speech, he mentions resistance that arises against the knowledge of God and resists it. Nevertheless, this resistance is eventually broken, yielding and willingly submitting to the bonds of divine grace.

VII. In response to Saint Paul's prayer in 2 Thessalonians 1, where he asks God to powerfully complete the work of faith in the Thessalonians, some from The Hague (page 295) argue that the Apostle is not speaking of the beginning of faith but of its culmination in growth and perseverance. However, this

interpretation undermines their position, for if such great strength and power of God is necessary to further the growth of faith, how much greater power is needed for the inception of faith and to place faith in an unbelieving individual in whom nothing is disposed to resist God?

VIII. They also claim that by the "work of faith," patience is meant, which is an unsuitable interpretation. The work of faith is not solely accomplished through enduring and bearing afflictions. Moreover, the preceding words of the Apostle reject this interpretation. He says, "We pray always for you, that God would count you worthy of this calling; and fulfil all the good pleasure of His goodness, and the work of faith with power." It is a misjudgment to restrict God's calling and the effects of His goodness to patience alone.

IX. In the same passage, they suggest that this fulfillment refers to obtaining glory. However, this is in vain, as glory is not the perfection or fulfilment of the work of faith; rather, it is the fulfilment of the reward received through faith. Furthermore, the work of faith is not perfected at that time but will cease.

X. Our party demonstrates this through the passage of Saint Peter, 2 Peter 1:3: "His divine power has given unto us all things which pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who has called us to glory and virtue." If God provides us with everything necessary for life and piety, then He provides to ensure we do not resist ultimately but obey God's call. The Arminians respond that Peter here does not speak of bestowing faith and that he does not teach that God gives us faith but only those things He grants to those who already believe. This response is irrelevant and does not address any part of our argument. However, when Saint Peter asserts that all things are given to us by God that are necessary for salvation, they act honestly by not including faith under the word "omnia," all things. For in other places, they state that faith is the gift of God, thus proving that they do not take these words seriously and in earnest. The individuals on our side do not cite any Scripture

passages to demonstrate that faith is God's gift, which the Arminians do not corrupt or obscure, as they deny that the habit of faith is infused into people or imprinted on their hearts by God. Instead, they argue that faith is given to us by God no differently than by persuasion and by granting the abilities to believe if we ourselves wish. However, this is not truly giving faith but providing assistance and incentives. Turning these aids into action rests with free will. To further their deceit, they corrupt Saint Peter's words. Saint Peter says that God has provided all things necessary for life and godliness, while they want "offering and propounding" to be understood by "giving," which are quite different. Since, as the Arminians acknowledge, eternal life is offered even to reprobates, they argue that eternal life is given to reprobates if offering and giving are considered identical.

XI. That faith and repentance come from God is proven by Scripture. Saint Paul teaches that faith is the gift of God in Ephesians 2:8: "By grace, you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God." The gift Saint Paul speaks of here is neither salvation alone nor faith alone; rather, it is the gift to be saved by grace through faith. Hence, faith is as much a part of this gift as salvation. However, even if only salvation were called the gift of God, it would still necessarily follow that faith is God's gift, for He who gives salvation must also provide the means without which there is no salvation. The same Apostle says in Philippians 1:29, "It is given to you on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him but also to suffer for His sake." This demonstrates that we are given not only the ability to believe but also the act of believing itself and faith itself. Saint Peter bears witness that repentance is God's gift in Acts 5:31: "God has exalted Christ with His right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins." Additionally, 2 Timothy 2:25 states, "If God will at any time give them repentance." Saint Paul, in Romans 5, affirms that the love of God is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit given to us. This indicates that not only the capacity for willing and doing is given by God but also the will and the action themselves. As such, since every

Christian virtue corresponds to a gift of God, and these virtues are habits, it is evident that these habits are from God and not implanted by nature, as Pelagius himself has not claimed. They are also not achieved through use and actions with the grace of God's assistance, as the Arminians contend. If that were the case, humans would give either all of faith or, at the very least, some part of faith to themselves, attributing it to their own labour and effort. Indeed, if God provides the ability to believe but not the act of believing in the same manner, as these Sectarians believe, with God giving the ability irresistibly but the act of believing only through persuasion and invitation, which can be obeyed or resisted, then it is clear that the very act of believing, and therefore faith itself, is not solely from God and His grace but partly from human free will. This aligns with the Arminians' opinion, which holds that grace is not the complete cause of faith but only a partial one. To further demonstrate this, consider their statement that God gives faith only through persuasion and gentle invitation. If this were true, it would imply that God gives neither the ability to believe nor the act of believing. For a person who merely persuades and encourages another to run, despite igniting all the rhetorical artifices of persuasion, would never be credited with providing the power to run or the act of running.

XII. Since the habit of faith is God's gift, it must necessarily be infused and imprinted on our hearts by God Himself. If this is the case, it is impossible for this infusion to be hindered in the elect. What could hinder it? Does the mutability and instability of God's decree hinder it? No, His decrees cannot be abolished or changed. Does the evil disposition of the human heart hinder it? No, every person is ill-disposed before receiving faith from God. Does the obstinate hardness of some individuals hinder it? No, this hardness is softened by the reception of faith, as God promises in Ezekiel 36:26.

XIII. These promises of God, and others like them, in which God promises to give a heart of flesh, write His law on it, and cause us to walk in His ways, guarantee the infallible certainty of the conversion

of the elect and the grace of God, which cannot ultimately fail. What could hinder God from keeping His promise and fulfilling what He has absolutely promised? Does the hardness of the human heart hinder it? No, that's precisely what He promises—to soften the stony heart. Does the wickedness of humanity hinder it? No, everyone is wicked before God converts them. Is it the stubbornness that some individuals exhibit more than others? No, where sin abounds, grace abounds even more. In the end, no obstacle can be raised that God cannot remove. There is nothing so complex that the wise goodness of God cannot clear. Therefore, those to whom God promised to give a new spirit, to remove their stony hearts, and to cause them to walk in His ways cannot fail to be converted or to ultimately fall away. Even the Arminians do not deny this, although they appear to argue against it contentiously. In their conference at The Hague, they confess that these words of God in Ezekiel declare that God will work so effectively that actual obedience must follow. However, they ask, "Is it done irresistibly?" as if the controversy lies in that. It is enough that it is done most certainly, infallibly, and unavoidably, even if a person resists for a time and opposes God's call, that is, opposes their own salvation. The acts of piety that follow this change of heart are not presented as conditions upon which this change is contingent, but as fruits and effects that follow this change of heart.

