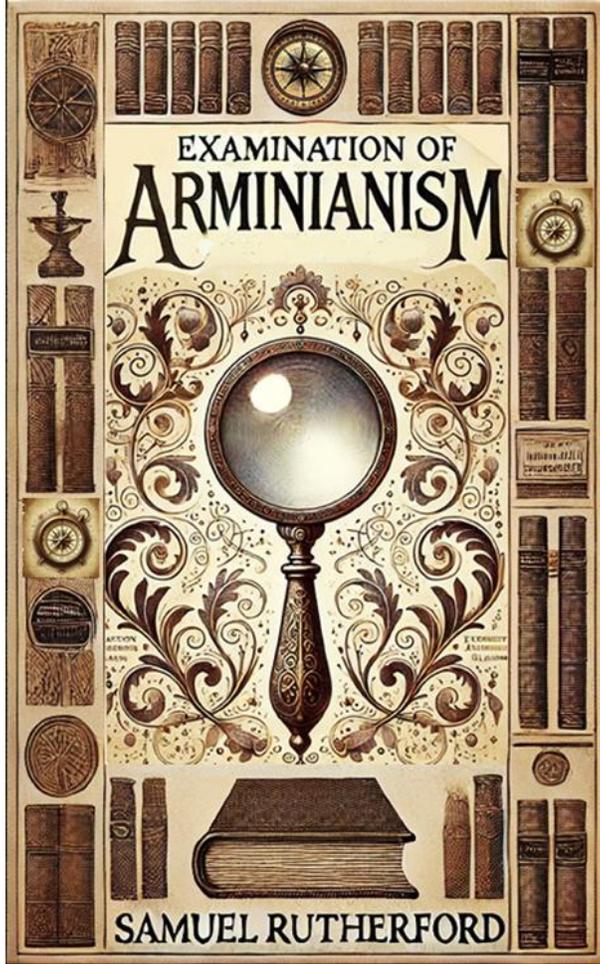


EXAMINATION OF
ARMINIANISM



SAMUEL RUTHERFORD



Examination of Arminianism

by Samuel Rutherford

DEDICATORY LETTER.

To the most noble, most eminent, and most celebrated lady of
illustrious lineage, learning, and piety,
Lady ANNA MARIA van SCHURMAN,

MATTHIAS NETHENUS
sends greetings in Christ, our Lord.

DEDICATORY LETTER.

Behold, most noble Lady, our Scottish Minerva comes to you; not a pagan one, but a Christian; not a goddess, but a worshiper of the true God; not lifeless, but living and breathing; a work of literature, academic and theological, and thus not alien to your intellect, nor abhorrent. It was born in the fortieth year of this century in the Scottish University of St. Andrews, and later, after its author—most

renowned in doctrine and piety—had passed away and been received into heaven, it was brought to us through the proscription of certain of his companions and disciples. It was offered to me, approved, and now, by the will of God, with the consent of friends, and through my care and labor, it has been brought to public light for the common benefit of all who are zealous for truth and piety, and especially for the advantage of beginners in theological schools.

The author of this counsel to me was a faithful minister and witness of Christ, our beloved brother in Christ, Mr. Robert MacWard, Pastor of the Church in Glasgow, formerly an intimate disciple of the most distinguished Samuel Rutherford. Now, with his compatriots and brethren, not entirely unknown to you, he has been moved by the free confession of truth and the defense of the cause of Christ, and by his opposition to the Anglican hierarchy, which, according to the desire of the hierarchs, has now been introduced into our native churches to the grief of many pious people. He has been disturbed, not only in his place and function, but even proscribed from the kingdom. For these brothers, as many as have been admitted to your acquaintance and conversation, together with us, do not admire so much the splendor of your lineage, your unique kindness, modesty, and courtesy, or even your excellent knowledge of so many languages, arts, and matters both human and divine—since God often pours such gifts even into vessels of wrath destined for destruction (though you have surpassed your gender to a miraculous degree in these)—as they admire your remarkable and unfeigned piety toward God, your earnest zeal for the Kingdom and glory of God, and your affection for the work and cause of Christ against the Devil and his kingdom, and your fervent zeal for the spiritual Jerusalem and the house of God. This zeal burns so strongly in your maidenly heart that your greatest joy is if it prospers well, and your

deepest sorrow if it appears to suffer harm—whether you see, hear, or understand it.

Thus, you demonstrate an exceptional love for all godly servants of God and faithful ministers of Christ, and Christian compassion for those afflicted for the sake of Christ, with pain and sympathy for their afflictions; joy and congratulations for their faith, constancy, and strength of mind in so good a cause. You have made this holy disposition, this truly divine character, and your Christian nobility and spiritual generosity well known through pious conversations, speeches, letters, and other occasions, and you have testified to it with these Scottish brothers and others favored by similar grace from God. Nor do you allow it to be obscure or unknown to anyone who knows you, as you are not ashamed of Christ, His cause, and His afflicted servants before this impious world and this adulterous generation. Rather, you acknowledge Him as your Lord and King, and these as His true and faithful servants, and your brothers in the Lord Christ; you consider the contempt, affliction, and miserable condition of these in the world far preferable to the perilous and slippery prosperity of those other pseudo-prophets, who, accommodating themselves to the world, seeking the favor of the mighty and powerful, buying the peace, goods, and comforts of the world, avoid the cross of Christ, being ἀνθρωπαρέσκων, ἐχθρῶν τῷ Χριστῷ, who mind earthly things and seek their own interests, and for profit peddle the Word of God, and through χρησολογίας καὶ ἐυλογίας deceive not only the wicked but also the innocent, and by these arts withdraw themselves from the cross of Christ, courting the favor of the great and the mighty, and redeeming the peace and advantages of the world.

You, however, judge these things to be far preferable to dangerous and slippery prosperity.

Moreover, the author of this book, the most distinguished man, Mr. Samuel Rutherford, is known for his doctrine, piety, faith, and diligence in the office committed to him. From his various writings, both in the English and Latin languages, and from his many labors in the cause of Christ, combating errors, heresies, and corruptions opposed to the Gospel of Christ, in defending the truth, purity, and Christian discipline of the churches of his homeland, he is also well known among us and beloved by all who are zealous for God's cause. Now, however, his labors and struggles are ended, and he has been received, according to his soul, into the rest and joy of his Lord. On the last day of judgment, in that great assembly of men and angels, he will also be adorned with the crown of heavenly glory in his resurrected body by his supreme Agonothetes and Brabeutes, Christ his King. Deservedly, you have esteemed him highly and loved him in Christ, though separated from him by a long distance across the sea and never seen with the eyes of the body.

For these reasons, therefore, our Reverend Brother Mr. Mackward has judged that this book, which the great author wrote as his Apologetical Exercises in defense of divine Grace and his Scholastic Disputation on divine Providence against the Pelagians of our age, those who are friendly and εὐπεριζήταες to fallen man, and who have, therefore, easily spread their errors from our Netherlands into Britain, should be dedicated to you, in honor and reverence. The author directed it to instill in the minds of his hearers the knowledge of Orthodox truth concerning divine Providence and Grace and to prepare the novices of Theology for the battles against the Arminians both in his native Britain and here in the Marian schools of the University of St. Andrews, where he served as a Professor of Theology. Nor could he doubt that, in this cause of God against Pelagius and his followers among us, the Arminians, a woman most loving and zealous for the truth that accords with godliness, and

most devoted to the memory of the deceased author—now received into heaven—for his dignity, the blessed memory of the author, and his outstanding merits for the Church of Christ, both the book and this our duty would be pleasing to you.

Indeed, he is persuaded that, if his most distinguished author and well-deserved instructor were to come back to life and understand the reason for this counsel, he would hear with pleasure that this dedication of his book has been made according to his wish and intent. Therefore, I also could not but yield to the counsel of this most excellent man and distinguished brother, seeing that I have noticed, not only of old that the beloved Apostle of Christ wrote a canonical epistle to the chosen lady and her children, whom he truly loved, but also that afterward Jerome, the most learned and renowned Doctor of the Christian Church, dedicated theological commentaries and treatises to Paula, Eustochium, Laeta, Marcella, Hedibia, Algasia, and other women outstanding in doctrine and piety.

And even in this our time and in the fifty-fourth year of this century, the most distinguished and renowned man, a veteran soldier of Christ, most trained and experienced in the battles of Jehovah, now longing for the end of his labors and the celestial prize, Mr. Gisbertus Voetius, our former instructor and later a venerable colleague in the profession of Theology, has dedicated part of his selected theological disputations to you and to your brother, the most noble man, Mr. Johann Godschalck van Schurman, a companion in multiple studies of learning and piety, who, after that time, with firm confidence in the grace of God and with the sure expectation of eternal life, has been translated hence to the Lord and to the blessed fellowship above.

After he was admitted to your friendship, he testified that he had found your most noble family to be, in those times, a sanctuary of piety, a workshop of all kinds of learning, and an ἀκροατον truly domestic, in this urban Academy, in this Republic of letters, and even in this domestic Church a domestic Church: from which you alone remain surviving, while your other relatives have been promoted to the heavenly Academy and Church. And why not? Even there, servants were exercised in Latin, Greek, and Hebrew letters, in the study of piety, and in the knowledge and meditation of the sacred Scriptures, being formed for the holy ministry of the Word of God not only in public but also in that domestic School. One of them still fulfills the office of Pastor in Zeeland, near Zierikzee, with praise.

And to whom would these literary gifts be more fittingly sent than to learned persons, patrons of letters and scholars, lovers of Orthodox truth and piety, and those who are well disposed toward its teachers and defenders, and all the servants and handmaids of Christ? These are those who can wisely read the books of godly teachers presented to them, rightly judge their subject matter, treatment, and value, and, by the celebrity of their own name, commend the books dedicated to them to those who are less skilled, yet curious and earnest for truth. Indeed, these rare gifts of God converge in you so uniquely that not only among women, but also among learned men, few can be found who can be compared to you. And since they are in the feminine sex, they easily place the honor, unstained reputation, and the renown of your name among all those who possess any humanity, beyond and above envy.

Many are accustomed to dedicate their works, whether their own or those published by their care, to kings, princes, magistrates, the wealthy, the noble, the powerful of this world, and men established in positions of eminence, to invite them to the knowledge and

protection of good letters, and of heavenly truth and wisdom, for the reformation of defects in doctrine and morals, and for the restoration and propagation of divine worship; and that, under the shadow of their name and authority, they may be protected against envious critics (Zoilos) or even open enemies, or even to bind them to their promotion or to extract some honorary gift. This is not to be blamed if done decently and prudently, and it often does not lack some desired success. For God has among them, though rarely, yet some who are His; and even those who are not His, often possess certain gifts for the better preservation and propagation of human society—such as justice, prudence, humanity, clemency, kindness, and beneficence—gifts which, by a certain common grace of God, are also granted to pagans and unbelievers and are worthy of praise.

When, however, the pseudo-prophets offer books and literary gifts, adjusted to their own mind and desires, to pseudo-politicians, worldly men to worldly men, and hypocrites to hypocrites, because of the kinship of a common spirit and disposition, their hope and expectation are rarely disappointed. Yet, it can truly be said of kings, princes, and great men of this world in general that very few of them possess the intelligence, learning, judgment, and will to read with discernment and profit the books presented to them by learned men, especially by those devout and devoted to God and Christ, and to grant the authors the patronage, defense, and rewards they deserve. Of most of them, the judgment of the Holy Spirit fits well: "They know nothing, neither do they understand; they walk in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are moved" (Psalm 82:5). Most people throughout the world are either wholly ignorant of the truth which is according to godliness, or they despise and neglect it when known, or even mock it in their hearts. Most do not serve God, but the prince of this world, and their own desires, ambition, avarice, and belly; they both abhor serious piety and its teachers and use the authority and

power which they have received from God, not for their defense but for their persecution and oppression.

Among that order of men are tyrants and scoffers, vigilant in injustice. They, being themselves covered in sins and all injustice, and proudly walking without fear in their guilt, alien from the life of God through ignorance and hardness of heart, when they cannot oppress the man of God who fears and teaches justice and piety by any other means, falsely accuse him of sin because of some word, and lay snares for him who rebukes at the gate, causing the righteous to turn aside and casting them into the void (Jeremiah 20:10, 11). Thus, by their actions, they effectively tell God's faithful ministers and seers, "See not," and to the prophets, "Prophecy not unto us right things; speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits. Get you out of the way; turn aside out of the path; cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us" (Isaiah 30:10, 11). Thus, casting away reverence for God, they, as it were, say to His face, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of your ways" (Job 21:14). Thus, they rise up against Jehovah and His Christ and say among themselves, "Let us break their bands asunder and cast away their cords from us" (Psalm 2:2, 3). So they say, "We will not have this man to reign over us" (Luke 19:14).

But when they have filled up the measure of their sins and impiety, Christ, our Lord and the Judge of the world, will break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel (Psalm 2:9). This has already happened to many such tyrants and sons of Belial; it happens daily to others, and will continue to happen to the end of the world, when, before the entire assembly of angels and men, they will also be cast, in their resurrected bodies, into eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41; Revelation 6:15-17).

Now, those who in their life do not serve God but the prince of this world, who mock truth and piety and their teachers in their hearts, or even maliciously hate and persecute them, and who believe that a mere appearance of religion, justice, and piety is useful for their purposes, while its truth and power are useless, what can a sincere theologian, and a teacher and defender of the truth that accords with godliness, expect from dedicating his or someone else's work to such as these? Unless perhaps, as they wish to retain the appearance of piety, they show a small measure of favor for the honor shown to them, but with a hypocritical heart, as toward God, so also toward His ministers and cause. For their gifts and benefits scarcely ever reach learned, pious, and sincere men, but rather fall as prey to boastful people, parasites, and flatterers at court, ecclesiastical politicians, and military men. Just like figs and similar fruits, growing on high, inaccessible cliffs and mountains, are devoured by crows, vultures, and other rapacious birds, or, falling to the ground or water, are plucked by some wild animal or fish or completely rot away and perish uselessly.

Therefore, with greater reason, I dedicate this present book, concerning the cause of God against the Pelagians of our time and our regions, to you, most noble Lady, devoted servant of God, rather than to any such prince or eminent and powerful lord. For if honor is to be given by the dedication of books to doctrine, virtue, and piety, these ornaments are lacking in such princes and great men. Yet they make you admirable in your sex and elevate you not only above ordinary people but even above many learned men and the princes and rulers of this age. If honor, defense, and patronage are sought for the author, the dedicator, and the book itself, we expect more honor, defense, and protection from you than from any such prince or great lord. For you yourself, on account of your manifold learning, wisdom, and piety, are worthy of every honor and veneration—

qualities they lack—being honored solely because they hold an eminent place in the world. You understand these things well, rightly assess their worth, and can commend them with the sharp judgment, wisdom, and authority that your learning and piety have gained you among all who love such things, and you can defend them against the barkings and bitings of the Zoilos.

For although you are not armed, as the pagans imagined their Minerva, with a warlike breastplate, helmet, aegis, and spear, nor do you terrify those you meet with a Medusa's head bristling with serpents, turning those who look upon it into stone; and thus you do not wage physical battles, nor shed the blood of enemies or overthrow cities; yet, in this respect, you are a gentle and unarmed Virgin, a peaceful sheep of Christ, the supreme Shepherd, showing Christian kindness, courtesy, and gentleness toward all. Nevertheless, as a good disciple and follower of Christ, a spiritual warrior, endowed with heroic spirit from above and fortified with *χαρις πνεύματος*, you wage spiritual battles against the Devil and his kingdom, assisting others who fight by counsel, aid, or at least by your prayers and petitions.

You have your loins girded with the belt of divine Truth, part of which is also delivered and asserted in this book. You have armed your breast with the breastplate of Righteousness, granted by Christ our Lord and His Holy Spirit. Your feet are shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace, and your head is covered with the Helmet of Salvation. You hold the Shield of Faith, with which you can quench all the fiery darts of that Evil One; and the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, to slay and destroy all errors and sins, and to defend the doctrine of Evangelical Truth and piety against its adversaries, and the cause of God against Pelagius, Arminius, and their followers, alongside the man of God, Rutherford, and other

heroes. Thus, you yourself faithfully serve Christ our Commander and fight not weakly in the station assigned to you by Him, applauding others who bravely hold their ground: praying with all prayer and supplication at all times in the Spirit and being watchful in this very thing with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.

Thus armed and thus fighting for Christ, you are indeed a certain mighty Pallas, not sent by the Devil to drive men mad but introduced by God into the world to destroy the Devil's kingdom, formidable to the Devil and his angels, and esteemed and honored by the servants of the Most High God and the soldiers of Christ. Therefore, in the dedication of this book, you are rightly to be preferred by us to other worldly men and princes, and all Nimrods, Pharaohs, Sennacheribs, Nebuchadnezzars, Belshazzars, Achillesees, Alexanders, Caesars, Jeroboams, Ahabs, and Herods.

Receive, therefore, most noble Lady and most celebrated Virgin, with a calm and serene countenance, this theological gift brought to us from Scotland, the posthumous book of the great Rutherford, in which he, though dead in the Lord, still speaks, and wages new battles against Arminius and his followers among us and his fellow Britons for the defense of God's grace and cause. He instructs and forms young soldiers to carry on the same battles of Jehovah successfully, having been prepared and published through my labor. And henceforth, as you have done so far, continue to demonstrate yourself as a lover and worshiper of heavenly wisdom, orthodox truth, and true piety, and as a supporter of me and other servants of Christ who are fighting for these things, especially of those Scottish brothers, who are courageously enduring the contest of affliction, and all theologians who are partakers of the cross of Christ. Thus, sharing in their grace, you will in due time also share in their glory.

As for the pseudo-prophets and heretics, whether in doctrine of faith or morals, the ἀνθρωπαρέσκων theologians, the betrayers of Christ's Church and His cause, the pseudo-politicians and tyrants, the secret and open haters, slanderers, persecutors, and oppressors of truth and piety, and of the faithful servants of God and soldiers of Christ—the genuine ministers and sons of the Devil, who fight with united spirit and effort against His cause and kingdom—God will judge them in due time and give them their reward according to their works. May His grace be with you and with us. AMEN.

Written at Utrecht in my study, in the year of our Lord 1668, on the fifteenth day of the Kalends of September (August 18).

**To the Distinguished Servant of God and Renowned
Professor of Theology, Mr. MATTHIAS NETHENUS,**

Utrecht, November 8.

Most renowned man, redeemed by the honorable Cross of Christ,

I have sent, through this excellent young man, a candidate for theology and a participant in the cross of Christ, along with his father, Lord Tralius, that manuscript of your illustrious brother, Rutherford, which, in the judgment of learned men, and especially in yours, is deemed worthy of being published. Whatever benefit the Church of God derives from it will be credited to you alone, second only to the author himself.

You have promised, great and noble man, to carefully review every page before it is set in type and, once printed and corrected, before it

is committed to the press for the final time. Since you are uniquely suited for this task, given your intellectual parity with the author in sharpness of mind, you will ensure that if, at any point, the author, in his hurried pen, has either spoken inadequately or omitted something that ought to have been said, you will make him appear like himself. To this end, I have instructed our friend, who is in charge of overseeing the press, to obey your directions in all things. If any word or phrase appears less suitable and makes the meaning obscure to the reader, as we agreed between us, you shall, without hesitation, delete or change it as you see fit before it is handed over to the printer.

Furthermore, wherever there are additions in the margins made by the author (if there is any doubt about where they should be inserted), you will indicate the proper placement. And lest the reading of the manuscript cause you any difficulty or consume too much of your valuable time, I have instructed Lord Tralius to relieve you of this burden by reading it aloud, while you note what needs correcting, omitting, or changing.

As for myself, I have nothing with which to repay you for this labor; however, we have no doubt that the God whom you serve and for whom you have endured so many great sufferings will richly reward you for this and all your other faithful services. I also know that the friends of the author will send all his works, written and published in the vernacular language, to your Lordship as a token of gratitude.

Farewell and live excellently, servant of Christ. I wish you all prosperity, and even in the greatest adversities, may God and your Lord bless you. This is the prayer and wish of your unworthy brother and most humble servant,

R. MACKWARDUS.

Preface to the Reader

MATTHIAS NETHENUS

To the Diligent Student of Truth and Piety, Greetings.

Do not be surprised, Christian reader, that after so many disputes with the Pelagians and their remnants, both elsewhere and here among us—disputes that have now been somewhat settled—and after so many works of other most learned men, including two by our own author on this subject, defending the cause of God against the remnants of Pelagianism found in the writings of Arminius, his disciples, and followers—works that have been read by all who are devoted to these matters—we now bring this present book into the public light, even though its author has been deceased for some time.

For if the disciples of Pelagius, adversaries of Orthodox Truth, considered it appropriate to publish the Pelagian dialogues of Sebastian Castellio on predestination, election, free will, and faith—writings filled with ignorance, errors, corruptions, slanders, and blasphemies, which that Pelagian dog vomited against heavenly truth—even though, as Felix, or rather the unfortunate Turpio the Preface writer says, these writings were not given their final touches by the author, yet they deemed them worthy of being published almost fifteen years after his death; and if our Remonstrants, the disciples of Pelagius, Castellio, that wretched Turpio, and Arminius, had them reprinted in Gouda, here in the Netherlands, in the year 1613, with additions, and afterward translated some of them into the Dutch language to seduce and deceive the common people, why should not we, as disciples of Christ and of Orthodox truth, and adversaries of Pelagius and his followers, publish this work, so learned, so pious,

and so esteemed by a theologian, in order to promote among men the cause of God and to rescue them from the darkness of error, and to bring them into the Kingdom of truth, piety, and light, for the glory of God and their salvation—even if it was not polished by the author for this purpose?

Especially since such books, so full, so orderly, and so briefly written in Latin against Arminianism, which is creeping about here and in Britain, have hitherto been sorely needed? For you should not think that Pelagian errors, which are so familiar and akin to corrupt human nature, can ever be so uprooted or extinguished that they do not spring up again, like ill-fated weeds, from the soil of corrupted nature and strive to choke the wheat and the good herbs of truth. Nor can they be so thoroughly defeated, struck down, hidden, or destroyed that they do not rise again, like the heads of a hydra, to rebel against God and His truth, inflating man with the presumption of his absolute and independent liberty against God and His grace with a pernicious and deadly pride.

This lament of Thomas Bradwardine belongs to all times and places when, in the preface to his work "On the Cause of God," invoking God, he thus laments: "Behold (and I say this not without a deep pain in my heart), just as in the past there were found eight hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and the like against the one prophet of God, to whom the innumerable people adhered, so today, O Lord, in this cause, how many, with Pelagius, fight for free will against Your free grace and against Paul, the champion of grace?" Likewise: "Nearly the whole world has gone astray after Pelagius." This, Bradwardine here prefaces to his work not in a rhetorical hyperbole but in theological truth, confirmed by experience.

For after the fall of our first parents, human nature was depraved, the intellect was darkened, and the will and desires were entirely inclined to evil. Just as it is natural, familiar, and easy for man to please himself, to err, to slip, and to sin, so it is equally natural, familiar, and easy for man to approve Pelagian errors as if they were truth and to embrace and defend them as truth. They sneak upon a person unawares and cling most tenaciously, and it is solely the work of divine grace to think rightly about itself and our free will and choice.

Indeed, just as there are certain remnants of moral virtues, so too are there remnants of orthodox truth on these points in corrupt nature. When a certain common grace of God is added, they have borne some fruits even among the nations, but outside of Christ, as seen in the ancient sages and magi of the Chaldeans, Persians, Indians, Egyptians, and the Stoic philosophers of the Greeks, and even today among the Mohammedans, who have taught and written much about the providence of God and fate according to right reason, which also align with the true oracles of the Holy Spirit.