XIV. These Sectarians concoct another hiding place, claiming that this promise of giving a new heart was made to a whole nation, not to individual people. However, this is a vain argument. Regeneration and the change of heart are gifts given to individual people, not to entire nations. Moreover, this promise would not be true if it were to be fulfilled for an entire nation, as there have always been many stubborn and rebellious individuals within nations. Therefore, this promise applies only to those who will truly be faithful.

XV. Their argument is no wiser when they claim that these passages promise not the initial onset of prevenient grace but a greater abundance and progress of grace. I do not deny that progress and advancement in grace are promised here, but I strongly assert that

the beginnings of conversion are also promised here. The very phrase "a new heart" proves this, as a heart is truly and properly made new when it begins to change. It is not credible that the increase of grace is promised without its commencement.

XVI. I further inquire whether the promise in which God declares that He will cause us to walk in His ways extends to the end of life or only for a short time. If it does not extend to the end, then the promise is in vain and even absurd, for it would imply that God promises to give His grace only for a limited time, after which He would take it away and destroy individuals forever. The words themselves indicate that this promise pertains to perpetual grace, as God promises that individuals will not depart from His ways, implying final perseverance.

XVII. If the grace of God could be ultimately hindered in all individuals, it might also be hindered in every person, leading to the conclusion that no one would be elected, there would be no Church, and Christ's death would have been in vain. Nothing could be more absurd than to suggest that God decreed that some individuals should believe and be saved irresistibly, yet did not decree the same for any particular person. It is inconceivable to determine that it must be necessary for some to be saved, yet also claim that there is no one who cannot be damned. How can any certainty be derived from many uncertainties? Is it plausible that God's decree concerning the entire Church cannot be thwarted, yet it can be frustrated in the individual members of the Church?

XVIII. The truth also finds refuge in the words of Christ in John 6:44-45: "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the Prophets: 'They shall all be taught by God.' Everyone, therefore, who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me." Each word is like a thunderbolt. The Arminians believe that many who hear and learn from the Father do not come or follow. This directly contradicts Christ's words: "Everyone who has heard and learned from the

Father comes to me." Christ speaks of a particular kind of hearing and learning unique to the elect, one that works in their hearts as He commands. The Arminians also claim that many are drawn but do not come. However, this contradicts Christ's statement: "No one can come to me unless the Father draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day." Christ speaks of a certain kind of drawing and obedience, such that those who are drawn and come will be raised by Christ on the last day. He speaks of a kind of drawing that cannot be ultimately resisted.

XIX. From the same passage in Saint John, the following argument is constructed: "Whoever has heard and learned from the Father comes; whoever is drawn has heard and learned. Therefore, whoever is drawn comes."

XX. This passage from Saint John refutes the Arminian belief that all people are drawn and that sufficient grace is given to all. Christ's purpose is to explain why the Jews of Capernaum could not come, which is because they were not drawn by the Father. He thereby teaches that they would have come if they had been drawn, indicating that all who are drawn do come.

XXI. These proofs from this passage are not based solely on the word "drawing," which we know can have a broader meaning and is sometimes used to describe an invitation that is not obeyed. Instead, they are based on the entire context of this passage and the flow of the conversation, which clearly demonstrates that it speaks of a type of drawing in which those who are drawn come. In this sense, the term "drawing" is also used in the beginning of the Song of Solomon when it says, "Draw me, and we will run after you." Saint Augustine acknowledges this in Book 1 against the two Epistles of the Pelagians. After pointing out that Christ did not say "lead" but "draw," Augustine adds, "Who is drawn if he is already willing? Yet no one comes unless he is willing. He is drawn, therefore, in a wonderful way so that he may be willing, by Him who knows how to work inwardly in the hearts of men—not that men who are unwilling

should believe, which cannot be, but that their unwillingness should be made willing."

XXII. It is not credible that a grace whose primary function is to remove final resistance can be ultimately resisted. If it were the case, it would not fulfill its purpose, especially since Christ says in John 4:14, "Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life." Clearly, this passage speaks of a grace that, once well received into the heart, is never lost and remains unto eternal life, like an everlasting spring. Similarly, Christ's words in John 6:35, "He who believes in Me shall never thirst," and verse 51, "He who eats of this bread will live forever," would all be false if true faith, which seriously apprehends Christ, could be shaken off and ultimately lost. This would imply that some, after partaking of the heavenly bread, would perish forever.

XXIII. If there is any certainty of salvation or full assurance of the saints, it must necessarily mean that the grace of God within them cannot be overcome or extinguished finally. Otherwise, this certainty would be vain and deceptive. How can someone be certain of their salvation if they believe that the grace of God can be hindered and abolished through a final resistance? How can there be no absolute and decisive election on God's part until the end of one's life, while on man's part, the free will of even the most devout individuals possesses the power to completely drive away the Spirit of God?

XXIV. The Scriptures, in more than six hundred places, teach and command a certain and assured confidence in our salvation. Saint Paul says in Romans 8:16, "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God." What more certain and trustworthy witness can there be than the Spirit of God? The Scriptures also teach the certainty of this inward testimony, referring to the Spirit as a seal deeply imprinting God's promises on our hearts and as the pledge of our inheritance (Ephesians 1:13, 4:30; 2 Corinthians 1). In 1 John 5:10, it states, "He who believes in the Son

of God has the witness in himself." This testimony is beyond question. Anyone who does not experience it in themselves should be more critical of their own condition rather than judging the confidence of others by their own unbelief.

XXV. The Apostle to the Hebrews in Chapter 3, Verse 6, commands us to hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of our hope firm until the end. In Chapter 10, Verse 22, he encourages us to draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. In Ephesians 3:12, we are told that in Christ, we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him. In 1 John 5:13, it is written, "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life."

XXVI. Our Savior Himself promises in John 14:13 that He will give us all things we ask in His name. Therefore, if we ask for grace that cannot be overcome or extinguished, as well as perseverance in the faith, Christ promises that we shall receive what we ask.

XXVII. Did David speak as one doubting of his salvation when he said in Psalm 17, "I shall see your face in righteousness, and I shall be satisfied with your likeness"? Did Simeon express doubt when he said in Luke 2, "Now let your servant depart in peace, according to your word"? Did Stephen, even as his enemies gnashed their teeth at him and he faced certain death, cry out, "I see the heavens open, and the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of God"? Could the grace of God be overcome by free will in these men? Was their confidence deceptive and subject to revocation, as these Sectaries claim?

XXVIII. Why should I speak of Saint Paul, who, full of faith, desired to be dissolved and to be with Christ? In 2 Timothy 4:18, he declared, "The Lord will deliver me from every evil work and will preserve me for His heavenly kingdom." In the same passage, after enduring numerous trials, he proclaimed, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness," and so on. Saint Paul spoke with

unwavering confidence, not only on his own behalf but also on behalf of believers, as seen in Romans 8:38: "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

XXIX. These Sectaries find pleasure in doubting our salvation, portraying themselves as modest and humble. They state in their words against the Walachrians (page 76): "Whether anyone can be certain that he shall persevere in the faith, we will not say yes; we suppose it to be very profitable to doubt these things, and that it is laudable for a Christian soldier to shake off the slothfulness and drowsiness of the soul in the work of religion." In the same passage, they only admit a certainty in which one knows that God and sufficient help will not be lacking, provided he does not fail himself—a certainty that could exist in any reprobate. They instill these ideas under the guise of promoting good works, secretly undermining the foundation of faith as if doubting were the only way to overcome spiritual sluggishness. Such professed modesty fosters disbelief and teaches people to distrust God. Ironically, these teachers themselves boast that God has given them what He ought to give and claim that God is obligated to provide them with sufficient grace, revealing that beneath their affected humility lies much pride.

Chapter 47

Saint Augustine's Opinion on the Perseverance of the Saints.

I. The certainty of perseverance can be understood in two ways: First, as the certainty of God's decree by which He determined to grant perseverance in faith to those whom He elected for salvation. Second, as the confidence by which a person persuades themselves

that they will never be forsaken by God. The former certainty is necessarily deduced from an absolute election and is not based on foreseen faith, but the latter does not follow because God has decreed many things concerning us that He has not yet fully revealed.

II. The complete assurance of the faithful does not rest on any revelation in which God has disclosed the secrets of His counsel. Instead, it is grounded in the promises of the Gospel, the inner conviction that one genuinely believes in Christ upon self-examination, and the internal testimony of the Spirit bearing witness in our hearts that we are the children of God. However, many good and godly individuals, even though they belong to God's elect, may not have attained this full confidence.

III. Saint Augustine, who had experienced many disputes with the Pelagians, firmly maintains the former certainty. He argues that from God's election according to His purpose, the elect can never be abandoned by God. He asserts that grace is given, which cannot fail, and by which they will certainly persevere. In his writings, he expresses this belief most explicitly, particularly in his work "On Correction and Grace," penned in his old age. In the twelfth chapter of this book, he states: "To the saints predestined by the grace of God for the kingdom of God, there is given not only such help of grace but such help that perseverance itself is given to them, not only so that they cannot persevere without this gift but also so that by this gift, they cannot fail to persevere." Saint Augustine emphasizes that Christ appointed them in such a way that they would continue to bear fruit and that their fruit would remain. He questions who would dare to suggest that their fruit might not remain when Christ Himself has ordained it so. He argues that Christ's intercession guarantees that their faith will not fail and that it will persevere to the end, finding them faithful at the end of their earthly life.

Continuing, Saint Augustine writes: "Their will is so inflamed by the Holy Spirit that they are able to will because they so will, and they will so because God works in them to will. If, in the great weakness of

this life, where virtue needed to be developed to curb pride, human wills were left to themselves so that, if they chose, they might continue with the assistance of God (without which they could not persevere), and God did not work in them so that they might will, then human will, due to its weakness, would fail amidst numerous and severe temptations. They could not, therefore, persevere because, weakened by their own inability, they could not be willing or, by the infirmity of their will, they could not be willing to the extent that they might be capable. Thus, the weakness of human will was aided by the grace of God, so that, by the grace of God, it might be propelled irresistibly, inseparably, and invincibly, and so that, although weak, it would neither fail nor be overcome by any adversity."

Note the use of the words "irresistibly," "inseparably," and "invincibly." Saint Augustine employs these terms instead of "irresistibility," a concept not yet coined by the Jesuits. Nevertheless, these words effectively convey the power of God's most certain and ultimately insurmountable grace in those who are elected according to God's purpose. In another passage, he speaks of resisting in Chapter 14, where he says: "No free will of man resists when God desires to save, for to will or not to will is so much in the power of the one who wills or does not will that it cannot hinder God's will or overcome His power." These words are expressed excellently, despite Arminius' objections.

Chapter 48

How the Arminians Paradoxically Establish the Irresistible Grace
They Oppose.

I. Irresistibility is depicted by the Arminians as a monster that they provoke by plucking its beard and pricking it with needles and goads. We have already explained that they construct castles in the air and promote fanciful notions, all while opposing their own dreams. For we do not recognise the same irresistibility that they falsely attribute to us.

II. The most astonishing part is that they themselves construct and firmly establish the very irresistibility they wrongly accuse us of, and they vehemently oppose it with all their might. It's as if they were blindfolded fencers, fighting with their eyes closed, striking the air, and injuring themselves.

III. In their dispute with the Walachrians, on page 68, the Arminians deny that they claim the Holy Spirit only works on the will through means that can be resisted. Instead, they argue, "we would have these things restricted to none but the ordinary manner of conversion, which the Spirit mostly employs, while not doubting that the conversion of someone can sometimes be accomplished by extraordinary means." Here they admit their own guilt, as this statement undermines the entire foundation of their argument. If God irresistibly converts some individuals and grants them faith by His absolute and precise will, then these individuals cannot have been elected based on foreseen faith. For someone who is absolutely and irresistibly appointed to faith must necessarily be absolutely appointed to salvation. It would be foolish to imagine God decreeing, "I have decreed to save this person if they believe, but I will give them faith irresistibly." Election cannot depend on the foresight of a condition that God has decreed to be fulfilled certainly and infallibly. In the same way, God did not decree that Philip should live if he had breath, but He decreed to give him breath so that he might live.

IV. It is evident from this how unfairly these Sectaries deal with us. By falsely attributing irresistibility to us, they argue that it compels the will, and they claim that obedience cannot be considered when someone is irresistibly compelled. Yet these same individuals believe

that some are converted irresistibly and in an extraordinary manner, and they do not deny that such conversions are considered obedience.

V. Additionally, an old and well-established belief among the Arminians appears throughout their writings: that God calls some people in a manner that is incongruous and discordant, resulting in those called never following, even though they have the ability to do so. On the other hand, some are called in a manner, state, measure, and time that is congruent and agreeable, ensuring that whoever is called certainly and infallibly follows God's call. We previously cited Arminius himself in Chapter 44, where he stipulates that this calling is accomplished by God's decree and administered through His certain and sure predestination. This is justifiable because why would God choose such an appropriate state, suitable time, and congruous manner for those who are called to follow Him certainly and infallibly unless He intends for them to do so? Undoubtedly, these assertions uphold the same irresistibility that we believe in—namely, a certain and infallible outcome resulting from God's preordination. They attempt to qualify their position by adding the clause: "Those whom God calls in a congruent manner are indeed converted certainly and infallibly, but in a way that they may not be converted." This is according to Arminius, who argues that they may do something that has never been done, nor ever will be, something that God certainly foresaw would not occur, and something that, if it were to happen, would nullify the purpose and preordination of God (which Arminius acknowledges here).