Yet the Holy Spirit Himself, in Scripture, presents the orthodox truth received in our churches in so many places so clearly that a person, reading it without prejudice and bringing their intellect captive to the obedience of God, cannot doubt its genuine meaning. Nevertheless, these remnants of truth left in nature, so clearly scattered in many places in Scripture, have in most people—both among the common folk and the learned and eminent—been choked and continue to be choked by the unhappy weed of Pelagianism, which, of its own accord and in abundance, springs up and grows from the soil of corrupt nature.

What Paul once wrote about the wise men of the nations applies rightly to Pelagius and all his predecessors and followers, both ancient and modern: "They became futile in their reasoning, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools. They exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image made like corruptible man" (Romans 1:21-23). This can rightly be transferred to Pelagius and all his predecessors and followers, both old and new, whose entire wisdom lies in subtly renewing the heresy of the Anthropomorphites, conforming the incomprehensible divine nature to man, and interpreting what they find written about God in the Word of God as ἀνθρωποπαθῶς—according to human imperfections—and applying them to God.

Let us hear Castellio, the master of Felix Turpio, Arminius, and the Arminians, and we will see how the truth sometimes imposed itself upon his mind, and how it was suffocated and rejected there by his Pelagian and anthropomorphic speculations. In his "Dialogue 2," after objecting to himself with the passage from Romans 9:14 and onward—indeed, quite ignorantly and crudely, as if he had nothing to say in reply—he says, "If this were the only passage written by Paul, I would have nothing, to tell the truth, to reply. But since the entire holy Scripture and other writings of Paul himself speak against this, it is necessary that either his words be understood differently or he appears to contradict himself; which may it never be!" (page 95).

Romans 9:17

Would that Paul had indeed expressed his mind more fully and clearly in this place and in certain others! (p. 102). But he expounds the truth there more fully than was pleasing to Castellio, who inclined to Pelagianism. Later, discussing desertion, he says, according to his understanding: "Truly, a man cannot help but sin if

he is thus deserted by God" (p. 105). Similarly, he introduces God speaking according to his understanding: "But if you ask why I created you, knowing you would perish, I will answer: 'Woe to him who contends with his Maker, a vessel with its potter! Shall the clay say to the one who molds it, 'What are you making?' or 'Your work has no handles?'" Likewise, since he says he had hoped so openly from the Israelites, let us simply take his words at face value and cease to be curious here" (pp. 109-111). As if it were not manifestly imperfect to have hope that can be vain! Or as if it were unlawful curiosity to inquire how this hope can be consistent with the foreknowledge of sin and destruction! Again: "I ask you, what could be more absurd than to say there is patience where things happen according to one's will and purpose?" (p. 112). Indeed, what could be more absurd than to attribute human-like patience to God?

Thus, the miserable stumble, falter, and remain stuck in the paths of Pelagianism, demanding that the reason for all God's plans and actions be shown to them so clearly that they can grasp and approve it with their own reason; otherwise, they heap up slanderous absurdities. Let us also hear Felix—or should I say "unfortunate"?—Turpio, the preface writer to Castellio's Pelagian Dialogues and treatises, also a great master of the Remonstrants and Vorstius. For he is the same person who, in 1582, published in Krakow a treatise on the place in Paul's Epistle to the Romans, chapter 7, in which he wanted to prove that Paul did not speak of himself as a regenerate man, under the name of Prosper Dysidaeus. That is to say, Faustus Socinus. If you inquire about the meaning of the name: "Prosper" and "Felix" mean the same as "Faustus"; "Dysidaeus" and "Turpio" mean "Socinus." For "turpis" signifies "base" or "deformed," which the Italians call "Sozzo."

The reason that moved him to conceal his name in this way was common: to avoid the enmity of the Orthodox against his heterodox writings and, thus concealed, to disseminate his errors more widely without hindrance, as he did in Transylvania and Poland. But there was also another more secret reason, which a Polish Knight, the writer of his life, reveals to us: that, by the goodwill and care of Francesco, Grand Duke of Tuscany, and Isabella de' Medici, he lived in Poland and received annual revenues from their estates in Tuscany. He was also instructed by their most gracious letters to remain well-disposed to them as long as they lived (with the added condition that he should not allow his name to appear publicly in any published books).

Thus, Faustus Socinus offers us a clear example and testimony of suppressed truth, both in his own mind and in others, when he writes in the preface to Castellio's Dialogues and treatises: "Who again can be unaware of the great mental anguish of those who think that man is free to consent to the divine will but cannot perceive how this could in no way detract from divine providence or be consistent with many passages in the holy Scriptures?" Indeed, a man sees, approves the truth to some extent through the light of right reason and Scripture. But, against this, the Devil, to block his sight, casts dense clouds of doubts and approves and commends Pelagian errors to him, and while the man should make a judgment here, his intellect, accustomed to darkness, easily inclines to the worse part, so that he embraces errors as truth.

Then the Devil puffs up these haughty and self-pleasing men with self-confidence and pride, so that they do not fear to blaspheme the way of truth, as the Apostle Peter foretold concerning false prophets and their followers (2 Peter 2:1-2). Even our Remonstrants, in the Apology of their seventeenth chapter (folio 161b), must admit that

God has the right to grant to some of those called, particularly those whose work He wishes to use for the conversion of others, a more excellent and noble virtue—one that removes all resistance in the called person and effectively and infallibly brings about their assent and conversion. Also (folio 183b), they acknowledge a special grace, concerning some specific persons, so administered by God that the person called by it never resists it. They say that this has been established beyond doubt from antiquity.

Finally (folios 189-190), they are compelled to admit the free and yet certain obedience of Christ the Savior and the angels through the grace of God, which is both indefectible and praised in Scripture and proposed to us for imitation. And in their synodical writings on the fifth article, page 910, they do not dare to deny that God sometimes, by His right and in an extraordinary manner, rewards certain faithful people—who have long and greatly exercised themselves in piety and been tested in various adversities and afflictions, as in fire—with the gift of indefectible perseverance. They serve as lights of piety, patience, and fortitude in the house of God, serving God as instruments to encourage others to the same steadfastness of faith by their example.

These confessions of theirs, even though expressed unwillingly, compelled by the evidence and force of the truth, are sufficient to justify the doctrine of our churches and to clear it from all accusations of absurdity. From these, the Remonstrants, with a conceived and fervent love of the truth, could be led to recognize their errors. Yet they do not cease to accuse and slander our doctrine and to cherish and defend their Pelagianism. Indeed, how familiar Pelagianism is to corrupt man and how difficult it is to fully understand and root it out from one's heart is shown to us by the

greatest antagonist of Pelagius and his followers in the ancient Church, Augustine.

While Augustine rightly and orthodoxly thought and wrote about the grace of God concerning fallen man, he wrongly and heterodoxly agreed with Pelagius and his disciples about the grace given to angels and upright man: that it was given to them without which they could not obey God and stand, and with which they could obey God and stand if they wished; but to none was given grace that would ensure they would obey and persevere. He stated that the good angels, by using that grace well of their own will, stood firm and obeyed God and deserved to be confirmed in the good, while the bad angels and the first humans, not using it rightly, fell into sin and condemnation.

This is to say, he posited that this grace was subject to the free will of men and angels and was determinable by them—determined by these to good and by those to evil—just as the Jesuits, the Remonstrants, and all those who incline toward Pelagianism teach today concerning the grace of Christ. Such grace necessarily implies and presupposes a conditional predestination, or one based on the foreknowledge of the movement of free will in angels and humans. This is nothing other than pure Pelagianism, which Augustine never rightly saw, considered, or openly retracted after all his years of struggles with the Pelagians.

Hence, with the sounder doctrine of Augustine, Cornelius Jansen adopted and retained this and the Jansenists, now condemned and oppressed in the Papacy; indeed, what may surprise you, that same Pelagianism, perhaps out of incautious reading of Jansen, the Papist, or even a blind zeal for contention, has been adopted here in the Netherlands by a certain theologian from the Reformed, as I have previously shown him from his own words; and although he mixed

himself with the Jansenist cause and defended it in published writings, he neither noted nor refuted these errors, which, for their greater good, he could have done more effectively than thus simply approving and praising their doctrine, which is most infamous in the Papal court for its agreement with ours.

Seeing that Pelagianism is so natural and familiar to mankind, I devoted no small effort during my years of study, and later in my profession of theology, to properly understanding and discerning these most difficult controversies. I presented and publicly discussed three fundamental and crucial disputations on this subject in the academic sphere at different times, from which all things flow and to which they ultimately resolve. The first was on the Decree of God concerning free contingencies—whether absolute or suspended upon a condition external to God. The second was on *Scientia Media* (Middle Knowledge). The third was on the determining or determinable concurrence of God. I also established a disputation on the Decree of God concerning possible things that do not happen, demonstrating its use both for settling the dispute that arose among our people, especially in France, regarding the grace or will to save universally, and for utterly overturning the Pelagianism of the Remonstrants and others.

Besides these, I also held special disputations on the Grace of God. If God wills and the opportunity presents itself with a suitable printer, these works, reviewed by me and others, might be published for the public benefit of those who are devoted to the truth. But if not, let them be as God wills. To me, the reason for my duty and time well spent is evident. Now, to come closer to the matter at hand, I consider it important to communicate the following to you regarding the present book and its author.

The man of God, Samuel Rutherford, a Scot by nationality, great in doctrine but even greater in holiness, piety, and zeal for the house of God and the Kingdom of Christ—which all his writings breathe forth, especially his letters, most of which were published four years after his death—after completing his course of studies as a very young man, was promoted to the profession of philosophy at Edinburgh College, where he had been educated, and from there to the Ministry of the Divine Word in the Church of Anwoth.

During that time, he wrote and dedicated his *Apologetical Exercises* for Divine Grace against Jacobus Arminius and his followers, and against the Jesuits, their champions and associates, to Lord John Gordon, Lord of Lochinvar, and Viscount of Kenmure. These were published in Amsterdam in 1636 and later reprinted in Franeker. During my studies at this academy, I found them very pleasing and very useful for properly understanding and discerning the Pelagian controversies. Likewise, in 1643, I publicly professed a disputation on *Scientia Media* (Middle Knowledge) at this academy.

However, since he had assumed the Ministry of the Word in the Church of Anwoth without the consent and approval of the Bishop of Galloway, whom he refused to acknowledge, the Prelates not only accused him for the published *Apologetical Exercises*, but also summoned him to their court for certain things he had spoken in a sermon concerning the sins of the Kingdom. When he declined to acknowledge their judgment, arguing they were not legitimate judges appointed by Christ in the Church, he was removed from his office in 1636, sent away to Aberdeen, far from Anwoth, and kept in captivity. From there, he wrote many letters to his friends, which constitute the first and largest part of his printed letters.

He remained a captive there until 1638, when, after a notable change in affairs, he returned to his church, for which he had been anxious day and night during his captivity. Yet he could not stay there long, ministering to it, for the following year, the thirty-ninth since he had bid farewell to his academic studies and exercises, he was called by the National Synod from that church to the Profession of Theology in the Academy, and simultaneously to the Ministry of the Word in the Church of St. Andrews.

He continued in both roles until the time of his fatal illness when, after another great change in the governance of the churches and schools of his homeland, he was detained in his house by order of the supreme Senate. With his illness worsening, he was called by his God from this sorrowful life to a better one on the 4th day before the Kalends of April (March 29), in the year 1661. His body, accompanied by a great crowd of people, was buried, according to the custom of the place and kingdom, in the cemetery there.

However, because his name and doctrine became known here in the Netherlands due to his published *Apologetical Exercises*, in 1651, at the suggestion of the most learned and distinguished man, Mr. Charles Dematius, of blessed memory, to this academy and the Church of Utrecht, our most honorable city magistrate, learning of his doctrine, piety, and zeal for the house of God, sent his brother Andrew, who served in our ranks and later also passed away here in Utrecht in the Lord, with letters of invitation to him, to see if he could transfer such an eminent man from his homeland to the Netherlands, so that his person and doctrine might build up the house of God and adorn the academy and the theological chair.

But the brother was captured at sea by the English Parliamentarians and deprived not only of his goods and provision for the journey but

also of the letters of invitation. With the help and support of friends, he reached St. Andrews and communicated to his brother Samuel the desire and intention of our most honorable magistrate. But having lost the authentic letters of invitation, he brought nothing back to his homeland except the hope of obtaining this man. Therefore, the most honorable magistrate, full of hope, sent the brother back with sufficient provision and letters. However, in the meantime, Oliver Cromwell, having defeated the King's army and expelled him from the Kingdom after his coronation in Scotland that same year, fearing the imminent calamities for his homeland, refused to leave, declaring that with a clear conscience, he could not abandon his country in such great dangers, but felt bound to be present with the Church of his homeland, now at its deathbed, and at least to attend its funeral and burial.

Thus, he remained in his homeland until the day of his passing from this world, and there his body, brought into the light, rests in its bosom until the day of the blessed resurrection.

During his time as a Professor of Theology he wrote and published ten substantial books, most of which were polemical, although some were also practical, including a sermon on Daniel 6:26, composed in the vernacular language for the use of his people. These books were also sent to me, accompanied by a letter from a pious widow, full of kindness, prudence, and devotion, as a gift in recognition of the labor I had contributed to the editing of this book, which was delivered to me at the end of July. As long as I live, these books will hold a place of honor with me, both for their inherent worth and for the memory of our departed brother.

In addition to his *Apologetical Exercises for Divine Grace*, he published in 1649 a well-prepared Scholastic Disputation on Divine

Providence, in the Latin language, against the Jesuits, Arminians, and Socinians. Among other manuscripts he left behind was this present work, which we now give to you, titled *Examination of Arminianism*. He composed this in the early years of his professorship for the use of students of theology, to whom, on the nineteenth day of June, 1640, he began to dictate it to the Marian Schools. However, he did not revise or polish it for publication.

When the Reverend and beloved brother, Robert Mackward, one of the chief and most intimate disciples of the illustrious Rutherford, who had been entrusted with this manuscript, along with certain other Latin manuscripts, by the widow and friends of the deceased author, showed it to me for review and examination, although the handwriting of the author was somewhat difficult and obstructive to read for someone not accustomed to it, I nevertheless judged from what I had read that the book was worthy of being published and shared with other students of theology, especially beginners. I knew of no other work among us that was as comprehensive and succinct an examination of the entire theology of the Remonstrants, written in such a method and so well adapted to the understanding of beginners and the convenient use of the more learned.

Certainly, the greatest praise is due to the profoundly and thoroughly learned theologian, William Ames, an Englishman, who not only, before the National Synod of Dordrecht, engaged in a theological duel with Nicolaus Grevinckhoven but also, having written and published his *Coronis* in response to the Hague Colloquy, refuted the principal writings of the Remonstrants and Anti-Synodals with great strength, prudence, and success and presented himself as a strong and invincible leader for others in this struggle. Yet all his labor, struggle, and contention remained confined within the bounds of the five articles of the Remonstrance examined and decided upon at the

Synod of Dordrecht; it did not extend to the other errors of the Remonstrants.

Likewise, great merit is to be attributed to William Twisse, a most learned, subtle, diligent, and faithful theologian, who has rendered excellent service to the Church of God. He carefully examined and refuted the writings of Jacobus Arminius against William Perkins and Francis Junius, and of Johannes Arnoldi Corvinus against Daniel Tilenus on the matter of predestination. His writings, contained in two substantial volumes, were published in 1631 and 1639, and he also refuted the fiction of *Scientia Media* in a special volume, published in 1639 and dedicated to the illustrious and powerful States of Friesland. Yet here, too, many controversies with the Remonstrants are not addressed, as they did not pertain to the goal proposed in that work.

First, after the Synod of Dordrecht, the most illustrious Peter Moulin, a French theologian, more fully published against the Remonstrants a system called the *Anatomy of Arminianism*, which he later revised and expanded with a refutation inserted into the Synodal Writings. However, he could not confront or respond to other significant writings of the Remonstrants that were published later since they were not yet available to him at that time. Johannes Arnoldus Corvinus attacked that *Anatomy*, but Antonius Walaeus defended it.

In the year 1621, the Remonstrants published their Confession of Faith in the vernacular, presenting as it were a complete body of their doctrine and theology. In response, the theologians of Leiden, at the command of the Lords of the States of Holland and West Friesland, undertook, wrote, and in 1626 published a *Censure* of this Confession, translated into Latin and including the inserted

Remonstrant Confession. In 1629, the Remonstrants opposed this with an *Apology* for their Confession, or *Examination of the Censure*, written by Simon Episcopius.

Afterward, since the theologians of Leiden were diverted by other occupations, including most notably the preparation, correction, and illustration of the original texts, and the production of a new version of the Holy Scriptures in the Dutch language, according to the decree of the National Synod, and desiring to comply with the wish of the South Holland Synod, Isaac Junius, the pastor of the church in Delft, took on this task. He wrote the *Antapology*, or *Remarks on the Sixteen First Chapters of the Apology of the Remonstrants*, which, after he was called from this life to the Lord, was published in 1640 at Delft, under the care of the Synod.

Thereafter, from the year 1642 to 1650, the Reverend and greatly esteemed man in the Church of God, especially in the United Netherlands, Jacob Trigland, a theologian of the Academy of Leiden, and very experienced in these controversies, completed the refutation of the entire *Apology* in seventy-four successive disputations. He revised, expanded, and compiled this system of disputations into a book consisting of fifty-nine chapters during the following four years of his life, to which he prefixed a preface refuting the preface of the *Apology* and defending the *Censure* against the *Apology*. This work, long desired by learned men, was published in 1664 at Harderwijk under the care of his sons, as he had instructed before his death, under the title *Antapology, or Examination of the Entire Apology of the Remonstrants*.

Thus, in this *Censure* of the theologians of Leiden and this *Antapology* by Mr. Trigland, we have what was previously desired—a thorough examination of the entire doctrine and theology of the

Remonstrants, from which anyone can now obtain a full knowledge of these controversies. Yet it is more laborious and extensive than could be read, re-read, and fully absorbed by students of theology during their course of theological study.

In 1640, the Remonstrants published their Catechism, which, written in the Dutch language, was examined and refuted by the most illustrious men, Mr. Gisbertus Voetius and Abraham Heydanus. Subsequently, when Episcopius attacked it, he defended the *Refutation of the Catechism* he had published with a lengthy work in Dutch, *De Causa Dei*.

Therefore, of all the books that our theologians have written in Latin against the Remonstrants,

I indeed know of none that has so thoroughly, learnedly, vigorously, methodically, and, as much as possible, concisely examined the entire doctrine of the Remonstrants and asserted the orthodox doctrine of our churches against them, as does this present book by Mr. Rutherford. Therefore, Christian and kind reader, I do not hesitate to recommend this book to you as of the highest quality. Indeed, even if we had one or two such comprehensive systems of the Arminian controversies written by learned theologians, just as in the political courts and ecclesiastical consistories, it is useful to hear and weigh the diverse opinions of several learned and experienced senators and pastors concerning the same matter under deliberation; so too, in theological controversies concerning faith and morals, when dealing with adversaries of truth and piety, to gain a deeper understanding and a better judgment of them, it is useful to hear, read, and consider the various opinions, concepts, and judgments of learned and pious theologians, owing to the diversity of the gifts of prophecy.

Therefore, despite this book's being by a theologian of such esteemed doctrine and piety concerning these controversies, it should not be neglected but held in esteem. How much more should this be the case when, as far as I know, there is no other like it? Even though the author's final hand was not applied to the book, nevertheless, in its present state, it is learned, accurate, carefully worked, and worthy of reading and consideration. Anyone devoted to the truth in these controversies will not regret the money or effort and study spent on it.

You will find here the author, with his sharpness of intellect and judgment, penetrating the innermost depths and recesses of these controversies. He precedes the principal controversies with a notable passage of Scripture, the foundation of the matter. Then, thoroughly surveying everything with great care, he diligently investigates the state of the controversy, making it clear with proper and necessary explanations of terms and phrases, descriptions and distinctions of matters aptly applied, and the testimonies and words of his adversaries plainly brought to light. He establishes and confirms the orthodox position against the Pelagianizing or Socinianizing adversaries with, for the sake of brevity, some brief and almost solid arguments, particularly from the passage already cited. He skillfully overturns the hypotheses of his adversaries, successfully vindicates the words and testimonies of the Holy Spirit, twisted by them to support their errors, from their corruptions, and faithfully reveals and shows their genuine and true meaning, fulfilling all the roles of a good teacher and disputant.

Even though, as with any posthumous work not revised and polished by the author himself, something of human imperfection should not be thought to be entirely absent from this book, it must be read with the judgment of Christian prudence and charity applied.

Because of these qualities of the author and the book, well known to me, I was asked by the Reverend Brother Mr. Robert Mackward to take on the responsibility of bringing this book to public print, to review the author's text, correct it where necessary, and to examine each page after it had been set in type and corrected before it was printed for the final time. Mr. Mackward promised the assistance of some honest and learned young man in reading the text and correcting the first two pages set in type. I was easily persuaded to undertake this labor for God, His truth, and the Church, as well as for the faithful servant of God, our honored deceased brother, the author, and also for you, kind reader, as becomes evident from the preceding letter written to me from Amsterdam, where Mr. Mackward was residing at the time last year.

What he writes so magnanimously about me and so humbly about himself should be read with the spirit of discernment and prudence. The letter was brought to me along with the manuscript of the author by a learned, pious, prudent, and industrious young man, Mr. Robert Traill, a candidate in Sacred Theology and the Ministry of the Gospel, a son not unworthy of his father, who was exiled for the cause of Christ and the confession of truth, and who was designated to assist me in procuring and promoting the publication of this book. He diligently, faithfully, and consistently fulfilled his part to the end, deserving praise and love from all who cherish orthodox truth and the memory of the most illustrious Rutherford.

To help you understand what has been done in this edition, I will briefly explain. First of all, as was fitting, we followed the author's autograph manuscript, in which, after rereading most of it, the most learned, diligent, and ardent servant of God's cause, our honorable brother in Christ, Mr. John Livingston, had already noted more than

a hundred places that he judged to need examination and correction. He deserves praise for this effort and should not be deprived of it.

Moreover, we used a manuscript of one of the disciples, taken from the mouth of the illustrious Mr. Rutherford in the Marian Schools of the University of St. Andrews. In most cases, it agreed with the author's autograph manuscript, but in some cases, it also differed. Just as we found in the author's autograph manuscript what was missing in the student's manuscript, so also in the student's manuscript, we found what was missing in the author's autograph. Since both texts were by the author—one written by his own hand, the other dictated to the disciples—we did not hesitate, if we found something in the student's manuscript that was more accurate or clearer than in the author's autograph, to transfer it into the book itself and to supplement what was missing from the autograph with the student's manuscript.

In the student's manuscript, where it dealt with the Church, synods, sacraments, and ecclesiastical discipline, several disputations against the Separatists and Independents were inserted. These we omitted as not relevant to the controversies with the Remonstrants. Since neither manuscript was well divided into chapters and paragraphs for the readers' use, but the author's manuscript contained only a few headings and questions, which were not all arranged in a convenient order, I arranged the book into twenty chapters, with the titles set in a more suitable order. Of these chapters, the second one, which is about God, has five special titles; and in chapters eighteen and twenty, I joined two titles due to the affinity of the subject matter and the brevity of the treatment.

To make the book more useful to readers, I took care not only to print questions, Scripture passages, and other human testimonies in

a different typeface from the rest but also to divide the continuous text in the manuscripts into more articles and paragraphs, so that every new argument of the author or his adversaries begins a new paragraph. In the first chapter, there occurs a repeated question with some relevant details: "Is the Roman Church a true Church?" Since this is a serious question and worthy of just consideration, so that we may not justify those whom God condemns or condemn those whom God justifies and acknowledges as His own, and since each treatment has certain peculiarities, and the latter is much more ample, fuller, and more accurate than the former, I have left both as I found them in the author's manuscript.

Mr. Traill, in my aid and that of the printers, transcribed the author's text from the collated manuscripts in a better and more elegant character, in the order and manner I showed him, adding asterisks in the margin where he thought something should be examined or corrected. He brought each sheet to me to be read and reviewed before they were delivered to the printer. In such an important matter, I have exercised the diligence and fidelity I could and ought. In places that were unclear, poorly written, or made no sense, I made gentle corrections where I could. Where a tolerable sense could be obtained, I left it unchanged; if something refused any remedy and could be omitted without harming the rest of the discussion, I cut it out. I filled in smaller gaps by adding what was missing, and for one or two larger gaps, I inserted what was necessary to complete the discussion.

The freedom of prophesying, which I would wish to grant myself, I did not deny to the author. Therefore, even if I disagreed with him on one or another hypothesis or on the interpretation of this or that Scripture passage, I did not change or alter those passages to match my own views, remembering that I was not writing a book from my

perspective, but publishing a book of the venerable brother, as he wrote it from his perspective.

Furthermore, so that this book might appear in as corrected a form as possible, I reviewed, corrected, and amended all the pages already set in type, which Mr. Traill had read and corrected a second time, and I reviewed them a third time. Since our Savior says, "Whatever you wish others to do to you, do also to them" (Matthew 7:12), I can truly testify that in editing this posthumous book of our blessed brother Rutherford, I have exercised the diligence, sincerity, and fidelity that I would wish others to exercise toward any writing of mine under similar circumstances.

And although I neither wish nor can affirm that this book comes forth entirely free of errors and perfect—something that cannot be said even of books published by a living author—I can, however, truly affirm that it is much more polished and perfected than when it was first written by the author himself or taken down from his dictation by the student.

For the benefit of the readers, I took care to add three indexes to the book. The first is an index of chapters and questions with the main points of each response added, following the order observed in the book. The second is an index of the principal passages of Scripture cited in this book and used in the controversies, arranged according to the order of the books of Scripture. The third is an index of principal matters, arranged alphabetically. In compiling these, we were also assisted by the labor of another servant of Christ from Scotland who is exiled among us. You, kind and candid reader, make use of this work by the illustrious Rutherford and our labors with a charitable spirit. If you find any progress in your understanding of the truth from it, give thanks not to Rutherford who planted, nor to

me who watered, but to God who gives the increase and ordains all things for the benefit of His elect, and commend me and my labors to His grace.

Here I would end my preface, but a word of further admonition must be added to our people in addition to what has already been said.

Since Pelagian errors are so natural to the corrupt human heart, it is for those of us who have been freed from them to recognize this as the grace of God. We should attribute it not to the goodness of our nature, the clarity of our intellect, or our free will, but solely to the grace of God. We should feel compassion for our neighbor who Pelagianizes, not out of malice but out of natural ignorance and blindness. According to our calling, we should endeavor to free our neighbor from error and lead them to the knowledge of the truth.

Once the truth is acknowledged, we must sanctify it in the pursuit of holiness and keep it with a good conscience, demonstrating that our knowledge is not carnal, dead, and sterile, but spiritual, living, effective, fruitful in good works, and salutary. We must refute the slanders of our adversaries and their doctrine of absolute predestination, conditioned by something outside God, and of the efficacious grace that determines our free will, not so much with words and subtle arguments but with our life and works. This is what must be diligently inculcated and considered among our people. Such admonitions will not be without their effect on those who are truly predestined to eternal life and the means thereof by the absolute purpose and decree of God and who, according to this purpose, have been efficaciously called by the invincible grace of God.

Since, by God's grace, among all the Christian Churches, none has been so purged from Pelagian errors as ours, it is fitting that our gratitude toward God should correspond to the measure of truth revealed to us, which consists primarily in the pursuit of holiness. And all those among us who profess and dare to boast that they are predestined to eternal life by the mere grace of God should show that they are also sanctified (2 Thess. 2:13), lest their boasting be found vain. Those who boast that they are partakers of this all-sufficient, omnipotent, and never-failing grace of God in Christ and that they have been efficaciously called according to the absolute purpose of election, ought to manifest by their deeds and entire life the Spirit of grace dwelling in them, powerfully working, mortifying the desires and works of the flesh, drawing their heart and desires to God, Christ, and heavenly goods, and work out their salvation with fear and trembling.

Because God works in them both to will and to do for His good pleasure (Phil. 2:12-13), not merely by some moral persuasion, as those who Pelagianize attribute to God and the Devil the same operation in man, but also by the real and hyperphysical power of His Spirit and by the determining concurrence of grace, indeed even predetermining and thus bringing the gifts granted to us into action. Will not this eternal and so great grace, condescension, love, and mercy of God toward us, miserable sinners, stir us to love Him in return, to revere, worship, and obey Him, in whose fellowship all our happiness consists? Will it not spur us on to walk worthily of such a benevolent and beneficent God and His grace, and to render all acts of gratitude with a cheerful heart?

Therefore, if we glory in being participants in the Covenant of Grace, let us show that we not only believe in the forgiveness of sins but also hate and avoid sins; that we are new people, having received the

Spirit of God dwelling in us, and having received a new heart, filled with the fear of God, in which the law of God is inscribed; that we have been cleansed from our sins, sanctified and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God, and thus walk in God's statutes and observe and do His judgments (Jer. 32:32, 40; Ezek. 36:25-27; 1 Cor. 6:11). If we believe that the promises of the Covenant of Grace also concern us, let us purify ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God (2 Cor. 7:1).

If the solid foundation of God stands firm, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," let us depart from iniquity, all of us who name the name of Christ. For if anyone cleanses himself from errors and injustice, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and fit for the Master's use, prepared for every good work (2 Tim. 2:19, 21). For as the Spirit of God testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, so also He works with our spirit so that we live as the noble children of God (Rom. 8:16, 14). If it has been granted to us in Christ's cause not only to believe in Him but also to suffer for Him, let us conduct ourselves in a manner worthy of the Gospel, standing firm in one spirit, συναθλῶντες τῇ πίστει Evayyeyir (Phil. 1:27, 29).

These are the consequences of holiness that the Spirit of Truth teaches us, not the consequences of profanity suggested by the spirit of Pelagian falsehood. For to the wicked, God says, "What right have you to recite My statutes or take My covenant on your lips? You hate discipline and cast My words behind you" (Psalm 50:16-17). Therefore, brothers, let us strive rather to make our calling and election sure. For if we do these things, we will never stumble. Thus, a rich entrance will be supplied to us into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:10-11). May God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who is to be blessed forever, grant this

grace to you, kind reader, to me, and to all His servants and children who earnestly desire it. Amen.

JUDGMENT

Thus, rightly renowned is the name of Samuel Rutherford, a most solid theologian, formerly a most worthy professor of that faculty in the University of St. Andrews, a most profound practitioner, and a most skilled champion for the truth and piety. This posthumous work, *Examination of Arminianism*, has such a parent. Now the Reverend, learned, and pious Minister of the Divine Word, known to us, a disciple and faithful follower of the great author, considered it wrong to keep such a precious deposit to himself, for his private use and that of a few familiar friends. He judged that it should be printed for the public good and thus sent forth into the light. Moreover, he decided, by letters addressed to us individually, to seek our judgment on this work, so that it might be more freely published in these provinces.

We, considering that we should not refuse such a request, have carefully reviewed and examined a good part of the said work that was presented to us during the printing process. We judge, therefore, although the most learned and experienced author was not able to give it a final polish or refine certain parts more fully and clearly, that the book is nonetheless worthy of such a great author and can be read with great profit by all who are devoted to Divine grace and saving truth. Thus, we commend it to our hearers and all benevolent readers of the highest esteem.

At Utrecht, August 20th, 1668.

GISBERTUS VOETIUS, Theol. Prof.

ANDREAS ESSENIUS, Theol. Prof.

Examination of Arminianism

Chapter 1

On the Holy Scripture:

Their Subject Matter, Fundamental and Non-Fundamental Articles; Ignorance and Error, Knowledge and Faith Concerning Them

The inquiry before us is whether Scripture, or the Holy Spirit speaking through Scripture, serves as the ultimate judge in controversies. Or, whether God has left us in His Word a standard that binds our consciences coercively, or merely one that directs us without compelling. The Remonstrants, in their Apology, chapter 7, argue that the Scriptures cannot serve as a judge, for where there is a dispute about the meaning of the law, the law itself and the judge must be distinct. The Romanists, however, place the Church as the final and infallible judge over Scripture, the meaning of Scripture, and all matters of faith. In contrast, the Arminians deny that there is even a ministerial judge with any coercive authority; they see the Scriptures merely as a guiding rule, leading us only insofar as the sense of Scripture itself would direct, so that even one who embraces a heterodox interpretation is not condemned. Furthermore, they reject the notion of any infallible judgment by the Church, even when it claims to judge according to Scripture, teaching instead that the very words of Scripture, or arguments derived from them, serve only as a directive standard, allowing each person to form their own judgment regarding salvation, in accordance with what they perceive

as the clearest rule left by God—such that no one who dissents may be forced to conform by any infallible judgment.

Yet we affirm that the Scriptures are sufficient for the coercive resolution of controversies.

1. Because Christ appeals to the Scriptures in John 5:39: “Search the Scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life; and they are they which testify of me.” Similarly, in John 5:47: “If you do not believe Moses' writings, how will you believe my words?” Paul also appeals to Moses and the Prophets in controversies with the Jews (Acts 24:14-15 and 26:22).
2. Because the conscience would always be in turmoil and lack a firm foundation unless Scripture were the ultimate resolution of controversies.
3. Because the Scripture is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path (Psalm 119:105).
4. If Scripture were a mere law and nothing more, then necessarily, law and judge would be distinct. But because Scripture is the rule of judgment and simultaneously accompanied by the Holy Spirit, who resolves disputes for those to whom the Gospel is not hidden and convinces the dissenters, it is not necessary here to distinguish between law and judge, as is done with human law and earthly judges.
5. It is absurd to claim that the judgment of the Church, according to the Scriptures, is not the standard for controversies, for this would be to deny God and the Holy Spirit speaking from the Scriptures, which the Church proposes as a minister. If the Church could not decide controversies of faith as a ministerial judge, then all the doubters would be left without resolution.
6. If there were no standard left to us in the court of conscience that judges coercively but only directs, and if people were left to

the private judgment of their own consciences, no one would be obliged in conscience to believe the Scriptures, and all believers would live in conjectures and private fantasies.

7. No one would sin by twisting the Scriptures to their own destruction, as many are said to do (2 Peter 3:16). For who sins by twisting a law that does not coercively bind the conscience? If Scripture does not compel people to accept the true sense intended by the Holy Spirit, it does not act against its due obligation to one who attaches a false or erroneous meaning to it; therefore, one who, being devoid of truth, distorts Scripture does not sin.

But on the other hand:

1. Even if Scripture is clear, the Gospel remains veiled to those who are perishing. The Jews do not perceive or comprehend the Messiah (the only begotten and proper Son of God, incarnate in the fullness of time; who, in a humble state, was born of the Virgin Mary in Bethlehem; who was despised, subjected to a shameful, cursed, violent, and bloody death to atone for our sins; who fulfilled and abolished the sacrifices and ceremonies of the Mosaic Law; who rose from the dead on the third day, ascended into heaven, and now sits at the right hand of God the Father, until He returns to judge the living and the dead). His kingdom will not be worldly and physical, but spiritual, heavenly, and eternal, as promised and prefigured in the Old Testament, and as He was revealed in the New Testament. Yet, this truth, brighter than the sun itself in Scripture, they neither see nor can see, for a veil lies over their hearts when reading the Old Testament (2 Corinthians 3:14-15). Therefore, they claim that the article of Christ incarnate, crucified, risen, and glorified was not fundamental.

2. Before the prophets were written, the resurrection of the dead was not a fundamental article. Christ's argument from Exodus 3:6, "I am the God of the living, not of the dead, therefore the dead shall rise," is not as clear as this: "He runs, therefore, he moves."
3. There is no fundamental article that some heretics have not attacked, as proven by experience, Scripture, and history.
4. The Arminians assert this because they teach that the Socinians, Anabaptists, Anti-Trinitarians, Arians, Tritheists, Sabellians, and Papists do not err in fundamentals. For example, they question whether Christ is consubstantial with the Father and truly God, whether there is one God in three distinct persons, and whether God's providence governs all things, foresees all, and determines all. The Arminians do not dare to assert these doctrines as being contained in Scripture beyond all exception.
5. The second Arminian thesis is that the doctrines necessary for salvation are very few, namely, only those which, as Casaubon impiously said in his letter to Cardinal Perron, are almost universally accepted by all who wish to be called Christians. They criticize Athanasius for exceeding his authority when he said of his creed: "Ὅς δ' ἂν θέλη σωθῆναι, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic faith." And they say that controversies between the pious and the learned are not fundamental. They rank the Socinians, Arians, Jesuits, Pelagians, and Semi-Pelagians among the pious and learned, as they teach in their Apology, chapters 25 and 3. Furthermore, they measure piety by civil morality in the sight of men, and not by the Word of God and fundamental faith, whereas piety ought to be measured by true faith. This is the piety of the Pharisees:

they consider those pious who are not adulterers, murderers, or poisoners, even if they are Arians or Socinians. Yet, indeed, the Word of God alone is the true standard of piety.

Fundamental Articles are those that concern the vital parts, the soul, and the life of faith.

The simple ignorance of these damns not all mortals, but all who are within the visible Church, except for the insane, the deaf, and infants, who are parts of the Church materially, on God's part, often intentionally and in their first act, but not formally and in their second act, because they are not capable of receiving God's calling either actively or passively. However, for those outside the visible Church who have heard nothing of Christ, this ignorance does not formally damn them but makes them incurable, as a punishment: just as a health-giving medicine, if despised, kills the body actually and by merit, so also the doctrine of salvation concerning God and Christ, His Son, the Mediator, and Savior of men, when delivered and despised, kills the soul actually and by merit, and such contempt casts the soul into eternal death. But the health-giving medicine, not offered and therefore not despised, renders incurable as a loss, not by merit; likewise, the doctrine of salvation concerning God and Christ, if not communicated or despised, kills the soul, but not as guilt.

The second kind is the Supra-Fundamental Articles,

which follow from the fundamentals by plain and necessary consequence. These too are secondarily and materially fundamental, and error concerning them and implicit ignorance condemns, for whoever denies such things subverts the foundation; whoever denies the clear and open consequences, denies the antecedents (John 8:19).

Thirdly, Circa-Fundamental Articles are all those revealed in the Word,

such as incidental, chronological, and historical matters—for instance, that Paul left his cloak, books, and parchments in Troas (2 Tim. 4:13), that Abraham begat Isaac, or astronomical matters concerning Orion, the Pleiades, Arcturus, and the northern signs (Job 38:31-32). These are indeed matters of faith to be believed by necessity of command but are not fundamental, nor necessary by necessity of means, such that without knowledge of them no one can be saved. Three sins are to be considered in these matters: 1. Ignorance. 2. Weakness. 3. Obstinacy or stubbornness. The ignorance of these Circa-Fundamental Articles is, in many, a sin and condemns by merit and potential, but not in act. All within the visible Church (God granting understanding, means, and opportunity, especially the teachers) are bound to know these things; yet many are saved who are ignorant of them. 2. Many, clouded by weakness, passions, and temptations, sin in these things; and this sin condemns by virtue and merit, but not in act. 3. There is an obstinate and malicious opposition to these, as if one maliciously denies and opposes the miracles performed by Moses, Elijah, Christ, and the Apostles; such an error is fundamental, not because the material of these is the foundation of faith, but because it sins against the fundamental principle and denies the truth of whatever God clearly and openly reveals in His Word. Such obstinacy ought to be retracted by confession; if not thus retracted, it condemns in act.

Fourthly, Preter-Fundamental Articles are those

which in themselves and their nature are neither forbidden nor commanded, such as eating meat or marrying this or that woman. The practice of these, without faith as to general rules that they should serve edification, decency, and piety, is limited by the Word; and ignorance of these in this way condemns by merit, and such

obstinacy, which is called a perverse disposition, condemns in act. Where malicious obstinacy is also present, it is a fundamental error, as obstinacy regarding things revealed in the Word, because to resist the light of the Word clearly proposed in the most plain manner is to deny the authority of God in the Word.

7. Those of the third and fourth kinds are equally to be believed with divine faith because of the authority of God, who says that Christ came into the world to save sinners, and who says that eight souls were in the Ark of Noah. Yet the former is fundamental, while the latter is not. Hence, it follows that the essential reason for a fundamental article is not to be taken from the authority of God commanding, at least not as the formal reason, but from the necessity and gravity of the article proposed. For that is fundamental, without the knowledge of which no one can be saved; but without the knowledge of many historical and chronological matters, men can be saved. Hence, it also follows that many of God's miraculous acts can be unknown to many who are saved, but our moral acts—such as faith and repentance—cannot be unknown to us. Therefore, certain human acts are among the fundamentals, while certain divine acts are not. Thus, the reason for a fundamental article is taken not from the excellence of the object but from the necessity of the thing, which is necessary to know for salvation.

8. The necessity of knowledge of fundamentals is twofold: one for obtaining salvation, the other for external communion with the true Church. This twofold necessity must be discussed here.

David of Dinant, in *De Pace Ecclesiastica*, page 28, considers a fundamental article to be one which, by the will of God revealing, is so necessary to know and believe for obtaining salvation and eternal

happiness that ignorance of it, and much more opposition to it, incurs manifest danger of losing eternal life.

Estius, in *l.3.d.25. §. 2*, defines fundamentals as those whose distinct knowledge is necessary for rightly ordering life. This is a too narrow definition because true faith is required beyond a rightly ordered life. Potter, in *De Charitate male intellecta*, chapters 8 and 9, referring to Section 7, defines Catholic truths as those which principally and essentially pertain to faith, which principally constitute the Church, and which are necessary, in the ordinary course, to be believed by anyone who wishes to be saved. However, Potter gravely errs in that he distinguishes from these non-fundamentals, which are disputable on both sides and can be admitted as undecided. But indeed, many things are non-fundamental that are not disputable, and (as he says) not determined by Scripture, such as that eight souls were in Noah's Ark, because they are plainly decided in the Scriptures.

Furthermore, the Papists generally consider fundamental those things that pertain to faith and whatever is proposed by the Church as such, once defined. But on the contrary:

1. An article is fundamental before it is defined by the Church as fundamental, just as the Word of God is not the Word of God because the Church defines it as such, but because God has revealed it to us as His Word.
2. If the Church can make non-fundamental things fundamental by its ecclesiastical definition, then it can also make fundamental things non-fundamental. For the power to make something fundamental is equal to the power to make something non-fundamental, just as the power to create is equal to the power to annihilate. But this is absurd; for by this reasoning, the Church

- could legitimize Arminianism and declare that Christ being consubstantial with the Father is not a fundamental article.
3. The Church, when defining, does not have greater authority than God defining in the Scriptures. But not everything that God defines in Sacred Scripture is fundamental; for example, He defined that Eve was deceived by the Serpent, which is not fundamental. As Bellarmine says in *De Conciliis*, Book 2, Chapter 12, "Councils, when they define, do not make something to be of infallible truth, but declare it." Vincent of Lérins, in *Adversus Haereses*, Chapter 32, says, "Finally, what has the Church ever achieved by the decrees of the Councils, except that what was previously believed simply, was afterward believed more diligently?" Laudus, against Fisher, Chapter 32-33, Nos. 4-5, pages 226-227, says, "An Ecumenical Council can hardly err in fundamentals; or if it does err, it still remains valid, and external obedience should be given to it, at least as far as obedience consists in silence, patience, and abstinence, until it becomes clear through Scripture or demonstration to the contrary that it has erred; or until another Ecumenical Council, of equal authority with it, refutes it; and a General Council is not to be rescinded by private judgment." The response is: "He holds heretically that a General Council can hardly err in fundamentals; or if it does err, faith must be suspended (perhaps until the end of the world) until another General Council is convened."

Gerson, in *Tractatus de Declaratione Veritatum Quae Credenda Sunt*, etc., Chapter 4, Part I, page 414, states: "Not everything that the Church delivers under a judicial definition (in Council) is to be believed as necessary for salvation; only those things which it so delivers with the concurrence of the whole Church's consent, whether implicitly or explicitly, truly or interpretatively."

9. In my view, fundamental articles should be defined as follows: they are the principal heads concerning Christ, the only foundation of salvation, which are either contained as parts in the Scriptures or by a consequence that is evident to all who are not maliciously blinded, necessarily pertaining to those two adequate means of our communion with Christ, namely, faith and repentance, or Christian obedience, without the knowledge of which a man cannot be saved.
10. They are the principal heads concerning Christ, such as are included in most of the articles of the Creed, which is called the Apostolic Creed. Thus, many incidental, chronological, genealogical, topographical, and historical matters are not fundamental, for they are not the first and most common elements of the Christian Religion.
11. Doctrines concerning Christ the Savior or most closely pertaining to our communion with Him, which do not necessarily cohere with this foundation, are not fundamental, even if they can be matters of faith. As Bellarmine rightly notes in *De Ecclesia*, Book 3, Chapter 14, §5, "Many things are of faith that are not necessary for salvation."

Hence, it is an amazing ignorance of the Formalists, who argue that the Anglican ceremonies must be embraced out of a duty of conscience toward superiors because they are not fundamental or necessary for salvation but are in themselves *ἀδιάφορα* (indifferent things). As if this were the adequate division of things to be believed and done: some are fundamental, others indifferent; likewise, some are fundamental and necessary for salvation, others not necessary. For believing that Paul left his cloak in Troas, and that Saul persecuted David, and such things, are not fundamental, nor

necessary for salvation; yet, for all who read the Word of God, they are necessary for salvation to be believed, and wanting to ignore these is not indifferent but a sin; or, when these things are presented by reading or public preaching of pastors, not believing them is a sin that justly condemns.

Although, therefore, the ceremonies are not fundamental, it does not follow that they are indifferent or that their practice is lawful.

3. Fundamental articles are either expressly in the Scriptures or by evident consequence. Hence, those things which are, in themselves, as far as godly and learned men can see, controversial, such as questions about the degrees of the glorified, the new heaven, and the new earth after the dissolution of the world, etc., are not fundamental.

From this, it follows that all the traditions of the Papists and Jews are to be expunged from the catalog of fundamental articles.

3. Hence, more remote and obscure conclusions, which are less evidently and more obscurely deduced from the cardinal elements of faith and obedience, are not fundamental articles.

4. Nor are any conclusions by which the doctrine concerning Christ, faith, and obedience is not overthrown, as Camero observes in *De Ecclesia*, pages 272-273.

Hence, 4. Fundamental articles necessarily pertain to the doctrine of faith and obedience. See Beza, Vol. 2, *Opuscula de Ecclesia Catholica Notis*, page 141, for without faith and repentance no one can be saved.

5. I say, without the knowledge of which no one can be saved, namely, without explicit knowledge of some first principles, no one can be saved: but indeed, implicit knowledge of some fundamental principles deduced from them is sufficient, as we shall hear.

Hence, the following questions concerning the fundamentals are to be discussed to provide a clearer explanation of the definition:

1. Are those things that are deduced by consequence from the most common principles to be believed with true faith?
2. What sort of evident consequence is required for an article to be called fundamental?
3. Since all fundamentals necessarily pertain to faith and obedience, can the number of fundamental articles be determined?
4. What kind of knowledge of the fundamentals is required? What explicit faith, and what implicit faith, is sufficient for salvation?
5. What constitutes a fundamental error? And what is vincible and invincible ignorance?
6. Since knowledge of the fundamentals is necessary for salvation, what is the nature and extent of this necessity?
7. To what extent can those who err in fundamentals be tolerated?
8. To what extent is communion with, or separation from, a church that does not err in fundamentals lawful or condemnable? And is the Roman Church a true church?