VI. These individuals also affirm irresistibility through their long-standing belief that God, in our conversion, irresistibly enlightens the understanding and stirs up the affection. It is noteworthy that they concede that part of our conversion and regeneration occurs irresistibly, namely, the illumination of the mind and the arousal of affections. However, I assert that through this irresistible enlightenment of the mind, if it is clear and evident, and through the stirring of affections, if it is vehement, the will is necessarily

influenced and drawn to a spontaneous assent, as we have thoroughly demonstrated.

VII. They inflict harm and confusion upon themselves when they claim that the power to believe is given irresistibly. After all, what powers of believing exist apart from faith? Habits are indeed the efficient causes of actions, just as the initial acts are the causes of the subsequent ones. Or how can there be powers of believing without faith? Therefore, if the powers of believing are given irresistibly, it is evident that faith itself, and consequently the assent of the will, are also given irresistibly, as the power and faculty of believing are inherently situated within faith.

The Arminians of The Hague, Collat. page 269, acknowledge that God irresistibly causes some to believe, a concession that creates complications within their own doctrine. Who are these "some" that they mention? Are they not certain individuals? Hence, God irresistibly works so that specific persons believe. Is it plausible that God irresistibly causes some to believe without determining who they are? Such a scenario would imply that God predestined some individuals to believe irresistibly while predestining none. Can God irresistibly cause some individuals to believe while those same individuals do not actually believe irresistibly? This is akin to saying that God causes some to die, even though they do not actually die. Given Arminius's view that none of the elect is immune to reprobation, creating the possibility of God failing in His intention, it is astonishing that God would irresistibly cause some to believe when not all of them believe and are converted; many ultimately resist and perish. Anything that can happen to several individuals can also happen to all. Therefore, God's purpose of irresistibly causing some to be converted cannot be certain unless some are irresistibly converted. Similarly, God's purpose of causing some to be drowned cannot be certain unless some are indeed drowned.

In Collat page 292, these individuals state that conversion requires a power that must exceed every created power in many aspects, even if

it does not work irresistibly. They claim that something more powerful than nature is required for nature to be effectively converted. To me, these assertions seem incompatible: that the power of the Spirit, through which we are converted, surpasses the power of nature in many respects, and yet it can be resisted by nature to the extent that it is overcome and ultimately hindered. Such resistance is the focus here.

There is, therefore, no need to worry that irresistibility, criticized by the Arminians, will collapse, as they both support and uphold it on one hand. Nonetheless, it is worthwhile to examine the objections they raise against it.

Chapter 49

The feeble objections of the Arminians against Irresistibility (that is, the infallible certainty of the conversion of the elect) are answered.

I. These Sectaries lay the primary foundation of their argument in their false opinion, which we have already refuted: that God does not provide the means for conversion and faith through any absolute and precise decree. If God, in calling people, does not have a precise and absolute intention for the conversion of any individual, then it is not necessary for the conversion of any one person to precisely follow the provision of those means. Since we have already dismantled and overturned this foundation, the other things they seek to build upon it must inevitably collapse.

II. The Arminian debaters in The Hague gather many arguments, but there is no need for great contention to refute them. They begin the battle by citing the passage in Acts, Chapter 7, verse 51, where Stephen accuses the rebellious Jews of always resisting the Holy

Spirit. From this, they infer that the Holy Spirit does not work conversion irresistibly when He works in a person.

III. However, they unwisely try to prove something that is not in dispute. We do not teach or acknowledge the irresistibility attributed to us by them. Therefore, this conclusion does not harm us because we openly admit that the Holy Spirit does not always work in the hearts of people in a way that eliminates all resistance. Furthermore, they assume something false to be true and granted: that the Holy Spirit worked in these Jews and that they resisted the inner working of the Spirit. Stephen charges the Jews with always resisting the clear testimony of the Holy Spirit, which spoke through the prophets. This is evident from Stephen's subsequent words: "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted?" If Stephen were speaking of the Holy Spirit dwelling in the impious and unbelieving Jews (which is untrue), it still wouldn't follow that he was referring to the Spirit of Adoption and the grace specific to the elect, which unquestionably and infallibly produces faith and conversion in them alone.

IV. Along with this passage, the places in Scripture where it is stated that the Jews tempted God, stirred Him to anger, and saddened the spirit of His holiness, such as in Psalms 78, Isaiah 63, Matthew 23:37, Proverbs 1:24, and others, also fall by the wayside. These have no relevance to the issue at hand. In those passages, the Scripture speaks of ungodly and rebellious individuals. However, in this question, we are discussing the faithful and the elect, and the question is whether they can never be converted and can finally resist the spirit of adoption. These passages about reprobates, which we admit finally resist God's call and lack the spirit of adoption, are completely irrelevant to proving this point. Ultimately, these Sectaries do not demonstrate that all these passages speak of a final resistance, which is the only type of resistance being discussed here.

But (they say) God, Ezekiel 18:31, commands the Israelites to make themselves a new heart and a new spirit. From this, they gather that a person can do what they are commanded or resist God when He

commands. I am embarrassed by this old and Pelagian argument, repeatedly brought up and repeatedly refuted. Firstly, there's no need to prove that an unregenerate person can choose not to obey the command to make a new heart because that's all they can do—not obey. The belief that humans can do whatever God commands is a heresy of the Pelagians, which we've already addressed. God's commandments are not a measure of our abilities but a guide for our duty, a statement of our debt, the subject of our prayers, and the aim of our efforts. But we've discussed this enough.

VI. Fourthly, they mention the passage in Isaiah 5:4, "What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" From this, they infer that the grace of God does not work conversion in a person irresistibly. This is a strange conclusion, and even if it were valid, it wouldn't apply to the question or us. We acknowledge that even in the elect, conversion doesn't occur without some resistance. Additionally, it's unwise to cite a passage about the calling of an entire nation when discussing the certainty of the conversion of the elect. They should not bring a passage about the rebellion of an unbelieving nation when addressing the certainty of conversion in the elect. Ultimately, they seem to be careful not to say anything relevant to the matter.

VII. Along the way, readers should note that figurative phrases and expressions spoken in human terms should not be taken as literal. It's figurative to say that God wished and expected fruit from His vine. Desires and sorrow, as if God had labored in vain and failed to achieve His intended purpose, cannot apply to God. When God wishes for the conversion of humans, as in Psalms 81:14, it simply means that human conversion is pleasing to Him. Similarly, when God is said to expect fruit from the vine or fig tree, it symbolizes His demand for obedience. When what should be done is not accomplished, He doesn't rush to punish but delays it, as seen in Luke 13:9. God doesn't expect events that He already knows won't happen, especially in the godly, where He is the one at work.

VIII. They stumble upon the same issue when they cite Ezekiel 12:2, "Son of man, you dwell in the midst of a rebellious house, who have eyes to see, and see not," etc. From this, they infer that humans indeed have eyes, ears, and the power to convert themselves, but they can resist. This is a misguided statement because who would deny that humans can resist? By their very nature, they can do nothing else. Why do they present examples of reprobates and wicked individuals in a question about whether the elect can ultimately resist grace and fall away from it? By the way, readers should recall that regarding the same people to whom ears and eyes are attributed here, God speaks in Deuteronomy 29:4, saying, "The Lord has not given you a heart to understand, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear, to this day." There are two kinds of eyes: some possessed only by the faithful, namely the eyes of faith, and others that reprobates may have, but they ultimately perish. These individuals see and willfully reject, failing to perceive and hearing heavily with their ears (Matthew 13:26, 27). Their eyes are carnal and dim; they rely on natural reason, have a superficial knowledge that doesn't affect the heart, and if they have experienced divine light, it tends to blind them rather than enlighten. They try to suppress the knowledge they possess, willingly groping in broad daylight.

IX. They similarly misrepresent the passages they add, such as Zechariah 7:11, Isaiah 6:9, Matthew 13:4, Acts 28:25, and 26. These passages only prove that reprobates and rebellious individuals can reject God's grace and resist His admonitions, which we willingly acknowledge. However, this has no bearing on the final resistance of the elect.

X. They proudly emphasise the words of Christ in Matthew 11:21: "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! Woe unto thee, Bethsaida! For if the mighty works which were done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes." They also cite Ezekiel 3:6. They use these passages to argue:

"If grace, by which some men, to whom it is given, have not been converted, and others would have been converted if the same grace had been given to them, is resistible, then the grace of conversion is such. Therefore, the grace of conversion does not work irresistibly."

There was no need for them to labour in proving either proposition because we willingly accept the conclusion. We understand that even the elect may resist God's grace, although not permanently, and that His grace is not ultimately hindered. The real question is whether the elect can resist God's grace to the extent that they are never converted or can extinguish it and prevent conversion. However, these individuals do not address this question and instead wander off-topic.

XI. Nevertheless, they do not adequately support these two propositions. They prove the Major and first proposition as follows: "If grace works conversion in man by an irresistible force, it should always and everywhere work with the same efficacy." I deny that this necessarily follows. Even if grace irresistibly works conversion in all those who are converted, it could still work with greater efficacy in some individuals who are so inclined that they immediately and without delay follow God's call with greater zeal and fervour than others who obey more slowly and hesitantly.

XII. They support the Minor and second proposition using the example of the people of Tyre. However, they assume (without providing proof) that Christ in this passage is speaking of true conversion, by which those to whom God gives true faith and repentance are converted. This is a significant assumption. The people of Tyre and Sidon were not part of God's elect because they were never converted. If the same miracles had been performed among them as in Chorazin, they might have been affected with a sense of their sin, repentance out of fear of punishment, similar to the repentance of Ahab in 1 Kings 21 and that of the majority of the Ninevites. We learn about this from the later downfall of Nineveh, as stated in Nehemiah 1:1 and the final chapter of Tobit. In this sense,

the people of Tyre would have been more praiseworthy than the people of Chorazin, who, despite witnessing many miracles, did not show the slightest sign of grief or repentance. However, I deny that the people of Tyre had the power to attain true faith and persevere in it, which is necessary for genuine repentance. The Arminians appear to accuse God of envious malice, suggesting that He knew the people of Tyre would sincerely repent and attain salvation if they had witnessed those miracles but chose to withhold this blessing from them while bestowing it upon a people He knew would not be converted by miracles or preaching.

XIII. In the seventh argument, they reason as follows:

"They who may resist the word of grace and salvation may also resist the spirit of repentance. Men may resist the word of grace and salvation. Therefore, the same men may also resist the spirit of repentance."

We accept the conclusion in the sense I have previously explained. They prove the Minor by citing examples of reprobates who we know ultimately resist. However, this argument addresses the elect, and the question is whether they can resist grace to the extent that grace is overcome and finally extinguished. This is the crucial issue that they leave untouched.

XIV. When driven from Scripture, they turn to Reason and construct a syllogism:

"That which is required of us in the Gospel for due and filial obedience is not accomplished in us by an irresistible power. But faith and repentance are required of us in the Gospel for due and filial obedience; therefore, they are not accomplished in us by an irresistible power."

They provide no need for proof of the Minor. They support the Major by arguing that something done in a person by another so that the person behaves passively cannot be considered obedience.

All of this is based on two false accusations: First, they falsely claim that we teach conversion is accomplished in us irresistibly. Second, they attribute to us the belief that conversion and faith are accomplished by God alone without any involvement from us, with humans behaving passively. We do not acknowledge such a conversion in which humans do nothing but passively endure. We understand that humans are drawn by a sweet and effective motion, with their will bent and turned so that, from unwilling, they become willing and act willingly. We know that it is humans themselves who believe and repent, not God. However, we assert that God provides humans with the ability to believe and repent. Just as fruit moves itself in the womb, even though the motion and the power to move come from God, it is sufficient for obedience if a person willingly obeys God.

XV. Here, we ask the reader to pause for a moment and observe how thoughtlessly the Arminians approach this issue and how contradictory they are to themselves. They argue that conversion cannot be called obedience if a person behaves passively in it. However, they themselves teach that in the beginning of conversion, which all Arminians acknowledge as obedience, a person behaves passively. They state in their Epistle against the Walachrians, pages 69 and 70: "Whether we say that the will is moved by the spirit only by the fore-going operations of the understanding or that there is a certain new energetic and operative quality infused to it, we always determine that the will is first moved, that is, behaves itself passively, before it actively moves itself to what is good." It's essential to note that the Arminians consistently teach that the understanding is irresistibly enlightened by God, meaning that knowledge is given by God in a way that cannot be resisted, even though this knowledge is a form of obedience. Scripture commands us to know and understand (Psalm 2:10, Matthew 15:10, 2 Timothy 2:7). Is not the eager compliance of the angels to fulfill God's commands also considered obedience, even though they cannot resist God's commands nor desire to resist them?