Regarding the first question: There are two kinds of consequences: some are clear, transparent, and evident, such as "All idolaters are abominable to God; therefore, those who bow to Baal are also abominable." Others are more obscure and less evident, such as "The males of the Jews were circumcised on the eighth day according to the Law; therefore, the infants of Christians ought to be baptized."

First Assertion: There are three types of light and, accordingly, three types of certainty:

1. There is a theological and human light when I know something to be true from natural reason or an acquired habit of theology;

- for example, Judas knew that Christ was the Savior.
2. There is scriptural light when I know something because it is revealed in the Scriptures as the Word of God, with the inclination of my will.
 3. There is a divine experiential light, yet infallible, such as when I know that I know God because I keep His commandments (1 John 2:3).

By the scriptural light and the certainty of faith, I know the major premise of the following syllogism; by divine, experiential, and infallible light (though not by scriptural light), I know the assumption to be true; and by a mixed and infallible light, I know the conclusion to be true when I argue thus:

Whoever believes in Christ will not perish but has eternal life;
But I believe in Christ;

Therefore, I will not perish but have eternal life.

The major premise is the expressed Word of God, certain by the certainty of faith (John 3:16). The assumption is not formally known by the light of the Word, for it is not written in the Word of God that I believe.

You may say: It is written in the Word of God by signs and **ἐκμήρια** thus:

“He who overcomes the world and keeps the commandments of God, he believes,” as it is in 1 John 5:4-5 and James 2:18.

But I have overcome the world and have kept the commandments of God;
Therefore, I believe.

I respond: Still, the minor is not known by scriptural light and certainty of faith, but by experiential knowledge and the reflective act of the Holy Spirit, testifying that I believe, that I overcome the world, that I keep the commandments of God. Therefore, such reflective acts are always resolved into the testimony of the Holy Spirit, or into a sense and experiential knowledge.

Nevertheless, it can rightly be said that these things are known by the certainty of faith if the word "faith" is taken more broadly, for that which God reveals as true in the Word expressly revealed, or that which He reveals through the gracious acts He produces in me by the Holy Spirit. For God does not only speak to us through the Word, but also through gracious effects; and both are equally infallible.

This latter is called the testimony of the Spirit:

It is either effective, when the Spirit effectively inspires, works, and produces certain and infallible acts of faith in our understanding, hence it is our **ὑποστάσις** and **ἀπόδειξις** (foundation and proof), as in Romans 4:21 and 14:5.

Or it is objective; and it is twofold. The Holy Spirit either testifies about the premises, or about the antecedent; or about the conclusion, or the consequence. Concerning the premises, when He objectively reveals and manifests to us the acts of faith, love, and repentance that He produces, so that in our hearts, by sense and experience, we feel ourselves to believe, to love, to repent.

2. From these acts, as from infallible and most certain premises, He deduces this conclusion, that we are the children of God, according to Romans 8:16, "The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." However, Paul does not make two testimonies in number, one of our natural spirit and another of the Holy Spirit speaking to us, but rather, while the Holy Spirit makes us

know and feel by reflective act that we believe, repent, and hope, He causes us to conclude from this that we are the children of God.

However, that this testimony and experiential knowledge is not fallacious or conjectural, as Bellarmine, along with the Papists, claims in *De Justificatione*, Book 3, Chapters 8 and 9, nor theological and human, nor lesser in certainty than the certainty of faith or scriptural certainty, as taught by Forbes, the pseudo-bishop of Edinburgh; nor uncertain and conditional, as the Arminians assert; but rather as certain and infallible as the testimony of God speaking in the Scriptures, is evident for the following reasons:

1. Because perseverance and eternal salvation are the objects of faith for every believer, as the Scriptures state: Romans 8:38; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2 Timothy 4:8 and 18. Hence, perseverance and eternal life, promised specifically and individually to the believer, are fundamental articles, even though the faith concerning them often wavers and fluctuates among the saints under the weight of temptations.
2. Because otherwise, no one could be certain of their own salvation, contrary to the Scriptures (1 John 2:3; 1 John 3:14; 1 John 5:13; Romans 8:38; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2 Timothy 4:8 and 18).

Therefore, those syllogistic conclusions in which the major premise is the testimony of Scripture and the minor premise is experiential knowledge can be objects of faith and can be fundamental articles, and they often are.

Fasolus, in *Prima Pars Thomae*, Q.1, Art.2, Doubt 9, Fig. 51, says: "The doubts and hesitations that the faithful experience do not arise from any intrinsic cause or formal motive of the act itself, nor from any weak adherence of the act concerning the object, but only indicate the intrinsic obscurity and lack of evidence, as well as

dependence on the free command of the will in the production and preservation of the act."

Hooker, in his response to Travers' Supplication, and William Chillingworth, in *The Religion of Protestants: A Safe Way to Salvation*, Part 1, Chapter 6, p. 311, assert that the articles of faith, in their essence and entity, are as certain as the principles of the sciences; but they deny that our certainty of adherence to the promises of the Gospel is equal to the certainty of the senses or the sciences.

1. Because faith can increase, whereas such certainty is situated in an indivisible point, is most perfect, and cannot coexist with doubt.
2. Because, as Hooker says, God does not prove to us that His promises are true by arguments drawn from sensible experience: we should be more certain of the proof than of the thing proved. If ten men were to look at the moon, they would all equally know that the moon is the moon; but if ten men believe the same promise, they do not all believe it with the same certainty. Therefore, the certainty of faith, which is required of us under the penalty of damnation, is not of the same kind as the certainty of the senses.

Response: Our certainty is equal to the certainty of the sciences and the senses, and it is not equal.

1. It is equal, negatively, inasmuch as it excludes the doubt of unbelief in that act.
2. It is equal inasmuch as it equally satisfies the intellect concerning the certainty of the object and equally generates spiritual joy concerning the known object.

3. It is equally certain in that a Christian would rather face death than deny the promises, just as one who sees and is certain with scientific certainty cannot deny that he sees and knows.

But it is not equal in the manner of knowing, nor in the nature of the means that exclude all blind doubt of reason.

2. Nor is it equal in the duration of such acts; for the senses are rarely deceived, and the intellect never doubts the truth of well-perceived propositions, because the object is proportionate to the intellect. But the acts of faith, in themselves, are not equally durable concerning certainty with all the differences of time, because many temptations assault the certainty of faith (being supernatural) more than the knowledge of the senses and natural intellect.

But Chillingworth, on page 312, denies absolute and infallible certainty, agreeing with the Arminians; for he argues that probable motives sufficiently move men to undertake the dangers of death by sea and land where there is only the hope of profit, which is not infallible nor as certain as the certainty of the senses and sciences.

Amesius rightly states in *De Conscientia*, Book 1, Chapter 3, Question 2, that faith, not only on the part of the object but also on the part of the subject (q.8. th.14.15.), by its nature, produces a firmer assent in us than natural science because it relies on a more certain cause. Yet, since the human intellect has a greater proportion to naturally known things and more fully comprehends them, it does not always use the light of faith with the same certainty that it uses natural science.

Thus, among the Papists, Andreas de Vega, in *De Concilio Tridentino*, Book 6, Chapter 39, says that every proposition that is inferred from propositions of faith is itself of faith, as if indirectly and mediately. And certainly, whoever denies a good consequence

denies a premise of faith.

Second Assertion: Those consequences in which the major premise is from Scripture, and the minor is the dictate of natural conscience applying the law of God to its actions, are also matters of faith; as

Whoever defiles the marriage bed with incestuous adultery is subject to the wrath of God:

But I, Herod, defile the marriage bed with incestuous adultery;
Therefore, I, Herod, am subject to the wrath of God.

Proof:

1. Because wicked men could never be convinced and condemned in their consciences by the Word of God (contrary to the Scriptures, Romans 2:15; Romans 1:20; Titus 1:11; John 8:9; Titus 3:11) if it were not infallibly clear to them of their guilt and the severity of their crimes.
2. Those who sin against the Holy Spirit, blaspheme God out of malice, and despair of salvation, could not certainly know that they have committed such deeds, which is contrary to experience.

Third Assertion: All ought to be convinced in their consciences, through reflective faith, that their moral actions conform to the Scriptures and are pleasing to God. Yet these deeds are not known by the light of Scripture (for Scripture directly judges nothing concerning this or that specific act; rather, it is through conscience applying the light of Scripture to these acts that one knows whether they are wicked). Therefore, what we know by the experiential sense of conscience, we do not know by the light of Scripture, yet we do know it by the light of faith and internal persuasion.

The major premise is supported by Romans 14:23: "He who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin." And further in verse 5: "Let each be fully persuaded in his own mind."

2. Because all are bound by the testimony of a good conscience to know that their deeds are pleasing to God (2 Corinthians 1:12; Hebrews 13:18; 1 John 3:20).

3. Because the testimony of conscience, rightly accusing and condemning or excusing and absolving, conforms to the testimony of God, as seen in 1 John 3:20, John 8:9, 1 Samuel 28:15, Psalm 17:3, Psalm 7:3-4, and Hebrews 13:18.

Fourth Assertion: Those conclusions in which the major premise is from Scripture, but the minor premise is not known by the light of Scripture or by experiential light of conscience, are not matters of faith. Such are these conclusions:

"Whoever believes will be saved;

But these Christians (e.g., John, Anna, with whom I am acquainted) believe;

Therefore, they will be saved."

Likewise:

"Whoever loves his brethren has passed from death to life;

But Judas, according to the judgment of the Apostles, loves his brethren;

Therefore, etc."

Two objections can be raised here:

1. Natural reason, in a Turk, a Jew, or in Aristotle, sees this consequence: "If the Son of God was made like us in all things except sin, then He is a mortal and suffering man." Therefore, such a consequence is not a matter of faith, for what is perceived

by natural light is not of faith.

Response: I deny the inference: for we perceive by both reason and sense that the sun is like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber in the east; and we know this by faith (Psalm 19:6). The only difference here is that reason is the organic cause, and the light of faith is the principal agent.

Objection 2: What is something other than the Word of God is not the Word of God, and so it is not of faith. But a conclusion deduced from the Word of God is something other than its premises, as Aristotle rightly said. Therefore, it is not the Word of God. Likewise, what is of faith is resolved into the first credible thing, which is expressed thus: "Thus says Jehovah." But this conclusion, "Therefore, I believe," is not resolved in this way; for God nowhere in the Scriptures says that I believe, nor that Lawrence or Francis believe. Therefore, it is not of faith.

Response 1: What is something other than the Word of God in itself, and externally, not internally (as Camero says, *De Ecclesia*, p. 359), or in our way of knowing, not in itself, is not the Word of God—this is false. If what is distinct only in terms of terms and as a species from the genus is something other than the Word, it is not the Word of God, I deny it. But conclusions clearly distinct from the Word of God, such as what is contained under every and none, are not the Word of God: for if God says that man is an animal, He says that Peter is an animal.

2. All conclusions partly known by Scripture, partly by the testimony of the Holy Spirit, or by the light of natural conscience, are resolved into this: "Thus says Jehovah; thus testifies the Spirit; thus testifies Jehovah through natural conscience." Therefore, what God speaks through the operations of a conscience conforming to righteousness

and through signs in the Word, God speaks no less than those things expressly in the Word. Consequently, the subjective certainty of salvation, by which I am certain that I believe and will be saved, is no less an object of faith (whatever the Papists and Arminians may say to the contrary) than objective certainty.

To the Second Question, namely, what sort of evident consequence is required for a consequence to be an article of faith, I say:

It is one thing to hold closely to a fundamental conclusion; it is another to oppose it by a less clear consequence. Peter truly and with saving faith believes that Christ is the Savior and promised Messiah (Matthew 16:17). Yet he does not see this consequence: "Christ is truly the promised Messiah; therefore, He will be delivered into the hands of sinners and will be scourged and crucified." Yet it was a fundamental consequence; by not seeing it, Peter dissuaded Christ from suffering death. Similarly, the Galatians believed that Christ was profitable to them, and yet they believed circumcision was necessary, thinking these two things could coexist. Likewise, among the Papists, there are simple men who believe that Christ is true man and yet believe in transubstantiation, thinking by God's omnipotence that transubstantiation and the true humanity of Christ coexist. Such people, due to a lack of judgment, poor education, and a deeply entrenched opinion, err materially, not formally, in fundamental matters. Their worship is impious in itself, but not in relation, as Camero states in *De Ecclesia Potestate*, pages 214-215. Such errors, after a clear proposition of the truth, become formally fundamental errors.

2. Concerning these fundamental consequences, first, there is a doubtful conscience that assents to them with fear, which can

exist in the saints, believing all fundamentals habitually.

3. Another is a scrupulous conscience, pressed by light doubts based on slight grounds; these too can believe.
4. Another is a presumptive conscience that conjectures, which is found in atheists who are not touched by any conscience of religion. In these, the error is formally fundamental.
5. Finally, there is a malicious conscience that denies fundamental consequences. These sin most greatly and are heretics, even if they concede all the cardinal principles of faith. For the power of conscience is evident whenever they deny evident consequences.
6. Those who have never had faithful teachers, who are among the most studious Papists and believe from childhood that the Church cannot err, and thus who have never doubted or felt the necessity of examining the Church's doctrine with judgment, as we must examine the clear doctrine of the Gospel, which we truly believe to be divine, are further removed from formally fundamental errors than those who, upon hearing rumors of Protestants attacking Popery, raise questions about the authority of the Doctors and the truth of the principles of Popery. Those who believe in transubstantiation and the humanity of Christ, whose doubt resolves into a philosophical error, whereby they think it probable that the extension of parts is not of the essence of the body, do not deviate as much as those who, from the Scriptures, can infer that Christ the man can only be in one place at once, as in Matthew 28:6, "He is risen; therefore, He is not here." And where simple credulity, weak judgment, and faith in Christ made like us in all things except sin are joined, they less directly subvert the foundation.

Amesius, in *De Conscientia*, Book 3, Chapter 2, Question 4, asks whether someone can be saved if they believe something that conflicts with those things necessary to be believed for salvation. He answers: If a person understands that these beliefs are in conflict, they cannot believe both; but if, through error and a defect in instruction, they think that these beliefs can coexist, that error does not exclude them from salvation.

The third question is more difficult: concerning the determined number of fundamental articles. Regarding this, I propose the following statements:

1. Rightly with Beza, *Opuscula*, Volume 2, *De Notis Ecclesiae*, page 141, and our own, it is said that all fundamental beliefs are either explicitly stated or follow as a consequence in the Apostles' Creed, which, as Calvin says in *Institutes*, Book 2, Chapter 16, Section 18, was accepted as a public confession, approved by all, from the very time of the Apostles. All deeds are contained in the Decalogue, and all petitions in the Lord's Prayer.
2. There are two types of articles in the Creed: some are primary and must be explicitly believed by all who wish to be saved, as stated in the Athanasian Creed and by Vigilus the Martyr in Book 1, Chapter 4, as noted by D. Pareus in his third prologue to Hosea 9:4—for instance, that Christ is a man, died for sinners, rose again, was exalted, etc. Others are those that explain the mode of a cardinal article rather than being fundamental themselves: such as the article explaining the manner of the passion by stating "suffered under Pontius Pilate"; the manner of His humanity by stating "born of the Virgin Mary, conceived by the Holy Spirit"; the manner of His exaltation by stating the time of His Resurrection, namely, "on the third day He rose

again," and of His Ascension into Heaven. And perhaps many closed their day in the faith of Christ who did not know these modes. Therefore, I would not assert that all articles expressed in the Creed are fundamental, and that there are some things that are not contained therein, such as the Sacraments, which are considered fundamental by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews 6, and that Scripture is the canon of faith, that we are born in sin, etc.

3. I would not dare to assign a specific number of fundamental articles whose explicit denial would destroy the essence of the Church or render a person denying them unsalvageable.
4. The denial of a single primary fundamental article, where malice is added, makes a congregation that is materially a Church, formally not a Church. An example is the Roman Church, miserably erring in many fundamentals, while it subverts the person, natures, and offices of Christ and worships creatures in place of the Creator; therefore, it does not hold the foundation and thus ceases to be a Church, or at least the essence of the Church is injured in it. But more on this later.
5. The specific number of fundamental articles is not itself a fundamental article because many truly believe and thus hold to the foundation, who cannot define the number of the fundamentals, as experience loudly proclaims. That alone is the true Catholic Church, which cannot fail and believes all the fundamentals. But that congregation is Catholic which cannot but believe all the fundamentals and cannot err in the fundamentals, is the true Catholic Church. From this, it follows:
6. Although the Catholic Church cannot fail in fundamentals (otherwise, it would not be the Catholic Church), it does not

follow that it can infallibly determine the certain number of fundamental articles.

7. We cannot consult any particular congregation regarding the number of fundamentals.
8. A congregation or particular person may believe all the fundamentals and yet be unable to determine which are fundamentals and which are not.
9. Whoever materially believes the fundamentals, though they may not formally believe all of them or recognize them as fundamentals, can be saved.

To the fourth question, I say that knowledge and faith are of two kinds: one is express, explicit, distinct, and developed when someone is clearly and particularly convinced that God exists and that the Son of God is incarnate; the other is faith that is implicit and involved, and this is twofold:

1. Concerning the degree of faith;
2. Concerning the intellect or will of the believer. Concerning the degree of faith, we may concede three types of implicit faith, according to Calvin in *Institutes*, Book 3, Chapter 2, Section 45. First, in so far as many things are hidden from us in this life. Second, in so far as known things are seen imperfectly as in a mirror, and so faith is essentially implicit, and vision is explicit and developed. Third, preparatory faith for true faith (by which many were seen to be drawn to admiration by the miracles of Christ, John 4:48) is implicit.

3. Implicit faith is either such by reason of the intellect; as when someone believes a universal proposition, they implicitly believe a particular one contained under it. The rustic believes that it is wrong to worship a creature, and implicit faith suffices for him to believe that Vasquez is mad when he asserts that it is lawful to worship straw or the lips of Judas the traitor, because they are entities representing the primary being.

Or it is implicit by reason of the will, and this in two ways:

First, when one in the will is ready to believe more things if they are revealed by God than they currently believe. Knowledge and faith in the principal fundamentals are necessary for all, even for the laity who wish to be saved, such that repentance from ignorance of such fundamentals does not suffice unless they are imbued with contrary explicit faith. Acts 4:12: "There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." By the name of Christ, is understood Christ Himself revealed in the Word, to exclude the enthusiasm of good angels (Galatians 1:8, 9; 2:6; 3:10; John 14:6; Mark 16:15, 16): "Preach the Gospel to every creature; whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe (namely, in the Gospel) will be condemned." John 3:36: "Whoever does not believe in the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him." And verse 18: "Whoever does not believe is already condemned." Romans 3:20: "For by works of the Law no flesh will be justified," and this is said of each individual mortal, as the preceding verse indicates: "That every mouth may be stopped, and the whole world may become accountable to God."

Therefore, Becanus errs in the second part of his work on theological virtues, Chapter 2, Question 3, where he says that someone who explicitly believes in the two primary articles (namely, 1. That God

exists, 2. That God has providence over humans) is considered implicitly to be willing to believe the rest of the articles because of the same revelation. This is incorrect because saving faith in the two fundamental articles, explicitly on account of God's revelation, cannot coexist with the faith in many other articles. Yet there are indeed several fundamentals that must be explicitly believed.

Regarding these fundamentals, as they are known, there are three aspects:

1. Knowledge according to the substance of their meaning.
2. A more developed explanation according to what is proposed in the Scriptures for edification.
3. An elucidation of the difficulties raised concerning them. The knowledge of fundamentals in the first way is necessary for the more unlearned by the necessity of means, and is sufficient, as Amesius notes in *De Conscientia*, Book 4, Chapter 2, Question 3. As Beza rightly says (*De Notis Ecclesiae*, Volume 2), "It is not necessary that someone be a true member of Christ to understand everything most precisely; nor are things required of the unlearned that are required of pastors who must be apt to teach and to refute those who contradict." The same negative certainty (i.e., that which excludes unbelief and error concerning the faith) is required from all, both pastors and flock, without exception (Hebrews 5:11-12, Romans 14:5, Colossians 1:9, Ephesians 1:8). This is as Suarez affirms in *De Tripl. Virtut. Theolog.*, Disputation 13, Section 6, Figure 1.

It is not required by the duty of a special calling that the whole body be an eye; for if it were, where would be the hearing? (1 Corinthians 12:27). However, the same positive certainty is not required of both the pastor and the flock, of the infant and the father. Hence, the

obligation of the pastoral role, which in its kind is the greatest required by necessity of precept, differs from that of the Christian, which is also the greatest required in its kind. Therefore, all Christians must abound in all wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:2, 3:16) by necessity of precept. But by necessity of means, it is sufficient that the unlearned believe implicitly, with a pious inclination of mind, in the consequences of the fundamentals and in their explanations.

Furthermore, faith is implicit by reason of the will when someone is prepared to believe what the Church believes, as Estius says in *Sentences*, Book 3, Distinction 25, Section 2. Thomas explains the implicit faith of the Romans more soundly in *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, Question 2, Article 5, by stating that one is prepared to believe whatever is contained in divine Scripture. More crudely, Suarez in *De Tripl. Virtut. Theolog.*, Disputation 13, Section 6, slanders Calvin by claiming that he makes each person the rule of their faith because we disapprove of their implicit faith, which, as Suarez says (*ibid.*, Figure 4), "although it includes some ignorance, preserves from the dangers of error because it subjects the mind to the proximate rule of faith, which is the Church." Hence, the errors of the laity who believe implicitly with pastors erring are called laudable acts of obedience.

On the fifth question, concerning vincible and invincible ignorance, I say:

Vincible ignorance is that which one can overcome with the ordinary means provided by God, with diligence and effort; such is the ignorance of those born in the Church where the Word of the Gospel is preached, who can know the Gospel and yet remain ignorant of it. Another kind is invincible ignorance, which one cannot overcome through effort and industry; yet, if we speak of the saving knowledge

of all the mysteries of the Gospel, ignorance is invincible to us by the mere forces of nature because, to elevate the intellect, there is always a need for saving grace.

Theologians say that the ignorance of Christ among the pagans is invincible for two reasons:

1. Because Christ is an object that cannot be known naturally.
2. Because the obligation to believe in and know Christ arises solely from a positive commandment added to the law of nature (Romans 10:14): "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?"

However, the following cautions must be noted:

1. If the sound of Christ has traveled through the ears of the pagans (as Paul also speaks in the same context), then their ignorance is not completely invincible; even if they have neither heard of Christ by the written Gospel nor by preachers, if they have heard of Him by rumor and sound—as the sound of the glory of the Creator is heard in the heavens and the work of creation (Psalm 19), to which the Apostle alludes here—it does not mean, as Pareus observes, that he makes the fame of the Gospel as common as the knowledge of the Creator, as the Arminians chatter.
Nevertheless, I say that ignorance of Christ is not entirely invincible if one hears rumors from sailors or travelers that Christ is the only Savior of the lost human race.

2. Because no one ought to be indifferent and negligent concerning eternal salvation.

3. Because natural misery, natural ignorance, and the immortal nature of the soul dictate that man is miserable, and if they hear about a Savior, there is a means to escape misery.
4. It is not invincible virtually, because all naturally resist and disdain the revealed knowledge of Christ.
5. Pagans do not diligently apply all the means to investigate the truth of the Gospel according to the gravity of the matter; it is certain that God expects diligence here.

However, it is invincible: 1. Where there is no rumor of Christ. 2. Where there is no suspicion, arising from the works of God's providence outwardly, that a pagan is subject to eternal condemnation unless delivered by God. 3. Where the letter of the Gospel is entirely hidden from the pagans.

Invincible ignorance among the more unlearned Romanists is of two kinds:

1. From a sheer lack of reflective knowledge, either from the root of their upbringing or from a strong belief in the fidelity of their teachers, whom they are convinced would not lie to them. This kind of ignorance is in some sense invincible because if a simple Jew believed that Isaiah was divinely inspired, he would never examine his sermons. Thus, the more unlearned Romanists, who believe what the Church declares to be divine oracles (βόεια λόγια), and are devoid of any suspicion or thought of malicious deceit by false prophets, labor under a kind of invincible ignorance. Therefore, even though they err in fundamentals, if they believe in the articles of faith and live according to the Decalogue, while holding to superstructures that in truth and themselves overthrow the foundation, I would say they labor

under speculative rather than practical error. In this way, their ignorance is vincible in that they do not search the written Testament of Christ, which is among them, even though they could and should, especially when they see that the means provided by God (namely, the reading of the Scriptures) are being withheld by their leaders.

2. Ignorance can be considered in some sense invincible for those who hear that their Church can err. However, when they do not examine its doctrine but know that the way of salvation is opened to them by priests (men otherwise profane), who may not faithfully convey the mind of the Pope or a General Council and therefore of God Himself (as they believe), such ignorance is not entirely invincible, nor does it wholly excuse them.

Pure and simply invincible ignorance among pagans is a cause without which there would be no condemnation, and it blocks access to the knowledge of Christ, but it is not the proper cause of condemnation. The abuse of the light of nature and common means is the cause of their condemnation. Yet they err in the most common fundamentals of the law of nature, and their errors are truly fundamental:

1. Because knowing God, they do not glorify Him as God.
2. Because they do violence to the clear light of conscience, which is to despise the authority of God speaking through the natural conscience.
3. Because all things that are of God are to be believed under the penalty of damnation, although not everything contained in the Word, but only the fundamentals, is necessary to be believed by the necessity of means. I respond: Because in the administration of the evangelical covenant, God, as the supreme legislator and

infinitely just judge of the world, forbids all evil under the penalty of eternal damnation, just as He commands all good. Yet He forbids and commands in such a way that, as a gracious, kind, and merciful Savior, He leaves room for free remission and grace, by which, because of Christ's death and obedience, He can forgive all sins, even those of doubt and unbelief, to the repentant, and so also the omission of all means to salvation, except for that which is the means absolutely and precisely intended by God for salvation. It is equitable that divine mercy be left more liberally than sin. Because the way to glory, now evangelical, is through grace forgiving; but to Adam, who was to be led to glory by a purely legal way, whatever was necessary by necessity of means was also necessary by necessity of precept, and vice versa.

Perhaps one might except effective and confirming grace, that in the covenant of Nature, the glory of liberty belonged to God, just as in the covenant of Grace, the glory belongs to God, both of mercy and justice.

To the seventh question, I say it is one thing:

1. To believe fundamental errors,
2. Another to profess them,
3. And yet another to force them upon the consciences of others by violence. Many believe fundamental errors who do not know that they believe such things, but think they firmly adhere to the Christian religion, like the Marcionites and Manichees. Occam, in his *Dialogue*, Book 4, Part 7, Chapter 3, Treatise 1 and 2, calls such people "ignorant heretics," not because they think what is false is true (no one can believe that because assent as such is a natural act) but because they embrace what is false as true. I

know that it is asserted by the Scholastics that the denial of one fundamental article is the denial of all, because, as Meratius says in Volume 2, *Tract. de Fide, etc., Disputation 24*, Section 4, Figure 7, 8: "When many things are proposed sufficiently to the intellect for one and the same formal reason, namely, the divine authority, the intellect cannot embrace one and reject another." And indeed, whoever despises the authority which God holds over the created intellect in one thing despises it in all. But here there is a double contempt, one sometimes only virtual, as when the disciples denied the resurrection of the Lord (John 20:9): "For they did not yet know the Scriptures, that it was necessary for Him to rise from the dead" (yet they believed Him to be the Son of God, Matthew 16:16-17). In them was hidden the seed and habit of faith, but the act of faith was interrupted in this article because of the lack of clarity of terms and the power of temptations. Thus, the denial of one fundamental article is not the denial of all; for otherwise, one act of unbelief would make a faithful person an apostate, which is not to be said. Another is formal contempt when someone opposes a fundamental article because they are not touched by any authority of God speaking; and so, one who denies one fundamental article denies them all. But hence, it is clear enough that many pious people doubt this or that fundamental article who nonetheless do not err in the fundamentals. Thus, the Lutherans do not cease to be a true Church, even if their errors are such that they somehow undermine the foundation. Nor do the Arminians cease to be a Church, as long as they retain the foundation. But when Arminianism has prevailed under Vorstianism, and as it is proposed in the *Apologia*, and especially as defended by Curcellaeus and others, it is a most grievous heresy and destroys the foundation when they now mingle with the Arians, Socinians, Jesuits, and Antitrinitarians.

To profess a fundamental error is more grievous than merely to hold it; to promote and defend it is still more grievous. But to impose it tyrannically upon the consciences of others is by far the most grievous. The Church ought to tolerate those erring or doubting in the fundamentals until they are instructed (2 Timothy 2:24-26). Those who profess fundamental errors ought to be restrained. Those who teach and seduce others ought to be cast out of the Church.

Concerning the eighth question ("To what extent should we separate ourselves from a Church that errs in the fundamentals?"), I first ask whether the Roman Church is a Church. I propose my view with the following assertions:

Assertion 1: There is an invisible Church within the Roman Church and under the papacy, like a woman hiding in the desert who, due to weakness, dares not profess the pure faith. This is evident from the confession of many who secretly acknowledge that the orthodox faith has been graciously revealed to us.

Assertion 2: It is one thing to speak of the assembly professing Popery, defending it, and pressing the consciences of others; and another thing to speak of the same visible assembly which professes the Word of God and the two principal Sacraments of the New Testament, and that Christ is *λατρεύων* and has died for sinners, and separately professes and defends the fundamental axioms from the conclusions, and that the Holy Bible is the Word of God. For it is the profession of the Papal assembly according to these two acts of profession among them.

The assembly professing Popery, as such, is the Synagogue of Satan, the Babylonian Harlot, not the Bride of Christ; and there is no question that as such it is not a Church.

But the assembly professing Popery in the concrete—that is, the Word of God, and together with it, those false, heterodox, and heretical superstructures—such an assembly is not a true Church in ethical and moral truth, just as an impure and adulterous wife is not a true wife, that is, she is not an honest wife. But such an assembly is a true Church in physical truth, in a certain respect, materially, or (as Junius says) in respect to God, not on the part of men. Thus, he in his singular book *On the Church*, Volume 2, Chapter 17: "On one side it is still called Ammi, 'my people,' and Ruchamah, 'having obtained mercy,' which, most truly on the other side, can be called Lo-Ammi, 'not my people,' and Lo-Ruchamah, 'not having obtained mercy.'" But if that Church has nothing that is not corrupt, I admit; yet whatever it has that is divine is from God; whatever it has that is corrupt is from itself. Whatever it has that is divine, it is a Church; whatever it has that is corrupt, it is a corrupt Church. The Church is not removed by corruption unless it is total (as they say), which they call destruction. Particular corruption does not remove the Church but weakens it. The Roman Church has everything corrupt, but not wholly; hence it is not destroyed, but its corruption is to be called partial.

Reason 1: A congregation that possesses the Word and the seal of the covenant, which is baptism not to be repeated, is materially a covenant people. But the Roman Church is such. Therefore, etc.

2. A congregation in which there is an active calling on God's part, and a passive calling on the part of some who are convicted in conscience, and where the matrimonial tablets (i.e., the Word of God) serve as the instrument of calling, is a true church in the physical sense. But such is the Roman Church. Therefore, etc. In this sense (says Tilenus in *Syntagma*, Disp. 38, on the Body of Antichrist, Thesis 53), the name "church" is granted to the Papist assemblies so

long as the λόγος, or the calling of God through His Word in Scripture, calling them to faith and repentance, still remains among them and as long as this calling is signified by their sacraments, like certain signs and seals. However, in as much as the Roman Church departs from the foundation, it ceases to be a Church. But they do not retain the foundation. As Pareus says in his *Commentary on 1 Corinthians 3*, "Indeed, they profess the words of the Decalogue of the Law and the Apostles' Creed in name, but in reality, they overturn them," as he proves there.

For the congregation is not a true Church that exercises a pastoral act (for there is indeed some Word there, but not faith), nor is that congregation a true Church upon which any pastoral act is exercised. For that place in Jeremiah 51:9, "We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed," would prove thus that the Chaldeans were a true Church, since there was an active calling on the part of the prophet Jeremiah calling them.

Just as there is a double calling (κλήσις), so the term "Church" is used in two ways: either as an externally called congregation; and in this sense, the Roman Church is in some way a Church; or as an internally called congregation, that is, a congregation of the faithful; and in this respect, it is somewhat a Church, because of some elect mixed outwardly among the Antichristian crowd.

If "Church" is taken passively for a congregation called by God through the Word and the Holy Spirit, holding to the foundation and believing in Christ, then the Roman Church, neither concretely nor as papal, is a true Church, whether morally or physically.

1. Because in it, there is no foundation of salvation, but its doctrine overthrows all fundamentals with idolatry, superstitions, and heresies.

2. Because the Word, as interpreted by it, is not the Word of God nor a matrimonial tablet with God, but the word of men and Satan, diametrically opposed to it. And it is not the tablet of marriage with Christ but of desertion from Christ and adultery with Antichrist.

If the term "Church" is less properly taken for a congregation called by the Word of God and confirmed by certain sacraments, then, in this respect, the Roman Church is a Church, as the arguments presented by our men, such as Junius, and by the Papists or Papist sympathizers like Erasmus, Wicelius, Cassander, Grotius, and others who followed these leaders, who are incrustators of the Papist faith and religion, prove.

If **3.** the term "Church" is understood as an invisible and hidden congregation called and convicted by the calling Word, as purely explained by Protestants and believed by them, who, out of weakness, do not dare to profess the true faith, then it is a true Church, even in that which hides at Rome, though weak, which may be called Roman, though not as it is commonly distinguished by theologians from the Protestant Church.

Laud, against Fisher, §20, pp. 130-131, nos. 4-5: The Roman Church is not a right (that is, an entire) Church; yet it is true in its essence because it receives Scripture as the rule of faith, and both Sacraments as causes and seals of grace. It can be (I admit) harmed and mutilated in its integral parts, which remain sound concerning its essence, as long as there remain three or four calling on the name of Jehovah. For where there is active and passive calling, there is a congregation of the faithful, and therefore a Church. However, to maliciously oppose a single fundamental article, like the resurrection of the dead, as Pareus says, is to subvert the faith.

Laud is a falsifier against Fisher, §35, no. 1, p. 281, when he claims that our people teach that the Roman Church is a true Church. He cites Luther against the Anabaptists, from Bellarmine, Book 7, on the Marks of the Church, Chapter 16: "We confess that there is much good under the papacy, indeed, all Christian good." He cites Field, who says in his *On the Church*, Book 3, Chapter 47, "Some have been found in the Roman Church in such a degree of orthodoxy that we may well hope for their salvation." And this is nothing else than that the Church is under the papacy.

Just as the false prophet Balaam, for example, prophesied orthodox doctrine about the "star of Jacob," that is, the Messiah, and yet remained a false prophet; and just as logicians make a distinction between a doctrine that teaches and a doctrine that uses; so there is a distinction between a Church that teaches and a Church that uses. I do not deny that Junius acknowledges that the Roman Church is a true Church, but certainly, he speaks of the teaching Church, not the using Church.

For it is certain that the Papal Church in the concrete is a Church that teaches the fundamentals, hands down Scripture as the Word of God, and performs true pastoral acts; but because it overthrows the foundation with heterodox superstructures, therefore, it is not a Church that uses.

Therefore, even though the Roman Church teaches orthodox faith in itself, whereby many believe in Christ and may be saved, it does not follow that it is a true Church physically if we are speaking of a teaching church.

Although we admit that in the Roman Church there is a possibility of salvation, it is not safe to remain where the foundation is overthrown, even if there is a possibility of retaining the foundation

and it is indeed retained by the sincere part which is under the papacy.

Even if all fundamentals are conceded as true by both Papists and Protestants, it does not follow that the Papal Church is a true Church because they are conceded as true in general, but there is contradictory opposition in the particular sense. For example, both parties believe in the real presence, but one believes it is spiritual, the other corporeal. Both concede the necessity of good works: one as formal righteousness, the other as the effects of gratuitous justification, declaring them necessary. Both believe that Scripture is the Word of God and the rule of faith; but one party proclaims it to be a partial rule, the other a perfect and total rule.

One thing is a Church that is speculatively true, which teaches all fundamentals from the knowledge of which saving faith may arise, even if it adds others which are destructive to those fundamentals. And thus, the Roman Church is a true Church, as the arguments of Junius prove. Another thing is to speak of a Church that is practically true, which believes those fundamentals savingly; and thus, the Roman Church is neither metaphysically nor ethically a true Church but rather the Babylonian Harlot and is in no way to be counted as the Bride or Wife of Christ.

Laud, against Fisher, Sect. 37, pages 314-316, no. 9, conclusions 1 and 2, claims that the Roman seducers perish, but simple ones may be saved; and Protestant seducers perish, while the simple ones they mislead may also be saved. From this, he implies that our people, who oppose the pseudo-episcopate, are heretics and err in the fundamentals. Meanwhile, the Arminians must be saved, and the Familists who oppose our errors because they oppose heretics.

The Jewish Church is, in some sense, a teaching church, because they acknowledge the Old Testament, which implicitly is the whole Word of God, as the Word of God, and there is some form of active calling there. But the only foundation, which is Jesus Christ, they reject and detest. Therefore, the very essence of the Church is destroyed in that congregation, although they are beloved for the sake of the Fathers and the eternal election of God. Yet God explicitly states that He has ceased to call them (Acts 13:46-47): “Behold, we turn to the Gentiles,” etc. Therefore, the Word that is among them is not a sufficient means for effectively calling the elect.

Calvin, *Institutes*, Book 4, Chapter 2, Section 11: “In sum, I say that churches exist insofar as the Lord miraculously preserves remnants of His people, however miserably dispersed and scattered, insofar as there remain some who, like the symbols of the Church, maintain their efficacy, which neither the devil’s craft nor human depravity can destroy. But because, conversely, the known churches have been wiped out—these are the ones we particularly need to consider in this discussion about the Church—I say that every congregation and the entire body lack the legitimate form of a Church.”

John Jewel, Bishop of Salisbury, in *An Apology of the Church of England*: “They are accustomed to boast that they are the Church of God: Aristotle says that bastards cannot make a city. Let them see whether they can be made into the Church of God. Surely, they are neither lawful Abbots nor genuine Bishops.” (p. 147). What if the law is required from the priest, and counsel from the elders? What if, as Micah says, night falls upon them without vision, and darkness without divination? What if, as Isaiah says, all the watchmen of the city are blind? — Truly pastoral and ecclesiastical acts can be performed by one who is not faithful and regenerated (Phil. 1:15,16,17). Pastors who are not regenerated can rightly administer

the Sacraments according to Christ's institution. Therefore, an unfaithful congregation, which is not truly a Church, can administer truly pastoral acts.

The baptism of heretical and papist pastors is truly (in a metaphysical sense) a valid baptism, as is the baptism administered by an adulterous minister. For the value of baptism comes from Christ's institution, not from the minister, as Augustine responded in *On the Letters of Petilianus*, Book 2, Chapter 108. Thus, we approve baptism among heretics, not as their baptism, but as Christ's; just as among fornicators and idolaters, we approve baptism, not as theirs, but as Christ's.

Rivet, in *Catholico Orthodoxo*, Vol. 1, Question 7, Treatise 2, No. 8: "When we call the Roman Church a particular church of God, we do not mean the papacy, which we pronounce to be a pestilence upon the Church; rather, we mean the ailing body infected with this pestilence, in which some obscure traces of God's Church are still observed. Scripture, though hidden under a bushel, remains there, as does baptism, though corrupted by various human additions. Therefore, if anything of the Church remains there, it is because some of our marks still survive."

It is not absurd for a sacrament to exist outside the true Church, that is, outside the congregation of the faithful. It is absurd for a sacrament to exist entirely outside a congregation utterly deprived of the Word of God and matrimonial tablets.

A deprived minister, if he baptizes with a key that does not err, indeed sins; yet the baptism is valid, and the infant is not to be rebaptized.

Objection: The Church has made the minister a non-minister and is now as a layperson. Response: He is not wholly a non-minister, for the habitual office remains; yet the exercise is forbidden because he is merely deprived until he repents. Upon repentance, he is not re-ordained by the Church but merely readmitted to the lost exercise.

Objection: The Church can take away ministerially what it gave ministerially; but the Church gave the habitual office ministerially; therefore, it can take it away. Response: 1. The major premise is not universally true, whenever the Church grants something under God. The Church administers external baptism under God; yet, by excommunication, it cannot take it away. For although an excommunicated person is to be regarded as a Gentile or a tax collector, he does not cease truly to be baptized with an external baptism. 2. The Church ministerially begets a person for God through the preaching of the Word; yet a regenerate person can indeed be excommunicated justly; but the seed of God and the spiritual generation, conferred ministerially by the Church, cannot be taken away. Response 2. I deny the minor premise: the Church, in conferring, does not give the habitual office; God alone gives it; the Church designates it for exercise, and by its power, it makes it so that he who has been given by God both office and authority may rightly perform and exercise the ministry divinely given to him.

Before the rise of Luther, the Albigenses and others acted rightly in making a negative separation (for they did not communicate with the idolatry of the Papists), although before condemnation, persecution, and expulsion, they did not make a positive separation by forming another new visible Church. Where there are some fundamental errors in the Church, it is not immediately permissible to make a positive separation. Christ commanded to hear those who sit in

Moses' seat, although they taught some things that overturned the foundation and rejected Christ.

Nor does separation from an Orthodox Church due to some errors within it separate from Christ; for only separation from Orthodox faith separates from Christ, which opposes internal communion with Christ and the Church. But external separation alone is not internal separation; indeed, he who is thus separated retains internal communion with the Church in Orthodox faith, and therefore with Christ.

We deem weak and feeble the argument of the Remonstrants, who refuse to separate from Arians, Socinians, Anti-Trinitarians, Anabaptists, for they do not dare to consign all such to hell or ban them from heaven; as though it were not the Word of God, but our judgment concerning the salvation and damnation of men, that is the rule of our communion with the Church!

If, however, we are compelled, in external communion, to communicate with errors, even non-fundamental ones, in a Church not erring in fundamentals, then it is permissible to make a partial separation, not a total one; a negative, not a positive one. The reason is that it is never lawful to communicate with the unfruitful works of darkness: *Ephesians 5:11*.

It is false and blasphemous what Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, stated in his sermon to the Star Chamber, page 36, namely, that the Christian religion is the same in the Roman Church and in ours, and that they are not different religions. He offers a flimsy argument, saying that learned men recognize only three religions: Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity, to which they now add a fourth, Islam.

Potter, in *On the Defect of Charity*, chapter 6, section 3, page 63, states: "The most necessary and fundamental truths that constitute the Church are, on both sides (i.e., both among the Papists and the Protestants), by no means called into question." On page 68, he adds, "We Protestants still retain true and right union in faith and charity with the Roman Church."

But on the contrary: the Papists do not possess true faith; they err in the fundamental truths. They do not have the Holy Scripture with us as the sufficient canon of faith and morals; rather, they add their own traditions to it and wish the Scripture to be understood according to these. They do not recognize Christ but instead hold the Pope of Rome—i.e., Antichrist—as their head and lord, as the infallible teacher of faith, the interpreter of Scripture, and the judge of religious controversies.

They deny that only God is to be worshipped and invoked in a religious manner, and so they adore creatures, angels, men, bread, images, and idols. They nullify the mediatorial office of Christ by adding other mediators and saviors to Him. They deny the satisfaction of Christ, provided by His bloody death and the obedience rendered on our behalf, as they attempt to satisfy God for sins by themselves and others. They combine the unbloody sacrifice of the Antichristian Mass, fabricated by themselves, with the bloody sacrifice of Christ, as though it were necessary and useful to appease God, to satisfy for sins, and to remove both sins and punishments. They contend that man is justified and saved in the divine judgment not freely by God's pure grace because of Christ's obedience rendered for us and applied by faith, but by their inherent righteousness and the merits of their works. Thus, there can be no union in faith with them, for they subvert that faith.

2. Laud trivially enumerates four religions, as though there were not more species in the lowest degree, and as if there were one species of Christian religion, true and sound in the fundamentals, whether among us, the Papists, the Socinians, the Arians, the Anabaptists, the Libertines, the Antinomians, and all the impure and diabolical sects vending themselves as the Christian religion.
3. Perhaps he relies on what Medina says in *On Right Faith in God*, Book 4, Chapter 6: that the faith of the Decalogue is preserved in these implicitly known sayings: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them," and "What you would not have done to you, do not do to another." And Soto in his *4th Distinction*, question unique; and Vega in *On the Council of Trent*, Book 6, Chapter 20: that more fundamentals are not required for salvation than to believe that God wishes to assist the world and to reconcile it in ways pleasing to His providence. Likewise, the second chapter of the Qur'an says that a man may be saved in any religion, provided he acts not against his own conscience. Yet in Chapter 28:47, they teach that man's blessedness consists in food and drink.
4. Certain Innovators who measure all faith by the courts of kings and regard gain as godliness think they can compile a Catholic Catechism—a summary of fundamentals to which all may subscribe. Thus, Jews and Christians might subscribe to the sum of the Old Testament, which indeed implicitly contains the New Testament and all its fundamentals, and thereby constitute one true Church. For if we swear to the Fundamental Articles in a confused and implicit manner, understood according to the vague and indefinite sense that the Holy Spirit intends, even if we do not know it specifically, then surely the Jews and we could

rightly and properly subscribe to the Old Testament. But if any sect has its contrary and mutually opposed meanings concerning these articles, then there cannot be one Fundamental Catechism to which we all assent; rather, there will be as many catechisms regarding meanings as there are diverse opinions among different sects. For doctrine must be received according to its sense, not according to letters and syllables; otherwise, it would be permissible to subscribe to any general doctrine, and thus the Arians might swear that Christ is God, but they would understand Him to be God only nominally, not essentially.

I do not deny that there is a broad distinction between one who hates and detests a fundamental article of faith and one who, by clear consequence, subverts such an article. For instance, the Arian denies and detests this: "Christ is God consubstantial with the Father," as well as this: "Christ is true man, like us in all things except sin," which the Marcionites not only deny but also hate and detest. The Papists and Ubiquitarians, by clear consequence, deny this proposition: "Christ is true man," yet they profess it in words, love, and embrace it. Were there not a corrupt disposition toward evident consequences, they would not err in fundamentals; therefore, their error is by consequence, not direct.

Before the law was given, there were fewer fundamentals; Adam was bound to believe in his own misery, the remission of sins, and salvation through a Savior to be incarnated, the Final Judgment, and the Resurrection of the dead, as Enoch prophesied (*Jude* 14). Yet, there was never a time when Adam was bound to believe only the fundamentals of the law of nature, except perhaps in that interval between the first fall and the revelation of the Gospel. William of Paris, in his *Treatise on Faith*, and Hugh of St. Victor, Book 3, Treatise 3, Chapter 5, as cited by Bannez in *2.2. q. 24. art. 8*, taught

that in the time of grace, it is not necessary to believe explicitly any article of faith but only to believe what the Mother Church holds and believes. But this opinion is a source of shame to Dominic Bannez, Gregory of Valencia, and others. Yet Thomas Aquinas rightly responds in *2.2. q. 1. art. 7*: "The articles of faith have increased in succession of times, not indeed with respect to faith, but with respect to the explicit and expressed profession; for what was explicitly and more extensively believed by the later generations was implicitly and to a lesser extent believed by the earlier Fathers."