XVI. Lastly, they list a series of absurdities they believe can be drawn from what they call irresistible power. They argue that it follows that no one else can be converted except those who are genuinely converted and that no one can be converted before they are genuinely converted. Instead of appearing absurd, it should be seen as impious to believe that anyone can be converted and regenerated except those whom God converts and regenerates, granting them faith and the spirit of adoption. No one can be converted until God takes away their resistance and breaks their hardness. Let these new Semi-Pelagians consider how they can defend the notion that an unregenerate person has the power to convert themselves before God converts them in action, and how they can counter the numerous Scriptures, reasons, and proofs presented in the thirty-third chapter. Can they provide an example, from all the historical records, of anyone obtaining faith and salvation through gifts that are common to all, including heathens and unregenerate persons?

XVII. The Scriptures consistently attest that no one can convert themselves before being converted and drawn by God. Verses such as "Convert us, and we shall be converted" (Jeremiah 31:18) and "Draw me, and we will run after thee" (Song of Solomon 1:4) illustrate this point. Could the thief on the cross have converted himself before Christ miraculously and profoundly changed his heart, even in the midst of doubts and the fear of the apostles themselves? Could Paul have converted himself before his divine call from Christ on the road to Damascus? This opinion is foreign to the devout, and it belongs to the vain teachings of Pelagianism. By holding this view, they negate God's decree, which was to demonstrate the efficacy of Christ's death and divine power amidst suffering and reproach. It was meant to serve as a significant testament to the doctrine of grace. If the thief could have converted himself years earlier, God's purposes would have been thwarted. While God did not prevent him from converting, He had determined the time and manner of his conversion for those He had chosen to convert.

XVIII. The objection is raised that if only those whom God truly and actively converts can be converted, then the rest who are called are called in vain. They argue that God would be disingenuous and unwise to call them to salvation while withholding the necessary means to obtain it.

In response, it is crucial to note that their use of the term "withdrawing" is misleading. God does not withdraw the necessary means of salvation from those who are not converted, as that would entail taking something away from them. Unregenerate individuals have never possessed all the necessary means for salvation in the first place. There is a distinction between withdrawing means and not providing them. Pulling out the eyes of the blind is not equivalent to failing to cure a blind person. God does not give all people every means necessary for salvation; there are countless individuals to whom He does not send preachers of the Gospel. Moreover, not everyone who hears the Gospel preached receives faith and the spirit of adoption. Only those foreordained to eternal life believe (Acts 13). These points have been thoroughly established in earlier chapters.

God is not accused of folly or deception when He calls those He knows will not follow and does not grant them the power to do so. He still requires from humanity what justice demands, even though people are incapable, due to their own wickedness, of fulfilling these requirements perfectly. God has not lost His right due to human wickedness, nor is He obligated to provide every individual with the means to fulfill their obligations and commands. God does not call the virgins who lacked oil in vain, even though He did not supply them with oil they should have taken care to obtain themselves. Likewise, God requires perfect obedience from every individual, even though the Arminians themselves would not dare assert that it can be perfectly fulfilled by anyone except with fear and doubt. God's calling is not in vain, even when it includes reprobates, because it serves as a warning to the righteous, leading them to fear, pray, and acknowledge God's mercy. Therefore, there is no absurdity in this despite their vehement objections. These individuals aim to incite

envy among the uninformed masses by propagating these ideas and creating controversies that hold no weight.

XIX. They also level false accusations against us, falsely attributing beliefs to us that we do not hold. Specifically, they claim that God calls those who are not converted solely for the purpose of making them inexcusable. We vehemently reject such a notion. While we acknowledge that this may occur, we do not assert that it is the sole purpose of God's calling. We do not believe that reprobates are called only to be made inexcusable, although their rejection of this calling may indeed bring about their greater condemnation. God does present His Gospel to those who will reject it, but not with the primary intention of their rejection. God's purpose in calling those whom He knows will not obey is to demand what is owed and to reveal what is acceptable to Him. He also calls, warns, and threatens them, so that at the very least, they may be constrained by fear and refrain from harming the righteous. Through the example of their stubbornness, which does not go unpunished, the godly may learn to fear, and by comparing their condition with those who have not received similar grace, they may more ardently love God for the privilege granted to them.

XX. These sectaries raise another objection, suggesting that this belief may provide some people with a sense of security and lead to the contempt of means that God typically uses to effect conversion, such as preaching the word, and so on. They argue that if no one can convert themselves before this irresistible drawing, and once they are irresistibly drawn, they must be entirely converted, then all our care and diligence become void and pointless. For others, perpetual doubt is sown as long as they do not experience such drawing.

We have previously clarified that the assertion that God draws a person irresistibly is falsely attributed to us. We maintain that the elect, even though they may resist for a long time, ultimately heed God's call, and their voluntary conversion is worked with certainty and infallibility. It is impossible for them never to be converted or,

having been converted, to ultimately fall away, causing God's grace to be extinguished and overcome by the resistance of the flesh.

XXI. We deny that security or contempt for the word of God can result from such drawing, as this grace itself instills care and diligence in us. Consider how incongruous these claims are and how unsuitably it is suggested that the grace of God obstructs godly diligence when this very diligence is a component of grace. How could grace, by which a person is regenerated, lead to their corruption? How could grace, by which they are stirred and prodded forward, render them lethargic? Therefore, they argue as if I were saying that a person is killed by resurrection, or that they are covered with a white color while being blackened. They assert that negligence is caused by the same grace that generates godly care.

XXII. It is beyond doubt that similar absurdities can be deduced from the opinions of Arminius, who believes that some individuals are drawn by God in a congruent and suitable manner and time, leading them to follow with utmost certainty. Under such a belief, consciences may be lulled into a deep slumber. People may reason, "Why bother being diligent? Our efforts are in vain unless we are drawn congruently. And I am unsure whether I am being drawn in such a manner." This leads to negligence and a wavering faith filled with uncertainty.

XXIII. What they add is no better: that for some individuals, perpetual doubts persist as long as they do not experience such drawing. This absurdity is baselessly asserted by the Arminians, who, in their attempt to undermine the certainty of salvation, instruct people to doubt their perseverance. Even if we assume that doubts about salvation arise from our doctrine, do they condemn in us what they allow in themselves? We do not deny that doubts may sometimes plague godly and righteous individuals, but such doubts should gradually diminish as they grow more deeply conscious of God's grace and as their faith increases. However, it is not necessary for one who is already converted and believes to feel that they are

irresistibly drawn, that is, drawn in such a way that they cannot resist. We do not place the infallible certainty of conversion in a person's feelings, in their sense of being unable to resist. Instead, we place it in God's decree, which ensures that those whom He has elected for salvation will come to Christ. The reason why the bones of Christ could not be broken was not due to the hardness of His bones but to God's decree forbidding it. Consequently, it is possible for those whom God has decreed to save to remain uncertain of their salvation, even though it is certain in God's decree. They may often grapple with doubts. Some, after living sober and godly lives for many years, may only receive assurance of their salvation at the moment of their death. Therefore, the faithful individual should not examine whether they are drawn with an irresistible power but whether, after genuine and earnest repentance, they fully rest in the death of Christ and in God's promise. If they sense this transformation within themselves, they should not overly scrutinize the power and efficacy of the Holy Spirit and unconquerable grace but should strive to quell their rising doubts through prayer and by recalling God's promises, while also working to subdue the serpentine influence of their lusts, which resist the Spirit.