Rules for Distinguishing Fundamental Articles from Non-Fundamental Ones:

1. A Fundamental Article is one that concerns Christ as Mediator, and pertains to Faith and Repentance, having such a necessary connection with these that if it is overturned, the doctrine concerning Christ, Faith, and Repentance falls. Hence, there is an error in the Foundation:
 1. When the Deity is denied.
 2. When we think heretically about God and the Trinity.
 3. When we imagine there are three gods.
 4. When Christ is expressly denied or by evident consequence.
 5. When an idol is substituted for Christ, as when the idol of bread is adored in place of Christ.
 6. When hope and trust are placed in creatures, undermining divine providence.
 7. When something is taught that directly opposes the fundamental head of faith and Christian practice.
2. **Rule:** Knowledge of things without which one can believe in Christ is not a Fundamental Article. Thus, the knowledge of

Christ's miracles is not a Fundamental Article. They were instituted merely so that we might believe, as stated in John 20:30–31. Since many believe savingly in Christ who know little or nothing of His miracles, it is erroneous for certain Papists to deny that the Apostles' Creed includes all things that must be believed, merely because it contains nothing about Christ's miracles, circumcision, or baptism.

3. **Rule:** The Apostles' Creed, the Decalogue, and the Lord's Prayer, in terms of their literal words and syllables, are not exact rules for distinguishing fundamentals. For this reason, Papists, Arians, Socinians, and all heretics willingly subscribe to them. Secondly, these three are not a safe rule for the fuller explanation of all doubts and questions arising from the Apostles' Creed, the Decalogue, and the Lord's Prayer but are only rules for explanation, as derived from other creeds, such as the Athanasian or Chalcedonian, and concerning the easier and clearer heads found therein.
4. **Rule:** There is a difference between something that is of a fundamental doctrine and the fundamental doctrine itself. Whatever is part of God's Word is of a Fundamental Article, for it is God's Word, which resolves into the fundamental principle that Sacred Scripture is the canon of faith and morals. Therefore, every error concerning what is in God's Word somehow and remotely conflicts with Fundamental Articles. The fundamental doctrine itself is either purely or most clearly in consequence of the Scriptures, and such that ignorance of it excludes one from salvation.

Is the Roman Church Truly a Church?

To answer this question, the following distinctions must be considered:

1. There is a difference between the Roman Curia, the misled laity, and the multitude of the weak.
2. There is a difference between a materially true Church and a formally true Church.
3. There is a difference between a Church in the concrete and in the abstract.
4. There is a difference between a Church that is true physically or metaphysically and a Church that is true ethically and morally.
5. There is a difference between a calling body and a called body.
6. There is a difference between a teaching Church and a practicing Church.
7. There is a difference between a Church in the process of becoming, or according to pastoral or ecclesiastical being, and a Church in actual existence, or according to Christian being.
8. There is a difference between being saved within the Roman Church and salvation being in the Roman Church.
9. There is a difference between a Church considered speculatively and practically.
10. There is a difference between a Church "kata sarka" (according to the flesh) and a Church simply.
11. There is a difference between a pastoral act formally valid and one that is ecclesiastically and finally valid.
12. There is a difference between a mark of a Church in becoming and a mark of the same in actual existence.
13. There is a difference between a Church professing rejection of the Foundation, like the Jewish Church, and a Church professing the Foundation, like the Roman Church.

Assertion 1: Theologians do not assert that the Roman Church is wholly and entirely null. Junius, Book 2, *On the Singular Church*, Chapter 27, calls it still "Ammi" (My People) in part; see the other sources cited earlier, such as Calvin, Tilenus while he was still

Orthodox, and Rivetus. We do not associate with those Innovators who try to reconcile us with the Roman Church; they teach that the Roman Church must be called simply and without qualification a Church, and that truly with metaphysical truth, though it is a weak and sickly Church, just as a diseased man is still called a man simply. Potter, in *On Charity Misunderstood*, Chapter 6, Section 3, page 63, says, "The most necessary and fundamental truths that constitute the Church are, on both sides, by the Papists and Protestants, by no means called into question." On page 68, he adds, "We Protestants still retain true and real union in faith and charity." Likewise, Laud in *Against Fisher*, §20, p. 30–31, says, "The Roman Church is not a right, that is, an integral Church; it is, however, truly a Church in essence, receiving Scripture as the rule of faith and both Sacraments as causes and seals of grace." But in this manner, the Roman Church is not integral but subject to errors, although it has the true essence of a Church. So, according to Laud, the Anglican and Scottish Churches, indeed no Reformed Church, is true and free from errors, for only perhaps the triumphant Church in heaven is the true Church. But this does not prevent the Roman Church from being as truly a Church in metaphysical truth as the Protestant Church. Laud cites page 281, number 1, certain of our theologians affirming that the Roman Church is truly a Church. He cites Junius, whose mind we shall consider; he cites Luther against the Anabaptists, from Bellarmine, *On the Marks of the Church*, Book 4, Chapter 47: "We confess," he says, "that under the Papacy, there is much good, indeed all Christian good." He cites Richard Field in *Of the Church*, Book 3, Chapter 47, saying, "Some found in the Roman Church are in such a degree of Orthodoxy that we may well hope for their salvation." But these statements say nothing more than that the Church exists under the Papacy, which is not in question. Thus Joseph Hall, Schelford, William Chillingworth, and other Episcopalian theologians in England teach. Others say their errors are reductively, not perfectly,

fundamental; yet differently, Jewel, Bishop of Salisbury, in his *Apology for the Church of England*, states, "They are wont to boast that they are the Church of God. Aristotle says, 'Bastards cannot make a city'; let them see whether they can make a Church of God; certainly they are neither legitimate abbots nor genuine bishops," p. 147. What if they have consulted the priest and taken counsel from elders? What if, as Micah says, "The night is to them for vision," etc.?

Assertion 2: There is a difference between the Roman Curia, the miserably deceived laity, and the company of the weak, just as there is a difference between the body professing Papism, teaching and imposing it upon the consciences of others, and the Papal body following blind guides, and the crowd of weaklings groaning under the Papacy.

Assertion 3. If the term "Church" is understood to mean the assembly of the faithful, for whom Christ gave Himself, as stated in Ephesians 5:25–26, then the Roman Church and the Papal Curia, as such, do not even retain the essence of a Church.

1. Because that assembly obstinately errs in fundamentals, transforms the Word of God into the word of man, subverts the natures and offices of Christ, and openly professes and teaches idolatry.
2. Even if that assembly were to verbally profess all fundamental articles and acknowledge the Word of God as the rule of faith, it would not thereby be proven that the Roman Curia is metaphysically a Church or the bride of Christ that adheres to Christ the bridegroom with true faith. For there is no impure Christian sect that does not subscribe to the Apostles' Creed, the Decalogue, and the Lord's Prayer. Would such a subscription overturn formal fundamental errors? And even if the most

impure sect were to believe as much of the Word of God as could suffice for the salvation of a person (as the Jews today profess to believe in the Old Testament), it would not thereby be established as a Church truly and physically. For there is a difference between salvation existing in the Word, which some assembly acknowledges as the Word of God, and that assembly being truly a congregation of believers. For true faith requires attention not only to the material object but also to the formal object of faith.

Assertion 4. The blind and miserably deceived laity following blind guides is no more a Church, insofar as they follow them, than are the unconverted, the deaf, and the insane among us considered materially within the Church, that is, within the assembly of believers, but not formally believers nor formal members of the invisible Church. I say "insofar as they follow those guides," because what may happen to those who are deceived by the Word of God that exists and is, in some way, heard and read among them—even though they live and die within the Papal assembly—must be judged differently; indeed, what happens to the impure members of the Curia through the Word of God they profess must be judged differently afterward.

The members of the Curia are materially within the visible Church, as the wicked are materially within the true visible Church and can be called such. You may say that the Jewish assembly is thus also a Church since Jews can be called such. I respond: It does not follow, for they are not called proximately by power, not even externally, but they are to be called; whereas the Curia itself is an externally called assembly and thus materially and proximately the matter of the Church. Nor do we deny that some from the Curia, just as some from the Pharisees in the past, have been called inwardly to Christ.

Assertion 5. Under the Papacy, there is a true Church, both in metaphysical truth and in ethical truth.

1. Because that oppressed multitude under Papal tyranny declares us blessed, who have come out of Babylon, and sincerely detests their idolatry and errors. And this assembly does not cease to be a true Church because it lacks the essential mark of the Church, which is the pure profession of the Word of God; for there is a potential profession, as well as an actual one. That multitude is in the first act, ready to profess Christ and to die for Him, and actual profession is a mark of the true visible Church. Even Christ Himself did not at all times give a noble testimony, but only in due place and time, before Pontius Pilate. I add that there is a different negative profession when the godly, while hiding, do not profess idolatry nor bend the knee to Baal; and this profession is a mark of the invisible and hidden Church. There is also a positive profession when one openly resists idolatry and publicly testifies that they utterly despise false doctrine; and this is only a visible mark of the Church. The negative profession is of weakness and sometimes of godly prudence; the positive is from the zeal of faith.

Assertion 6. Hence, it is not surprising that the Roman Church in the concrete is sometimes called a true Church, even physically, since designation is often made from the better part. For Papalism in the abstract cannot more properly be called a Church or an essential form of the Church than gangrene, fever, or gout can be called a man, or an essential part of a man. Hence, there is a difference between the Roman Church considered materially, consisting of people to whom the essence of the Church pertains, and to whom the name, but not the essence and definition, belongs, just as various are the

people believing and subverting the faith within that assembly; and there is a difference between the Roman Church considered formally.

Assertion 7. The term "Church" is understood in two ways:

1. In becoming, according to pastoral being or ecclesiastical being, or the Church that calls or teaches through the Word and Sacraments—all these are the same—or according to Christian being or internal being, that is, by reason of faith, or the Church in actual being and constituted in its essence. The reason for this distinction is:

- Because there is an external form of the Church by calling pastors and the called people; just as there is another κλήσις κλήσις or external calling, and another internal form of the Church, and internal calling.
- Its foundation is in the Scriptures because Zion and Jerusalem are sometimes named from the pastoral act that pertains to the Church concerning the external form, concerning the rulers of the Church, whose task is to bring the message of salvation: Isaiah 40:9, "Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, bearer of good news; lift up your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, bearer of good news, lift it up, fear not; say unto the cities of Judah, 'Behold your God!'" Isaiah 54:1, "Sing, O barren, you who did not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, you who did not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, says Jehovah." Galatians 4:26–28; Isaiah 49:21, "So that you will say in your heart, 'Who has begotten these for me, seeing I am bereaved and solitary?'" ; Isaiah 66:11–12; John 20:21–23. To the rulers is given the power to bind and loose, and the Church is named

after what pertains particularly to the rulers: "The Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). Therefore, the assembly providing nourishment to the children by ministry (Song of Solomon 8:1) and Mother Jerusalem (Galatians 4:26), according to the phrasing of Scripture, is called the Church; at least the Church is named from that act.

If the term "Church" is understood as a teaching Church, or an externally calling Church, or a Church according to its pastoral existence, and insofar as it exercises certain pastoral acts through its external ministry—such as teaching the Word, admonishing the erring, correcting the scandalous, converting some to God, and administering the Sacraments, especially Baptism (which is considered valid and effective even when administered by the Roman Church)—then, in this manner, the Roman Church, as it is distinguished from the invisible assembly of the infirm believers who groan under the Papacy, but not reduplicatively as Papal, but in a concrete sense, is called a Church by Junius and some of our theologians. Neither would I altogether deny, in this sense, that the Roman Church is a Church.

For, as Junius states in the cited place, "What it possesses that is divine comes from God; what it possesses that is corrupt comes from itself: what it possesses that is divine makes it a Church; what it possesses that is corrupt makes it a corrupted Church."

Whittaker, in *Controversies*, 2, q. 3, c. 2, says: "For the Papists have certain things that pertain to the true Church—namely, Baptism (though not properly administered), the Scriptures, and some form of ministry." And Calvin, in his *Institutes*, book 4, chapter 4, section 11, states: "I call them Churches insofar as the remnants of His

people, however miserably scattered and dispersed, the Lord wonderfully preserves there; insofar as some Church symbols remain, and especially those whose efficacy neither the devil's cunning nor human wickedness can destroy."

In this way, the Roman Church is metaphysically a Church because it is a congregation that has the Word, even if it is hidden under a bushel (as Rivet says), and possesses the matrimonial documents and the seal of the covenant—Baptism—that is valid and effective. Therefore, the Roman Church is such a Church.

Argument for the Major Premise: In a congregation that retains nothing of the essence of the Church, such as a congregation of pagans, there is neither a matrimonial covenant nor its seal. But that congregation which retains something of the essence of the Church, according to ecclesiastical and pastoral existence, has what essentially distinguishes it from a congregation that has nothing of the Church at all.

It is true that our theologians, especially Whittaker (*Controversies*, 2, q. 6, c. 3), argue with various reasons that the Roman Church is not a true Church of Christ. However, it should be understood that the Roman assembly is to be considered in two ways: 1. As pastors. 2. As pastors who are specifically anti-Christian bishops, distinct in form from presbyters.

Argument for Minor Premise: A congregation in which there is the formal organ of active calling on the part of (for example, the Word and Sacraments) and in which there is passive calling (namely, people regenerated and born again to God through that organ) is metaphysically truly a Church according to its pastoral and ecclesiastical being. But the Roman Hierarchy or Curia is such a congregation.

1. Because they actively call through the Word, and through the Word sounding among them, some are born to God as His children. Therefore, the Curia itself, in this sense, is a Church.
2. This is confirmed because bishops and Pontifical teachers are capable of sinning against the Holy Spirit, which only falls upon those where there is an active calling and the Word of the Church.
3. It is further confirmed because unfaithful people who reject the foundation can still exercise truly pastoral acts; they can preach Christ (Phil. 1:15, 16, 17), they can truly administer the Sacraments, and pastorally exhibit the seals of grace and the covenant to the people.
4. Because the Word of God, however it may sound, and the Sacraments of God, however corrupted, as long as they remain the Word of God and Sacraments in essence, do not lose their efficacy, even if they are administered by the most impious instruments. Their efficacy comes not from the instruments but from God and divine institution.

To explain this more fully, it is to be noted:

1. Some promises are made to the Church only concerning true believers, such as: "The Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth," "I will be with you until the end of the age," and "I will give you a new heart." These are proposed to an assembly consisting of goats and sheep, but they are not made to the goats.
2. Some things are applicable to an assembly composed of both goats and sheep, concerning all and each of them, such as hearing the Word and receiving the Sacraments.

3. Some things also apply to the ungodly, which are nevertheless truly ecclesiastical, such as "Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven" (as Augustine notes in Psalm 61: "It is known that citizens of a wicked city administer certain acts of a good city").

Acts of preaching, administering Sacraments, binding, and loosing often pertain to the ungodly. These acts are valid, even ecclesiastically valid, in three respects:

1. Finally, in favor of and for the saving good of true believers, because God wills the Word, Sacraments, and Discipline to be in such a congregation solely for the sake of believers, not for the sake of impious pastors or those who reject the foundation.
2. They are valid by the virtual ecclesiastical consent of the believers, although they do not formally give their consent nor act there.
3. They are valid chiefly by virtue of divine institution, regardless of what kind of people the administrators are. Thus, the Papal Church, as a calling and acting entity, but with respect and relation to the believers hidden there, is rightly called a true Church in physical truth. Augustine in his *Enchiridion*, chapters 5 and 6, and against the Donatists, book 7, chapter 50: "The reprobate can be called the house of God due to external calling and profession, but they are not part of the structure of the house. Even if," as Gregory says in *Moralia*, book 28, chapter 9, "they seem to be within the limits of faith."

But it should be known that the term "external Church" is used in two ways:

1. Concerning the faith required in the true Church, and thus the Roman Curia is externally and in name only a Church, just as a painted man is called a man.
2. Externally, in relation to its ecclesiastical being: thus, the Roman Curia is not externally a Church but is essentially a Church by metaphysical truth.

This is also what we mean when we say that it is one thing for the Church to be speculatively true and another for it to be practically true.

In the former sense, the Roman Church is truly a Church because it transmits and teaches all the fundamentals from which saving faith and the practice of Christian life can be derived, even though it adds other things destructive of those fundamentals. Thus, speculatively, the Church is truly a Church by metaphysical truth, just as a sick man is truly a man. But it is not true by ethical truth; rather, it is impure and corrupt. However, this is a partial corruption that does not destroy the essence of the Church, just as a sick man does not lose the essence of being human due to his diseases. Likewise, the baptism of heretical and papist pastors is true by metaphysical truth, just as a person baptized by an adulterous and wicked minister is truly baptized. For baptism has its validity from the institution of Christ, not from the minister. As Augustine responded in book 2 against the letters of Petilian, chapter 108: "Thus, we approve baptism in heretics, not of heretics, but of Christ, just as in fornicators, idolaters, etc., we approve baptism, not theirs, but Christ's."

Thus, Balaam the false prophet, while prophesying orthodox doctrines about the Star of Jacob, that is, the Messiah, remained practically a false prophet. Similarly, the Roman Church is

practically not a true Church because it does not itself savingly believe the fundamentals it teaches.

This is similar to the distinction that logicians make between the "teaching logic" and the "using logic." For the Church is one thing as teaching, another as using. And if the Church is considered in its actual being and according to Christian being or its union with Christ the head through faith, then the Roman Church is no more a Church than a wooden or leaden hand is truly and essentially part of a living body.

Assertion 8: Hence, the question arises: Has Christ, the husband, given a bill of divorce to the Roman Church, just as He did to the Jewish Church? Answer: Christ has, in a legal sense, issued a bill of divorce, such that in the court of God she has ceased to be a wife and is now Babylon, the scarlet-clad harlot, with whom the marriage is fully dissolved, if we speak of the Papal assembly as such. But, in fact, God has not wholly given a bill of divorce; for she still possesses the matrimonial documents, the Word of God; she still holds the seals of the covenant and many fundamentals concerning the one true God and Christ and His natures.

2. There is a congregation of faithful people hidden among them.
3. There is still an active calling, for we (Protestants) call and pray through the Lord with voice, writings, and martyrdom that they may return to the Husband and to the Husband's house, forsaking idols and lovers. But because the pastoral office and function do not formally make a Church a teaching Church or a Church according to its pastoral being—just as an outward profession of marital consent constitutes a marriage, not a kiss or two; as is evident in Chaldea, where Jeremiah prophesied, according to that statement: "We would have healed Babylon,

but she is not healed," and there was an active calling there on the part of the prophet Jeremiah.

Likewise, Paul preached Christ at Athens, and yet neither the Chaldean nor the Athenian assembly is, therefore, a Church. And although there is in the Jewish Church the doctrine of the Old Testament, which implicitly is the whole Word of God and which they recognize as the Word of God, yet two things are missing which constitute a teaching Church or a Church according to its ecclesiastical and pastoral being, which are present in the Roman Church:

1. A virtual consent to marriage, so they can in no way or sense be called the bride of Christ, except improperly and as in the decree of God, because they are beloved for the sake of the fathers (Romans 11). For the Jews do not even outwardly profess the Messiah or the Son of Mary to be the Savior, which the Romans do.
2. They directly and explicitly oppose the cardinal principle and the only foundation of the Christian religion. For no one can lay any foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. They profess Christ to be an impostor and a false prophet. Yet, the doctrine concerning the person, natures, and office of Christ can be found in the Roman Church. Moreover, the active calling to the Christian religion as Christian has already ceased expressly and formally in the Jewish Church, as Paul says in Acts 13:46: "Since you reject the Word and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we turn to the Gentiles." Therefore, there is no longer an external call to Christianity among the Jews, except for the virtual and bare letter of the Old Testament; but there is an external calling in

the Roman Church, as stated before. Therefore, the essence of the teaching Church, or the Church according to its pastoral and ecclesiastical being, is preserved, which is not in the Jewish assembly.

Assertion 9: Therefore, salvation is in the Roman Church, and orthodox faith exists there, as in a seed.

1. Because there is the entire Word of God among them.
2. Because they teach many fundamentals, especially those that the Church taught before the Councils of Trent, Lateran, and Florence, from which sound faith can be derived; hence many are saved in the Roman Church.

But on these points, we depart from the Novators:

1. While they maintain that the Roman Church teaches errors, they claim these are not fundamental except reductively and improperly and that they overthrow the foundation. However, our theologians, Perkins, Pareus, and Whittaker, have proven that the Papal Church, as such, does not teach the doctrine of salvation but indeed subverts the fundamental principles of the Christian religion.
2. They assert that the controversies between us and the Romans are not fundamental and that neither their views nor ours overthrow the fundamentals, and that both could be held and defended without loss of faith or jeopardy of salvation. We, however, judge that the errors of the Papists are so formally fundamental, especially their idolatry, their pagan superstitions, and their blasphemies against the person and office of Christ,

that we consider that the Papist, as such, subverts the very foundation.

3. They maintain that repentance from Papist errors is not necessary in the same way as repentance from other errors about religion; because many have held dangerous opinions contrary to Holy Scripture, who nevertheless can be saved if they repent in general and confusedly, even if they are never imbued with the contrary truth. For if they hold the foundation, their errors, as hay and stubble, shall be burned, but they themselves, if repentant, shall be saved (1 Corinthians 3). But those who believe it is lawful to worship a creature and invoke the saints so ignore the fundamentals—namely, that God alone is to be worshipped—that unless they are imbued with the contrary truth and repent particularly of such things, they cannot be saved; just as God foretold through Zechariah that the Jews would repent of the piercing and crucifixion of Christ, so that they must necessarily repent in particular of that sin and be taught the contrary truth; thus, it is said, "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced," i.e., they shall see me with the knowledge of true saving faith (Zechariah 12:10). So it is necessary that a Papist who wishes to be saved repent of errors that are primarily fundamental, such as the worship of creatures and the divine graces and glory attributed to the Virgin Mary. For God explicitly excludes idolaters from the Kingdom of Heaven (1 Corinthians 6:10; Galatians 5:19-20), and repentance will require its recognition and abomination (Ezekiel 36:25, 31, 32; Isaiah 2:20).

Assertion 10: Therefore, our theologians rightly teach that the essential marks of the Church do not apply to the Roman Church. For, as Calvin says in the cited place, "Conversely, the marks that we

should especially consider in this dispute (about the Church) are erased there." For the preaching of the Word and the active calling through the Word of God is the mark of the Church in becoming and, as considered according to its ecclesiastical and pastoral being, because therein is the voice of the Bridegroom alluring the Virgin, even if it has not yet prevailed to obtain her consent by prayer. In this manner, the proclamation of the Word and the active calling by Protestants inviting the Romans to return to the Husband, and through the Word of God that is among them, is a mark of the Church. But the preaching of the Word with fruit is the mark of the Church considered according to its Christian being; according to John 10:27: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." This mark does not fit the Papal Church as it is contradistinguished from the congregation of the believing infirm in the Roman Church. The Church according to its ecclesiastical being, as distinct from the Church according to its Christian being, is less properly a Church. Therefore, simply and without addition and without applying distinction, the Roman Church is not to be called a Church.

Assertion 11: Even if the Roman Church were to teach all fundamentals as true in general, it is still not a true Church. Because when they are explained and understood according to its own sense, they are no longer the Word of God, but the word of the devil; not of Christ, but of Antichrist; not fundamentals of the Christian religion, but destructive of the fundamentals.

Assertion 12: We Protestants do not have (contrary to what Potter and others claim) a real union with the Roman Church in faith and charity.

1. Because our faith and theirs differ in their formal objects; for the Papists claim that the interpretation of their Church is the infallible testimony of the Holy Spirit, upon which their faith rests, while our faith relies solely on the Word of God as the Word of God.
2. The essence of faith is not preserved in that assembly which believes things that subvert the foundation. But the Roman Church believes such things.