XXIV. If anyone acts otherwise, we cannot prevent all evils or cure all vices, for we know that even with the best teaching and guidance, occasions for sin may arise, and the best intentions may be perverted.

XXV. I will not dwell on the fact that these sectarians conflate incompatible ideas and juxtapose things that are fundamentally at odds. They suggest that someone with true faith may doubt whether they have truly and sincerely converted. This is impossible, for true faith stirs genuine and heartfelt repentance and love of God in a person, which cannot exist without being felt.

XXVI. Ultimately, the drawbacks these sectarians find in our doctrine can be avoided, but the Arminian doctrine ensnares people's consciences in inescapable troubles. Through it, human pride is

inflated, teaching that man can separate himself, convert himself, and do so before being converted in action by God. It implies that man has reason to boast, that God is obligated to provide sufficient grace, that God gives man what he is owed, that God's grace is not the complete cause of faith, and that God's grace is subjected to human free will. On the other hand, Arminianism torments people's consciences with persistent doubt. Who can be certain of their salvation if our salvation is not secured through God's election and decree? What if the number of the elect is not certain according to God's will? Or if God has elected no one except those already considered spiritually dead? Or if the certainty of salvation rests on the strength of free will, with the power to persevere or not, to believe or not, to enable God to fulfill desires or to thwart His intended purpose? Surely, if this pernicious doctrine gains a foothold, faith and Christian humility are lost. Those who are most proud must inevitably be the most doubtful. Those who make the human will, a fickle and unstable foundation for their hope, will have their expectations suspended. Satan inflates these individuals with pride so that they may be shattered, elevating them high only to cast them down more severely and crush them utterly.

XXVII. However, they do not address our objection, in which we argued that if God works in us only through persuasion, He is not the efficient cause of faith but merely an influencer acting as an object does. This becomes evident when we consider Satan, who is not the efficient cause of human sin even though he stirs up and instigates it effectively in rebellious individuals. The Arminians do not respond to this objection. Instead, they raise a contrary point, stating that if God irresistibly converts those who are His (which they claim is the smaller group), while Satan resistibly diverts and turns away the larger group, then Satan wields more power than God since he can achieve his purpose in many more individuals using lesser and inferior means. These individuals frequently insert the term "irresistibly" to imply certainty and infallibility. However, I dispute that those whom God draws and converts effectively are fewer in number than those whom Satan diverts and turns away. Certainly,

some are led astray from the early stages of their conversion by Satan's cunning, but these are few compared to those who never experience any compulsion or pricks of repentance. Satan does not divert the latter group because they are naturally averse to God. Furthermore, whatever Satan does is insignificant in comparison to the efficacy of the Holy Spirit in the elect. Satan found humans inclined toward sin and simply accelerated the fall of those who were already stumbling. The reprobate are driven more by their own impulses than by Satan's influence. It is indeed more challenging to heal a few who are mortally wounded than to exacerbate and embitter the wounds of many or pour vinegar into their ulcers. It is easier to push those who are on the brink of falling than to resurrect someone who is already dead.

XXVIII. At this point, they protest that human nature is subverted and undermined when it is necessarily determined and limited to one thing. I respond: if by "necessity" we do not mean compulsion or natural necessity (such as the inclination of all heavy objects toward the Earth's center) but rather an infallible certainty that is voluntary and spontaneous, then nature is not undermined. The nature of angels is necessarily determined and limited to that which is good, yet it is not subverted. Our human nature is necessarily determined and directed towards the pursuit of happiness, yet it is not destroyed. The will of the Israelites, whose hearts God touched so that they would cleave to Saul (1 Sam. 10:26), the will of Esau, which quickly changed to embrace his brother (Gen. 33), and the will of the thief crucified with Christ, as well as that of Paul at the very moment of his conversion, were all determined and limited to one thing. However, their free will was not violated, nor was their nature destroyed. The intensity of thirst, compelling someone to drink when offered, limits them to that one action, yet they do not cease to be human, nor is their nature undermined. God possesses certain secret and imperceptible means by which He can incline human will while leaving its liberty intact.

Chapter 50

An addition to the thirteenth Chapter, containing some passages taken from the confession of the Churches of France and from the most prominent Doctors of this age concerning the object of Predestination.

The twelfth Article of the confession of the Church of France is as follows: We believe that God, out of the corruption and general curse into which all men were plunged, frees those whom He elected in His eternal and unchangeable counsel, solely out of His goodness and mercy in our Lord Jesus Christ, without considering their works. He leaves the rest in the same corruption and damnation to manifest His justice in them and to display the riches of His mercy. For none of them are better than others before God has set them apart, etc. John Calvin, in his commentary on the ninth chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, when speaking about Jacob and Esau in the womb, uses these words: God, in the corrupted state of humanity, could find nothing by which He might be induced to show kindness to it. Therefore, when He says that both of them had neither done good nor evil, it must also be added that He presupposes that they were both sons of Adam, naturally sinful and devoid of any righteousness. Esau was justly rejected because he was naturally a child of wrath. But lest any doubt should remain, as if his condition had been worse due to the consideration of any sin or vice, it was necessary to exclude his sins just as much as his virtues. It is indeed true that the proximate cause of reprobation is that we are all cursed in Adam.

Calvin, in his book on the eternal predestination of God, at the beginning of the Epistle which precedes the book, says, "The free Election of God is whereby He chose from mankind, who were lost and condemned, those whom it pleased Him." Page 955. He approves of the opinion of Saint Augustine, stating, "They who are not destined to persevere are not separated by God's Predestination

and foreknowledge from that mass of perdition and destruction, and therefore, they are not called according to His purpose."

Page 691. I wonder if Isaiah and Jacob, if left to their common nature, would have performed any good works that God could have found in Jacob more than in Esau. Surely, they both, by the hardness of their stony hearts, would have equally rejected the offered salvation.

In the same place, when Paul took for granted what these learned Divines find incredible, that all men are equally unworthy and that the same corruption of nature is present in all men, he safely concluded that God, by His free purpose, elects whomever He chooses.