1 Corinthians 2:14: "The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God: they are foolishness to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned."

Here, the Apostle teaches three things about the "natural man":

1. He denies actual knowledge of the things that belong to the Spirit of God.
2. He attributes to him the ignorance of a depraved disposition concerning these things, for they are "foolishness to him": his mind is hostilely disposed towards them.
3. He denies his ability to understand them.

Hence, the question arises whether the Arminians correctly teach in their Confession, section 14, and Apology, chapter 1, folio 33, and in Arminius's private disputation 8, thesis 4, that the Scriptures can be understood, in matters necessary for eternal salvation, by anyone, even the simplest, provided they possess the use of reason and common sense. And Episcopius, in disputation 5, thesis 3, says that no supernatural light or infused power is needed to elevate the mind to understand and believe the Scriptures. And likewise in their Apology, they deny the need for the light of the Spirit or spiritual evidence to understand the sense of the Scriptures, and on folio 29,

they assert that there is no need for the internal testimony of the Spirit to believe that the Scriptures are divine; for men believe before this testimony is given to them.

But we teach the contrary. Revelation, to me, is threefold:

1. Literal.
2. Literal in a grammatical sense.
3. Spiritual and supernatural.

The first belongs solely to God, who has devised the doctrine of the Law and the Gospel out of the treasure of His infinite wisdom. So perfect is this doctrine of Law and Gospel that no created wisdom could have discovered it. And although the doctrine of the Law is, in some way, natural to rational creatures, as is the rational soul itself, to discover it initially is the work of infinite wisdom, no less than the creation of the rational soul is the work of infinite wisdom and omnipotence. Literal revelation is the information and instruction about the literal and grammatical sense of the Word that has already been conceived, and this can be done by pastors and doctors of the Church, even among those who lack supernatural revelation. Pharisees, heretics, and profane teachers can both expound and understand the sense of Scripture, but this knowledge does not suffice for salvation.

There is another, supernatural revelation, which is indeed an unveiling and opening, not of a new sense of Scripture distinct from the grammatical and literal sense, as the Remonstrants babble (for the Scripture has only one genuine sense), but it is a spiritual opening and declaration of the literal sense, which flows from the supernaturally infused spirit of revelation, given to the faculty of understanding (Eph. 1:17; 2:9; Col. 1:9) and from the actual concurrent grace.

And thus, we teach that the Arminians err when they deny the necessity of the supernaturally infused light of the Holy Spirit for understanding the Scriptures sufficiently for salvation.

1. Because only the one who has the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:12, 13)—not the natural man—knows the things of the Spirit of God.
2. Because it would be in vain for Paul to pray for the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of the truth so that they may know what is the hope of Christ's calling and what is the wealth of the glory of His inheritance in the saints (Eph. 1:16-18) if this knowledge were acquired through grammatical and literal understanding alone. For, indeed, such a spirit would be needed to understand the works of Aristotle.
3. Because there would be no special privilege for Christ to send the Holy Spirit to the saints to teach them all things (John 14:26) and to give them that unction which teaches them all things. This action is clearly distinguished from the literal instruction we receive from pastors or human teachers (1 John 2:27): "But the anointing that you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need that anyone should teach you."
4. Because Christ would be thanking the Father in vain in Matthew 11:25-26 for literal information, for this was not withheld from the wise and prudent of this world; for otherwise, if they could not even grasp the doctrine of the cross with literal knowledge, they would not despise and disregard it. Therefore, Christ gives thanks to the Father for supernatural revelation.
5. Because Christ would falsely say in Matthew 16:17 that flesh and blood did not reveal to Peter that He was the Son of God, but only the heavenly Father, if the Holy Spirit were not needed to

perceive the Scriptures spiritually. For concerning literal revelation, it is revealed by flesh and blood, and literal knowledge is not lacking even among the Pharisees and all who stubbornly deny that Christ is the Son of God.

6. There would be no need to pray for Christ's salve (Rev. 3:18) and the opening of the eyes of the mind (Ps. 119:18). Nor would it be necessary for pastors and teachers to implore the light of the Holy Spirit to preach sacred sermons and teach publicly in schools. For sufficient revelation would be obtained through merely human instruction.
7. If there were no need for a supernaturally infused light in the faculty of understanding, but a mere clear proposition of truth sufficed, as the Synod Articles 3 and 4, page 164 say, to understand the Scriptures, then the natural man would be no more blinded in grasping the mysteries of the Kingdom of God than a novice student would be in understanding the Metaphysical and Logical disputations of Aristotle; and, similarly, to learn Aristotle's "Organon," the unction of Christ and the salve of the Holy Spirit, and the spirit of wisdom and revelation would be required. For in these, above all, there is a need for a clear proposition of truth.
8. Because all corruption in the will arises from the obscuring of the mind, and if this obscuration is not so great that it necessitates the supernaturally infused light of God, then the natural man will not only be able to grasp but also rightly discern, approve, will, and do the things of the Spirit of God. But the natural man is like one dead in sins and is unfit to understand, discern, approve, believe, or do any spiritual truth or good, just as a raw novice is dead and powerless to

understand, explain, and defend the first philosophy, whether natural or moral, of Aristotle.

9. According to this Arminian theology, Turks, Jews, Americans, and indeed everyone can understand and believe the Scriptures to be divine. There would be no need for the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit, if we believe the Remonstrants.
10. This doctrine is that of Ostorodius, the Socinian, who mocks the internal illumination of the Holy Spirit (Instit. lib. 1, cap. 5).

2 Corinthians 4:3:

"But if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing."

The question is raised: Do we Protestants, along with the Papists, defend the obscurity of Sacred Scripture by teaching that no one can understand it sufficiently for salvation without the internal light of the Holy Spirit?

The Remonstrants assert in their Apology (book 1, fol. 33; book 2, against Vedelius, chapter 2):

—We deny it.

1. Because the question between us and the Papists is about the literal and grammatical perspicuity of Scripture, not its supernatural perspicuity. We teach that the Scriptures are clear in themselves, but that the gospel is veiled to the blind and to those who are perishing, and that a veil remains over the heart of the Jews when reading the Old Testament (2 Corinthians 3:15).
2. Because the Remonstrants teach that the Scriptures are so clear that nothing is required for their internal and spiritual

understanding except the literal knowledge that is common even to demons, heretics, and those whose minds the god of this world, Satan, has blinded to prevent them from seeing the illumination of the glory of Christ (2 Corinthians 4:4). But we teach that the Scriptures are obscure to the blinded, reprobate, and to demons in the same way that the sun is dark to the blind, though it is in itself exceedingly clear and visible.

3. Because the Remonstrants falsely claim that we attribute two senses to Scripture: a literal and grammatical one, and a supernatural one superadded to it. This is entirely false. For, just as one sees the same sun differently, whether he is weak-sighted or sharp-sighted, we do not say there are two suns or two different visions of the sun. Rather, we hold that both believers and reprobates grasp one and the same sense of Scripture with natural understanding. However, believers, by a more eminent manner and with supernaturally infused power and the spirit of revelation, apprehend that same native sense of Scripture, which the reprobate never truly perceives. Therefore, we affirm two modes of seeing one and the same literal sense. Thus, the Word of God is clear and evident in itself to the believer, both by natural and supernatural evidence; but to the reprobate, it is evident by natural evidence, which we assert against the Papists, yet veiled and obscure by supernatural evidence, against the Arminians.

The Remonstrants argue in their work against Vedelius (book 2, chapter 10) that the Papists concede that the Word of God is not obscure to the illuminated, but clear. However, we respond: This is false. For they declare that it should not be read by any laypeople, even those truly regenerated, because due to its obscurity, it can lead

to heresies, and therefore, it should be explained only by the Church —that is, by the Pope, councils, and doctors.

Colossians 2:6-7:

"Walk in Him, rooted, built up, and established."

Hebrews 13:9:

"Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines."

The question is posed: Can a solid faith in the Scriptures coexist with the freedom to prophesy, where one may continually search for new interpretations of Scripture and perpetually doubt all controversies or what may be contested? The Remonstrants assert in their Apology, chapter 24, folio 275:

We deny it:

1. Because if this were the case, it would be necessary that we would always be carried about with new doctrines, which the Apostle forbids.
2. Because we must be rooted and established in the faith, and abound in all knowledge of Christ; we must not be driven about by every new wind.

The Remonstrants cite in defense of their freedom to prophesy the words of Paul in 1 Thessalonians 5:19-20: "Do not quench the Spirit; do not despise prophecies." From which they conclude that it should be permitted in the Church for anyone to teach that which he believes, by his own spirit of prophecy, to be the true sense of Scripture; and if anyone is hindered by the magistrate or by ecclesiastical discipline from teaching and spreading such prophecies, then, they argue, the Spirit's force is quenched and

prophecies are despised, as they interpret from 2 Thessalonians 2:2: "Do not be quickly shaken in mind or alarmed, either by a spirit or a spoken word," and from 1 John 4:1: "Do not believe every spirit."

But we assert that there are three types of liberty here:

1. One is pure science.
2. Another is conscience.
3. Another concerns profession or practice, both publicly and privately.

Liberty of pure science must be granted in all matters, in this sense, that the magistrate can compel no one to think this or that in matters of religion. This is God's prerogative alone. The magistrate may command the instruction of the mind by ministers and doctors but not enforce opinion.

2. The magistrate cannot justly deprive anyone of the liberty of conscience concerning right judgment about God; no king, tyrant, or any created power can compel or inhibit conscience.
3. But insofar as conscience manifests itself in the exercise of religious liberty, the magistrate may establish and defend the public profession and exercise of the Orthodox faith, prohibit the exercise of heterodox religion, and command subjects to hear the Word of God from the mouths of Orthodox doctors. This he may command primarily and, consequently, the correct understanding of God.

This is our view on the freedom to prophesy, but we condemn the Remonstrant license for prophecy.

1. Because, according to their view, the Holy Spirit would forbid the extinguishing of the spirit—that is, dreams and false imaginations—requiring us to respect fanatical and false interpretations of the Word, which is blasphemous.
2. Because the false prophet who sells his dreams as divine oracles should not be reproached but honored, and that by God's command ("Do not despise prophecy").
3. Because they want us to pray that God opens the eyes of our minds, teaches us His statutes, exhorts us to listen, pay attention, judge, and prove the Scriptures wisely and prudently, not as children but as adults in knowledge; so that we may inquire about new prophecies and new opinions in religion, abandoning those prophecies we formerly embraced. This means they want the Spirit of God to suggest to us a faith that is annual, monthly, or hourly. For the wisdom that is opposed to childishness is the fruit of the Spirit. Yet this spirit is the wisdom of God's Spirit, which today suggests that this is the true sense of controversial Scripture; yet that interpretation should be abandoned if the spirit of wisdom now suggests a new, opposing one. This is indeed the Remonstrant doctrine, that in all controversies, no one should be so certain in their faith that they are not prepared to believe a better interpretation (which they believe by their spirit of prophecy is true), unless they dare to oppose the true Spirit of prophecy, and thus to oppose God Himself, who is the true teacher; and thus, the Holy Spirit would suggest that contradictions are true, that is, this interpretation was true last year, but now its opposite is true.
4. Because if a person fluctuates in such a way concerning controversies, and if what is true is what everyone in his private

conscience believes to be true, it follows that the Scriptures are obscure and insufficient to decide controversies, and every controversy is reduced to a mistaken and errant dictate of conscience, and the judge of controversies is set as a dreaming spirit, not the Holy Spirit in the Word.

5. These controversies are either of useful or useless truth. If the first, we are left without an infallible standard for discerning all useful truth, which is injurious to the Holy Spirit and the Scriptures; if the second, then how could God have written so many useless things in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament and only four or five fundamental articles? This seems unworthy of God's wisdom.
6. It is lawful to doubt controversies and to incline to this or that opinion. But the Apology, chapter 24, folio 276, teaches that by controversies, they mean those which either are disputed or can be disputed. Yet it can be disputed no less whether there are three Gods, as there are three persons of the Deity; and it is disputed whether Christ is truly God, and the Tritheists have as much scriptural coloring as the Arians do; and whether the happiness of the glorified and the torments of the damned are eternal in the way circumcision is called eternal in the Old Testament; and whether the soul is not mortal, as Smalcius writes in his book on the errors of the Arians, chapter 14. And John Geisteranus, an Arminian, said he did not know whether souls after death were alive or dead, mortal or immortal.

Nor does their argument hold that fundamental things are not by nature such that they can be disputed; for there has never been a heretic who doubted whether thieves, drunkards, slanderers, or idolaters would inherit eternal life. But this is proved false by the

Antinomians or Libertines recently arisen in England, who argue from Scripture that the regenerate cannot sin, and that they can lie, get drunk, plunder, and shed innocent blood, yet remain united to Christ and be saved.

2. The Papists, idolaters, confidently hope they will inherit the kingdom of God, and indeed they hope this for themselves alone. And what is more controversial than what constitutes idolatry? What constitutes theft in terms of usury and restitution? Which is the fundamental article that cannot be disputed with as much rational color as the article on the perseverance of the saints, original sin, irresistible grace, the absolute decree of contingencies, divine predestination of the human will, and many other things that the Arminians call unnecessary controversies?

**To this question is closely related another:
Can anyone be saved in any religion?**

The Remonstrants must logically affirm this, as they teach against Vedelius (Book 1, Chapter 2):

1. Because they maintain that a church holding only the minimal doctrines necessary for salvation—even if it errs in everything else they call "controversial"—is still a true church. But those who are in a true church can be saved.
2. Because if Arians, Socinians, Papists, Anti-Trinitarians, Sabellians, Tritheists believe the essentials, and hold their heresies merely out of simple error of mind, they can, according to them, be saved. For to them, heresy is innocence and piety. But indeed, most of them believe all that is necessary for salvation. Therefore, in any such sect, there will be salvation.

Indeed, who would deny that among the Jews, who acknowledge the Old Testament as the true Word of God, there are many who, through a simple error of mind derived from a corrupt education, believe that the Son of Mary was an impostor and a false prophet? And they believe the whole Word of God, albeit more obscurely.

Not without reason is it asked:

Is the Arminian freedom of prophesying not Libertinism and Atheism?

The Remonstrants deny this against Vedelius (Book 1, Chapter 1).
But we prove it:

1. Because it is Libertinism and Atheism to teach that a person is obliged to believe a sense of Scripture that is contrary to it, because his own conscience dictates that it is true. For a Libertine would thus be obliged to believe that the regenerate cannot sin, that they are subject to no law, that it is lawful for them to fornicate, commit adultery, or shed innocent blood, according to 1 John 3:9, because "Christ is our sanctification." But this is taught first by the Remonstrants.
2. An atheist and a Libertine is one who believes his erroneous conscience is his guide, and not the Word of God.
3. An atheist and a Libertine is one who thinks he is not bound in conscience to follow the true sense of God's Word because his conscience dictates another, more truthful sense to him.
4. He is an atheist and a Libertine who believes he is not subject in his conscience to any censure, whether civil or ecclesiastical, to any determination, confession, or form of concord, whether of

the Church or of a Synod, even if established according to the Word of God. And he thinks this belief is innocence and openly defends it as piety. This is what the Remonstrants believe.

5. He is an atheist and a Libertine who believes he can be an Arian, Anti-Trinitarian, Socinian, or whatever his conscience dictates, and that he can wander through all the impure sects, because his conscience tells him they hold the fundamentals.
6. He is an atheist and a Libertine who believes he can dissemble the truth which he believes to be divine, and can tolerate false and erroneous opinions about God in others, even those who conceive that God is like wood, stone, or four-footed beasts; provided they believe this merely through a simple error of mind, and are otherwise good and honest men. This is what the Remonstrants believe.
7. He is an atheist and a Libertine who thinks the freedom of prophesying can extend not only to things already disputed but also to those that can be disputed. But the Remonstrants respond, in Book 2 against Vedelius, Chapter 10, that necessary doctrines are not by their nature controversial, but those are controversial which are not clearly and plainly defined in the Word of God. Yet many raise questions about those things that are clearly defined in the Word of God. For that "Christ is *εναρτητος*; that there are three Persons in the Godhead, and one God; that men are justified by faith alone, apart from works," are clearly and plainly defined for us in the Word. But these are not clearly defined in the Word for Arians, Socinians, Arminians, Anti-Trinitarians, and Papists. 2. Serious controversies arise over things that are in Scripture, such as

these: "This is My body"; likewise, "the heavens must contain Christ until the time of the restoration of all things."

8. Atheists and Libertines are those who teach that no mortal, when it comes to eternal salvation, can voluntarily and deliberately hold heresies or false opinions about God, and therefore they do not commit a crime worthy of punishment; against Vedelius (Book 2, Chapter 8), who sacrifices children to Molech, who blasphemes God; that the Jews who believe the Son of Mary is an impostor do not sin because (ibid.) "a crime is not committed unless one knows that what he is doing is a crime and worthy of punishment." Yet many Jews are ignorant that it is a crime to sacrifice children to Molech, or to call the Son of Mary an impostor. Paul, too, thus sinning out of ignorance when he was a Pharisee, was not considered a sinner.

2 Timothy 3:16-17:

"All Scripture is divinely inspired, and is profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly equipped for every good work."

From this, it is clear that the Scriptures are so full and perfect that not only the traditions of the Papists but also all human ceremonies and whatever is positively observed, invented by Antichrist or by false prophets in divine worship, all this conflicts with the plenitude of the Scriptures. You may say, reader, that the Arminians do not sin in this matter. But I say they sin shamefully here, and with a bad conscience, as I believe, to ingratiate themselves with the Anglican bishops who now hold sway (although the Arminians in England deliberately defend this error against the perfection of the Scriptures), because they teach in their Apology (chapter 21, folio 292) that the government of the Church by Presbyters and Elders is

not illicit and damnable, but was not instituted by the Apostles. They say it is presumption to condemn the ranks of Deacons, Archdeacons, Presbyters, Archpresbyters, Bishops, Archbishops; yet they do not dare assert these are of divine right or Apostolic institution. Likewise, they contend that Paedobaptism is not illicit, and yet has no foundation in the Word of God. Whence they hold that ministers in the Church are licit; and that some things are licit, though they have no foundation in the Word of God, which derogates from the perfection of the Scriptures.

Hence, against the Arminians, whether in Belgium or in England, we defend this thesis:

All new offices, such as the false episcopacy; all sacred rites, and positive ceremonies of observance; all mystical signs, such as the surplice, the square cap, feast days, and the other profane trifles and follies of Antichrist; these are illicit and to be condemned, because they have no foundation in the Word of God.

1. For here stands the firm negative argument from the authority of Scripture: "This is not in the Scriptures. Therefore, it is illicit," as in Acts 15:24: "The apostles gave no such command. Therefore, you should not be circumcised." Hebrews 1:13: "To which of the angels did God ever say, 'Sit at my right hand'?" Therefore, it is not lawful to attribute this to the angels. Hebrews 7:14: "Moses spoke nothing about anyone from the tribe of Judah serving at the altar." Therefore, it is unlawful for anyone from that tribe to be a minister of the altar. The fire of Nadab is illicit (Leviticus 10:1). Why? Because God did not command it. Likewise, Jeremiah 7:31, 9:14, and 32:35: "The high places of Baal, and the sacrificing of children to Molech, are not commanded by God, nor did it ever enter the heart of God to

command them." Therefore, they are illicit. 2 Samuel 7:7: "Wherever I have walked with the children of Israel, did I speak a word to any of the rulers of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, 'Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?'" Therefore, the building of the Temple by David was not lawful. Similarly, Jehovah would say, "I have said nothing in My Word about bishops who usurp authority and jurisdiction over presbyters, nothing about the sign of the cross, nothing about the surplice, nothing about feast days, nothing about archdeacons, archpresbyters, or archbishops; nor did I ever command My pastors to serve Me in these things. Therefore, all these are illicit." Furthermore, of the same order is this argument: "This is of human institution in God's worship. Therefore, it is illicit," as in 1 Kings 12:32-33: Jeroboam's feast day is illicit. Why? Because it was on a day and month devised in his own heart. Likewise, Jeremiah 18:12: "According to the imaginations of their own hearts." Therefore, they are vain. Acts 7:43: "The figures you made." Therefore, they are abominable. Hosea 10:6 and 13:2: "Idols of silver, according to their own understanding." Therefore, they are vain. Thus Zanchius gravely comments, "We gather from this that all worship not derived from God, His will, His Word, and Law, but conceived by ourselves and other men, without God's Word, is condemned."

For if there is anything in the Church about which the Lord could say, as He does here through the Prophet, "This is not from Me, but from Israel, but from men," that thing is disapproved by God.

As Jeremiah 18:12 says, "We will follow our own thoughts."

Isaiah 50:11 states, "Walk in the light of your own fire, and in the sparks that you have kindled."

Psalm 106:39 declares, "They were defiled by their own works and went whoring with their own deeds."

Objection 1. They reply that this argument holds in regard to worship considered necessary according to the opinion of the worshipper, as in the case of the high places of Baal and the calves of Jeroboam; but not in accidental worship, such as the sign of the cross and the surplice, which we hold as indifferent ornaments of divine worship, without any necessity or any opinion that they constitute necessary worship; for they do not bind the conscience.

Response 1. The argument of God in the Scriptures is not derived from the adjunct of worship or its necessity, but from its efficient cause; thus: "This lacks the proper efficient cause, namely, God as the author. Therefore, it is unlawful." Scripture does not say: "This does not have God as the author and is regarded as obligatory worship. Therefore, it is unlawful." Thus, to make the argument of the Holy Spirit rest upon such a basis is to distort it, for it relies upon the fact that the will of the Lawgiver is the formal basis of legality in everything that is commanded. For example, the reason why eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge is unlawful is the prohibiting will of God; and the reason why Abraham could lawfully sacrifice Isaac was the commanding will of God. And if God had commanded eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge, it would have been lawful. Whatever our opinion of the necessity or indifference of the thing commanded, only God's commanding will makes a thing lawful, and His prohibiting will makes a thing unlawful.

2. The conclusion of God would then be in vain, as follows: "The calf is not from God; therefore, it is unlawful. The feast day of Jeroboam is not from God, but from Jeroboam's heart; therefore, it is unlawful." For if the calf and those feast days

were considered indifferent and as things not binding the conscience, they would be lawful. By the same reasoning, the Ark under the New Testament, circumcision, sacrifices, abstinence from certain foods, and all Mosaic worship would be lawful, provided that we used them as worship not binding the conscience.

3. Nor did Jeroboam believe that the worship of the calf was binding upon consciences, for he instituted it only to preserve the kingdom. Yet, Jeroboam, worshiping the calves, was an idolater because his calves were not commanded by God, even though he considered their worship to be not religious but only a matter of political necessity.

Objection 2. It suffices that ceremonies are conformable to the Word of God in general; therefore, they are lawful in this way. It is not required that they be in the Word of God in particular. This consequence is sufficient: "Let all things be done decently and in order; therefore, ceremonies are lawful."

Response 1. If by "general foundation in the Word" they mean a major premise in the Word without a minor premise, then I will demonstrate that worshiping the Devil is lawful, thus: "All worship commanded by God in His Word is lawful. But the worship of the Devil is worship commanded by God in His Word. Therefore, it is lawful." The major premise is most certain, but I can answer the minor. But if they mean that ceremonies are conformable to the Word of God, they say nothing; for in the same way, the worship of the Devil is conformable to the Word of God. But if ceremonies are conformable to the Word of God because they have both the major and minor premises in the Word of God, oh, how we long to hear

such a syllogism! But such a syllogism is a castle in the air, a goat-stag.