In the same place, what Augustine said is most certainly true: "Those who are redeemed are separated from those who perish only by grace, as the common mass, stemming from the same origin, had joined them together for destruction."

Page 965. He testifies that God prepared the vessels of mercy for His glory. If this is specific to the elect, it is evident that the rest are destined for destruction because, when left to their nature, they are certainly devoted to destruction.

Page 970. Readers should be reminded that both of these views are equally condemned by Pighius, namely, that God, from the beginning when the state of man was intact, decreed what would later come to pass, and that now He chose whom He would from the perished mass. He mocks Augustine and all those like him, that is, all the godly, who believe that God, after foreseeing the universal ruin of mankind in the person of Adam, appointed some to life and some to destruction.

The same man in his Institutions, Book 3, Chapter 22, Section 1. When Paul teaches that we were elected in Christ before the creation of the world, he certainly removes all consideration of our own

worth. It is as if he is saying: Because our Heavenly Father found nothing worthy of election in the entire human race descended from Adam, He turned His gaze upon Christ, choosing members out of His body to be later admitted into the fellowship of life. Therefore, let this reason prevail with the faithful: God adopted us in Christ for His heavenly inheritance because we were not worthy of this excellency in ourselves.

And Section 7. If someone were to ask where God elected from, He answers elsewhere, "out of the world," which He excludes from His prayers when commending His disciples to His Father.

And Chapter 23, Section 3. If someone were to argue with us, saying, "Why did God predestine some men to death from the beginning, when they did not exist and could not deserve the judgment of death?" Instead of an answer, we could ask them in return, "What do they think God owes to man if He is to regard him according to his own nature? Since we are all tainted with sin, we cannot help but be detestable to God, not out of tyrannical cruelty, but in the most impartial justice. If all those whom God predestines to death are naturally liable and subject to the judgment of death, what injustice can they then complain of regarding His treatment of them? Let all the sons of Adam come forward and argue with their Creator because, by His eternal providence, they were appointed to perpetual calamity before their birth. What could they say against this defence when God, on the other hand, calls them to self-awareness? If all are taken from the corrupted mass, it is no wonder that they are under damnation.

Hieronymius Zanchius. *Miscellanies*, Book 3. In his *Treatise on the Saints*, at the end of the first chapter, he writes: General Predestination, which is the predestination of all men, is the eternal, most wise, and unchangeable decree of God, by which He determined from eternity, first, to create all men just and wise according to His image and likeness, and to allow them, when tempted by Satan, to fall into sin of their own free will, leading them

into the pit of eternal death as a just punishment for their sin. Secondly, out of His grace through Christ, to deliver some of them from the pit of sin and death by certain means, to accompany those He freed with His Spirit, and eventually grant them eternal life. To others, He decreed not to bestow this grace but to blind and harden them through Satan and to destroy them with eternal destruction, etc.

The same man, in the same place: The special predestination of the elect is the eternal, most wise, and unchangeable decree of God, by which He determined from eternity, according to the good pleasure of His will, to freely save certain specific individuals who, like all the others, had fallen into the deep pit of sin and death.

The same man, Book 5, On the Nature of God, Chapter 2, Question 4. By ascending in this order from effects to causes and descending from causes to effects, we may and should consider Election and Reprobation as follows: God, from eternity, determined by a firm decree, first to create all men, then to allow them to fall into sin, and because of sin, to be subject to eternal death. Finally, He decided to save some men through Christ, using a certain means, and to grant them eternal life. He rejected the rest from this grace, leaving them in their sins and eventually punishing them eternally for their sins.

Bucer on the ninth Chapter of Romans: Those who will plainly and simply follow God's word can easily free themselves from these things, for they stick fast to this, that God does witness of Himself. Namely, that He chose some men out of mankind, destroyed by their first father, to be fashioned by Him into a new and blessed life, and He accounted the rest as vessels of His wrath.

Philip Melanchthon, in his Theological Commonplaces, concerning Predestination, repeats these words more than once: It is certain that the cause of Reprobation is sin in man.

Wolfgang Musculus, in his Treatise on Election, Chapter 5, states: It is clear that our election is not based on any consideration of our quality. Therefore, we must seek the basis of our election in God's choosing, driven there by our own sense of baseness and depravity. David said, "What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You predestinated him when You foreknew that he would be evil and depraved?"

David Pareus, in his commentary on the ninth chapter of Romans, page 816, contends that Jacob and Esau are considered as sinners by God in His choosing. He says, "The cause was the eternal purpose of God, by which He determined to make such a distinction. Esau was wicked, and Jacob was no less wicked, for they were both conceived in sin. Yet God loved one and hated the other, not because of any inherent or foreseen difference, but according to election, by which He chose one but not the other."

The same man, on page 819, describes the pleasure or will of God calling as His purpose according to election in Christ. This purpose of God, by which He separated some from others out of the perished mass by choosing these and leaving the rest, is called Predestination, encompassing both Election and Rejection.

The Pastors of the Walachrian Churches, in their Epistle, unanimously define Predestination as follows: This is the opinion of those who adhere to the old and accepted confession of our Churches. That God, from eternity, according to the unchangeable good pleasure of His will, decreed to save some men whom He, by His sheer bounty in Christ Jesus, separated from corrupted mankind, etc.

John Piscator, a staunch advocate of Predestination from the entire and uncorrupted Mass and of reprobation without considering sin, has recently set forth a treatise consisting of ten Aphorisms. The second Aphorism reads: "This Predestination has two species or kinds, one of which is called Election, and the other Reprobation, by

Metonymy of the effect. For election and reprobation are properly related to mankind already made and fallen, but Metonymically, the decree itself of Electing or Reprobating is so named." The learned man ultimately realizes that in election and reprobation, man must be considered as already fallen and in the corrupted Mass. However, he has devised another higher decree in which God neither elects nor reprobates but only decrees to elect and reprobate. There is no mention of this decree in Scripture.

Lastly, the Synod of Dordt, in the seventh Canon, defines election as follows: "Election is the unchangeable purpose of God, by which, before the foundation of the world, according to the free good pleasure of His will and by His mere grace, He chose a certain and set number of men out of all mankind for salvation in Christ. These men are neither better nor more worthy than others, but they share the common misery with others. They have fallen from original righteousness into sin and destruction by their own fault, etc."

The same Fathers, in the 15th Canon on Reprobation, speak as follows: "The Holy Scripture clearly reveals and commends to us this eternal and free grace, especially when it bears witness that not all men are elected, but that some are not elected or are passed by in the eternal election of God. These are the ones whom God, according to His free, just, irreproachable, and immutable good pleasure, decreed to leave in the common misery into which they had cast themselves by their own fault. He chose not to grant them saving faith and the grace of conversion, etc."

FINIS.

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