2. If, then, the entire foundation of ceremonies lies in this sequence: "Let all things be done decently and in order; therefore, the surplice, the sign of the cross, feast days, etc., are lawful," this sequence can either be proved by the Word of God or not. If the former, we request to hear the proof. If the sequence can be proved by natural reason, then also by the Word of God, because the light of reason is contained in the Word of God as a part within the whole; and thus the Word of God will still prove the sequence. But if the sequence is proved by natural reason alone, which is not in the Word of God, how we long to hear such an invincible demonstration! If, however, the sequence is proved solely by the will of the rulers, then this sequence is valid: "Let all things be done decently and in order; therefore, let the calf of Aaron be worshiped in the temple, provided it seems fitting to the rulers." The goodness of the sequence stands indivisibly; therefore, it is either a good sequence or it is not. There is no mixed truth in the sequence that partly depends on reason and partly on the will of men.

But the adversaries say that your circumstances are no more approved in the Word of God than our ceremonies. Therefore, I add:

2. Of any action according to its specific moral difference, it may be said, καθὼς γέγραπται (as it is written), that it is determined in the Word, either expressly or by good consequence, even if not all circumstances of place, time, or person are expressed in the Word. But of all our moral actions, which are lawful, whether they pertain to faith or morals, whether to the first or second

table, it may be said, καθώς γέγραπται, even if not all circumstances are expressed in the Word.

Therefore, all our moral actions are determined by the Word, even if their circumstances are not in the Word.

The Major is proved:

1. Because the action of Joseph and Mary offering turtledoves and pigeons for their son Christ, as it is written (καθώς γέγραπται), Luke 2:23, nevertheless the Law in Exodus 13:1-2, 13-14; Numbers 3:11-12, 13; and 8:16-17, says nothing about the circumstances concerning Joseph, Mary, the priest, the doves, or the hour of the offering. Likewise, in the second table, the deed of Amaziah, who did not kill the sons for the sin of the father, that deed (I say) was one of mercy and justice, as it is written in the Book of the Law of Moses, 2 Kings 14:6. Yet the Law in Deuteronomy 24:16 says nothing about Amaziah, about that particular deed, or the sons whose lives were spared. Therefore, these actions themselves are determined by the Word, even if it is not spoken in the Word concerning the circumstances, so that it can be said of them that they were done "as it is written." Similarly, Zacharias and Elizabeth walked in all the commandments of the Lord, Luke 1:6, yet their particular actions, their names, place, and time, are not found in the Word.

But it cannot be said of ceremonies that they were thus done "as it is written." Thus, the public confession of those who are in public scandal, in the place of the church where their confession can be more easily heard by the people, is "as it is written" (καθώς γέγραπται), even if the Word says nothing of a penitential chair. Thus, a public sermon in a place where the whole congregation can hear the Word is "according to what is written," 2 Timothy 4:1-2,

Titus 2:1, even if the name of the preacher, John, Thomas, the specific congregation, the pulpit, the context, or the day and hour of preaching are not expressed in the Word.

I prove the assumption: If the Word is the rule that directly guides the actions of a young man, as in Psalm 119:9, if it is a lamp to his feet, verse 105, and if the wisdom of God makes it so that we understand righteousness and justice and whatever is right, and every good path, Proverbs 2:9, and causes us to walk safely on our way and not stumble, Proverbs 3:23, and if the words of God teach the way of wisdom and lead us along the paths of uprightness so that we do not turn away from our path when walking, and do not stumble when running, Proverbs 4:10-12, then the Word thus determines all our actions, whether pertaining to the first table (such as whether pastors should wear a surplice to signify pastoral purity, whether infants should be marked with the sign of the cross, etc.) or to the second table, so that all can be said to have been done "as it is written" (καθώς γέγραπται), as it is written. But the Scripture affirms the former; therefore, the latter also follows.

But indeed, of all our acts of worshiping God, preaching, singing, praying, reading, administering the sacraments, it can be said that they are done "according to the written Word of God." But of ceremonial acts, this cannot be said.

This I demonstrate through the following diagram, and first, I classify the Acts of Divine Worship:

1. Worship of God "as it is written."
2. Sacramental Worship, or the administration of the Sacrament "as it is written."
3. Participation in the Holy Supper "as it is written."

4. Participation in the Holy Supper by John, Mary, "as it is written," 1 Corinthians 11:23, Matthew 26:26, etc.

Likewise, concerning the Ministers of the New Testament, in this manner:

1. The lawful Minister of the New Testament, "as it is written."
2. A Presbyter preaching the Word of God, or a Pastor, "as it is written."
3. Archippus, Thomas, John, Pastors, "as it is written."

Thus, in Ecclesiastical Discipline, in the following manner:

1. The acts of Christ as King in the Church, "as it is written."
2. The acts of Discipline, "as it is written."
3. The acts of Ecclesiastical censure and the exercise of the keys, "as it is written."
4. The disciplinary acts of the Corinthian Church excommunicating the incestuous man, "as it is written," 1 Corinthians 5:4.

Likewise, concerning the acts of the second table, in the following manner:

1. Love towards the saints, "as it is written."
2. Acts of charity towards the afflicted, "as it is written."
3. Acts of charity, such as alms distributed to poor saints, "as it is written."
4. The act of charity by the Corinthian Church, giving to the poor saints in Jerusalem, "as it is written," 1 Corinthians 16:1-3.

If a moral action is proved in its ultimate specific degree, and according to its individual existence, as here demonstrated, all subordinate and supreme degrees are also proved. For example, if I

prove this thing to be Peter, by the same argument I prove it to be a human, an animal, a body, a living being, and a substance. But I do not immediately prove that because I prove this to be a substance or a body, it is therefore Peter. For a conclusion drawn from higher categories in the same classification is valid, but not the reverse.

Now, if we apply this clear truth to the doctrine of the adversaries concerning Ceremonies, it will immediately appear that they have written an epitaph for the Scriptures. Let this be the Ceremonial Category:

1. Order and decorum, "as it is written," 1 Corinthians 14:40.
2. Indicative and solemn signs, such as the veiling of women, "as it is written."
3. Humanly instituted ceremonies, "as it is written."
4. Mystical or symbolic sacred signs instituted by men — "Not written."
5. Surplice, sign of the cross, square cap — "Not written."
6. Surplice worn by Thomas, the signing of this infant at this place and time, by one whose hope is fixed solely on a fat bishopric — "Not written," except in the Papal Code.

You see here that our "as it is written" is lacking four times. Hence it is vain for the adversaries to claim that their ceremonies conform to Holy Scripture in a general sense. Indeed, this conformity is an empty hope for the reader. And it is much more futile what they say, that the ceremonies are in this manner conformable to the Scriptures as all our moral actions, both of the first and the second table. Why, then, are all the degrees in their Categorical Scale, especially the last and specific one, not proved by this standard (because "as it is written") as we contend that all lawful actions ought to be proved?

Objection 1. Hooker, "Of the Discipline," Book 2, p. 55, 56, 57: If wisdom teaches every good path, then Scripture will teach all arts and sciences: for these are good paths. But how ridiculous it is to prove all acts of arts and sciences — plowing, dancing, singing, constructing mathematical demonstrations, speaking Latin — to be lawful by this (because "as it is written in the Word of God"). Is it not sufficient that such acts are negatively lawful, that is, not unlawful, nor against the Word of God, since they are neither commanded nor forbidden by the Word?

Response 1. There is nothing against us in that certain acts of arts and sciences are not taught by the Word. For, 1. Certain actions belong to man insofar as he is a living being and acts. 2. Some actions pertain to man as an animal. 3. Some actions belong to man as such, as one who is subject to the Law, and as he is a moral agent.

Actions of the first kind include growing, breathing, feeling, hearing, etc. Such actions are not regulated by the Word of God, for in these, the distinction between lawful and unlawful has no place.

Actions of the second kind are eating, drinking, sleeping. These actions have two aspects. 1. As they are animal actions, they are natural in themselves and are not regulable by the Word of God. But 2. As they are in a Christian man, who ought to be governed by the Word and Spirit of God, they are doubly regulated by the Word. 1. According to the substance of the act in general: for the Law of Nature, which is part of the Divine Word, commands man to eat, drink, sleep; and to abstain entirely from these would be to commit suicide and offend against the Law of God. 2. Then, even in moderation, they are regulated by the Word; therefore, one should eat, drink, and sleep sparingly and soberly, according to God's Word, Ecclesiastes 2:24; 3:12-13; Luke 21:34; 1 Thessalonians 5:6-7.

Actions of the third kind are those which belong to man as a human, either as an artificial agent or as a scientific agent. And these actions, as such, are referred to the principles of Arts and Sciences and to the ends of intellectual virtues, as such: as to plow according to the rules of agriculture, to sing according to the precepts of music; to speak Latin according to the rules of Despauterius; to construct geographical, geometrical, astronomical demonstrations according to the Elements of Euclid. And such as these, as they are not moral and do not proceed from man as a moral agent but as an artificial or scientific agent, are not regulable by the Word. For Scripture certainly does not teach us every good path in this way, nor does it deliver precepts of Arts and Sciences; and Hooker errs in objecting in this way, since our thesis is chiefly about actions of the fourth kind, which pertain to man as a moral agent and subject to the Kingdom of Christ, in relation to the ultimate end, such as worshipping God in this or that manner, in these Aaronic garments or other symbolic ones; all ritual actions in the sacraments; hearing the Word, relieving the poor, honoring the King. The common principle of these actions is Conscience, which must be informed and actuated by theological habits, Faith, Hope, and Charity. And concerning these, our thesis is very poorly understood by Hooker. And Conscience has some influence even on the actions of arts and sciences, not indeed as they are such and flow from intellectual habits in man, but as they are (so to speak) moralized, or (if grammarians would allow) theologized, and contracted to moral being through conscience. Thus, the actions of arts and sciences, not indeed according to their artificial and scientific being, but according to their moral or spiritual and theological being, are regulated by the Word of God; e.g., that I should speak Latin elegantly, I do not consult the Scriptures but Despauterius' Grammar; that I should construct mathematical demonstrations, I do not consult the Apostle Paul, but Euclid. But indeed, that I should refer the Arts and Sciences to the glory of God,

and not to base gain or empty glory; that while speaking Latin, I should not lie; while making mathematical demonstrations, I should not defend any false conclusions, contrary to the light of conscience. Here, the actions are moralized and must necessarily be regulated by the Word of God.

Objection 2. Wisdom does not teach us every good path through Scripture alone, but through Scripture, it shows us some good paths; others through spiritual influence; some through experience; others through the senses: as it taught Thomas, the Resurrection of Christ; and the Jews, through miracles.

Response: This is no argument against us. For God teaches every moral good through the Scriptures. We do not say that He teaches men solely through the Scriptures and by no other means. He teaches fools through chastisements; but it does not follow from this that the Scriptures are not sufficient to teach us all moral good. And in citing the example of Thomas the Apostle, he stumbles miserably, as he does with the Jews, who were taught through miracles. Were not the Scriptures in themselves sufficient to instruct both Thomas about the Resurrection of Christ and the Jews, apart from all miracles? As if more means could detract from the sufficiency of the Scriptures? But neither Thomas's senses nor miracles, but solely the Word of God, was the formal means of faith for both Thomas and the Jews.

2. Let him show us by what means God instructs us concerning the surplice, the sign of the cross, or feast days. Not by Scripture, as is evident from the fact that Hooker accuses the Scriptures of imperfection, and therefore resorts to other means. But are ceremonies made legitimate religious rites by sense, sight, or hearing? Do they merely amuse the onlookers? By experience,

then? Therefore, still by the senses. By spiritual influence? Then the Holy Spirit teaches ceremonies. In what school? Is it in the arts and sciences? Nothing of the kind. Certainly, we are instructed about ceremonies solely by the superstitious will of bishops.

Objection 3. Hooker, *ibid.*: "When many dishes are set before me on the table, it is indifferent to me which I choose to eat. I choose these, not because Scripture says that these are superior to those (for then they would not all be indifferent to me), but because this is what pleases my discretion."

Response: 1. Eating is a mixed action in man; partly natural, as he is a natural agent driven by appetite, and our thesis is not concerned with such acts. And partly it is an ethical and moral action; and thus, to eat foods harmful to health or conducive to generating gallstones is against the sixth commandment of the Decalogue. 2. And even if the Word did not provide light for us who are ignorant of which foods are healthy, it does not follow that in sacred ceremonies and the worship of God, which is purely a moral action, the Word of God leaves us in darkness.

Objection 4. Parents and masters command children and servants things that are sins; and they would not be obligated to obey unless they had some reason from the Scriptures. But masters, under the seal of silence (says Robert Sanderson, in his sermon in English on Romans 14:23), often find it necessary to command servants about matters whose equity is not for them to inquire.

Response: 1. Brothers, are you angry with Paul, who commands servants and children to obey their superiors "in the Lord" only? Ephesians 6:1; Colossians 3:20, 22-24. 2. When parents and masters command artificial, economic, or scientific actions, the matter is

outside the scope of the question. But when they command moral actions, in which either God is offended or obeyed, it is necessary that even in the most secret things, they should know only as much as concerns their consciences in practice.

Objection 5. Sanderson, who borrows everything in this matter from Hooker, argues thus: "Many matters arise daily in our callings, about which finding testimony in the Scriptures would cause trouble even for the most experienced theologians; these would hinder the works of our calling and lead consciences to despair."

Response: 1. This vexation torments few consciences; for the ignorance of men who cannot see the reasons for legality and expedience in their actions should not obstruct the fullness of the Scriptures. 2. Those who acknowledge God in all their ways and consult the sacred oracles even in the smallest matters, in the fear of the Lord, will have sufficient light in all things.

It is certain that the Scripture is as precise a rule for justice and mercy towards our neighbor as it is for religion toward God.

1. For although there seems to be greater obscurity in civil matters, as in all human positive and political laws, nevertheless, human will is no more a rule of justice and equity than it is of religion. For if it depended on the authority of men to determine what is lawful, fair, and just in political laws, contracts, or military stratagems, this would be absurd.
2. Therefore, Scripture is the perfect standard of religion because only the will of God, the Lawgiver, and not that of men, formally constitutes something as lawful and pious in religion. But this same reasoning holds in the actions of the second table, for it is

the will of God, not Abraham, that makes the act of sacrificing one's son a just act.

3. Because "ἑθελόπραξις" (self-willed action) is as illicit as "ἑθελοθρησκεία" (self-imposed worship).

Objection 6. Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, who lived before the written Word, had revelations instead of the Word; they could neither laugh, eat, drink, walk, nor speak except through revelations made from heaven if men ought not to dare any actions without reason from the Word of God. For what is to us the written Word was to them a revelation.

Response: The light of natural reason, which is contained in the Word as a part in the whole, made their natural actions lawful.

Objection 7. If it is necessary that all particular actions conform to the written Word, what shall be done about the Indians? For they have no written Word. Has God left them without a law, without a rule of living? Where there is no law, there is no transgression. If it must be said that they sin, then they have been given a law. But this is the Law of Nature, not the written Word.

Response: Who would endure a neighing horse rather than a theologian arguing? For the Law of Nature to them is in place of the written Word; indeed, it is a part and principle of the written Word. We do not wish the written Word to be the norm of all human actions simply because it is written, but because it is just. Nor does the written Word oblige the Indians, since it has not been revealed to them.

Objection 8. The Word of God is as perfect in the acts of the second table as in those of the first; nor is it more capable of addition in one

than in the other. But in the acts of the second table, we cannot always provide reasons for actions from the Word; for then all human laws and the laws of military discipline ought to be proved from the Word of God. This, however, is impossible. Therefore, in the acts of the first table, the Word is not absolute in this way. No obedience could be rendered to rulers or commanders in war unless all laws were syllogistically derived from the Word of God.

Response: 1. There are two aspects in human laws. One is moral; the other is not moral in itself, but only "κατ' λόγον" (according to reason), as it serves as a means of order, justice, peace, and the avoidance of murder and confusion; for example, carrying weapons at night in the city. In these cases, subjects are mixed agents, partly moral, partly political, or (if a more fitting term were available) positive agents, who often act according to art, as in war, where there is a law that whoever is in charge of the watch should whisper such a word to the Prefect of the city; and the law that whoever is granted rights to lands should take a clod and stone in hand. These acts, in themselves indifferent and as such, are not moral nor regulable by the Law of God. It suffices that these acts conform negatively to the Word of God, that is, that they are not contrary to the Word of God. Therefore, subjects, regarding the morality of actions, cannot obey laws unless they know they are just and in agreement with the Word of God.

As for what is merely humanly positive in these matters, whether artificial or economic (I labor here under a scarcity of words), subjects are agents by art and custom, not moral agents; and therefore, it is not necessary that they should have reasons for their actions from the Word of God.

Objection 9. Thus, decency in the worship of God is moral and expressly commanded by the Word of God. But that this decency should be expressed by a surplice, by the sign of the cross, or by feast days is indifferent and depends on the discretion of the Church. Therefore, in the Church, there are mixed agents here; and thus it is not necessary that the use of the surplice or the sign of the cross be proved as lawful by the Word of God. It suffices that they conform to the Word of God negatively, that is, not being contrary to it.

Response: 1. There is in no way parity of reason here and in those other matters. For the physical use of the surplice, that is, to fit it to the arm and shoulders by a tailor, is not what we object to; but the ethical, theological, moral, indeed sacred and religious use of it is what we object to, since it cannot be proven from the Scriptures. For it is not according to human discretion what is decent or indecent in the worship of God.

There are indeed two kinds of Decency in the worship of God. One is natural or civil; and this is merely negative: namely, it requires that nothing in the worship of God be done contrary to good morals or to decorum. This kind of Decency does not depend on the will of men but on custom and nature; nor can any human authority determine what is decent or not decent in this way. Thus, the surplice and the sign of the cross are not matters of Decency in this sense.

The other kind is spiritual and religious Decency in the worship of God. This comes solely from the will of God; for eating and drinking in the Church are, by that very fact, decent and proper because Christ has instituted such actions; and bread is a fitting symbolic element of Christ's body over other foods, not for any other reason but because Christ instituted it. If men were to institute beef, lamb, milk, and eggs as sacramental symbols, they would not be signs of the body

and blood of Christ; much less could they be as decent symbols as bread and wine. Ceremonies are symbolic rites and symbols signifying divine things; for instance, the day of the Nativity is a sign commemorating Christ's Nativity; the surplice is a symbol of pastoral sanctity. These, then, if they are decent (if they are indeed decent), possess a sacred and religious Decency. But whence does this Decency come? No created will can confer religious Decency upon things. Therefore, it is necessary that they prove to us that these Ceremonies are decent by their nature and religiously and positively in the worship of God, and that this proof be drawn from Sacred Scripture. For it does not suffice that they are merely decent and lawful negatively, not contrary to the Word of God, for thus eggs, milk, and butter are negatively conformable to the Holy Supper; they do not contradict the nature of the Supper.

To these, I add the words of Paul in Romans 14:23, "Whatever is not from faith," that is, from a firm persuasion and πληροφορία, as Paul explains in verse 5, by which I know that what I do is in conformity with God's Word, "cannot be done without sin." But since it is not evident that Ceremonies conform to the Word of God, therefore, to use them is sin.

Robert Sanderson responds in his English sermon: "Whatever is not from faith is sin" is true in substantial matters of Divine worship and in the exercise of spiritual and supernatural grace, whether in beliefs or deeds under the necessity of salvation. Hence, we detest all traditions and additions to supplement the deficiency of Holy Scripture against the Papists. But it does not apply to all the actions of human life, even in the picking up of a straw.

Response: Neither do we insist on this text in actions performed solely by imagination preceding the act of reason, such as picking up

a straw or stroking one's beard. But we do insist on it in all moral actions, in all our steps, as Solomon distinctly says in Proverbs 2:9, 5:23, 4:10-12. For in all moral actions, whether eating, drinking, speaking, or walking ten miles to accompany a friend, or doing this or that at the command of masters and parents, it may happen that we stumble and our feet may be offended, as the Wise Man speaks, while we do these trivial actions contrary to God's Word. Therefore, we need a lamp for our feet here.

2. Sanderson is grossly mistaken in claiming that the Word is perfect in matters of belief and in actions necessary for salvation but is lacking in regulating the actions of daily life. For this is to affirm that the Word is perfect and not perfect at the same time.
3. The Papists teach that most of their additions are not necessary for salvation. Indeed, the great Suarez states (*De Tripl. Virt. Theol. Tract. 1, Disp. 2, Sect. 6, Fig. 3*), that the faith regarding the substance of what is to be believed has always remained the same from the beginning of the human race until now. Vasquez also responds (*Tom. 2, in 1.2. Disp. 154, Ch. 3*) that the Pope, whether outside a General Council or within it, cannot decree anything concerning faith that is not contained in the principles and articles revealed, nor can new articles or doctrines, in substance, be minted by the Pope or the entire Church, nor can a new Sacrament be instituted. Scotus adds (*Proleg. in Sentent. Q. 3, Art. 3*), "Our theology, in fact, deals only with those things contained in Scripture, and those things that can be elicited from it."
4. If we can sin in these matters of daily life, as no sane person denies, then such actions are encompassed within what must be done under the necessity of salvation.

Sanderson responds again, in the same work: Faith as certain as Logical Faith does not pertain to these matters of daily life and things indifferent; Ethical and conjectural Faith suffices. Indeed, nothing more is needed here than Negative Faith, that is, that we know these things are not contrary to the Law of Nature or Scripture, and therefore not prohibited. Hence, there are two kinds of lawful actions: some positively conform to the Word of God and can be syllogistically proven to be just from God's Word. Others conform to the Word of God negatively, that is, they are not contrary, as they are neither commanded nor prohibited by the Word of God. In this way, according to their judgment, Ceremonies are conformable to the Word of God.

But this distinction applies only to purely natural actions, such as hearing sounds or seeing colors, and to the actions of Art and Sciences, like composing a syllogism in *Barbara*; these are neither commanded nor prohibited by the Word of God. However, in religious ceremonies, such as wearing a surplice, making the sign of the cross, or in actions that are commanded or prohibited by the rulers of the State and Church, it is absurd and profane.

1. For what is good and lawful *negatively* is neither good nor evil. But the ceremonies and what is commanded by rulers are good; what is forbidden is evil. Therefore, ceremonies and what is commanded by rulers cannot be negatively good and lawful. The major is evident because whatever is lawful to do and commanded is good, for rulers cannot command others to do what they themselves cannot embrace in their own will. But rulers cannot embrace anything in their will that is neither good nor evil, for what is neither good nor evil is not the object of any will. Nor can ceremonies be commanded if they are not good and conducive to edification.

"Whatever is not from faith is sin" cannot be understood to mean that everything not from logical and conjectural certainty is sin. For:

1. If that were so, many acts committed in ignorance would be sins.
2. If something is lawful merely because it is negatively lawful, then our moral actions would be from faith in the same way that composing a syllogism in *Barbara* would be from faith, which is absurd.
3. If rulers can command something that is negatively lawful, they could command everything that is negatively lawful. But the latter is absurd; therefore, the former is also absurd. The reason for the major premise is that if they command because it is negatively lawful and under this formal reason, then anything that is negatively lawful could be commanded. For what is applicable καθ' αὐτό (per se) is applicable κατὰ παντός (universally). And thus, they could command, in the worship of God, the lifting of straw or the stroking of a beard, which is absurd; for such things would be idle, ridiculous, and unfit for edification. But rulers govern for the sake of the good (Rom. 13:4). If they command what is negatively lawful, not as such, but as good, then they command what is negatively lawful because it is positively good and conformable to God's Word; and thus, ceremonies, as far as they are commanded by rulers, ought to be proven syllogistically from God's Word or from some natural reason in agreement with God's Word, which is the same thing. And so they flee in vain to this distinction.
4. Rulers can justly command nothing except what the people can do from faith, for "whatever is not from faith is sin" (Rom. 14:23), even in things that are most indifferent, such as the observation of days and the distinction of foods. In using these,

Paul requires more—namely, πληροφορία (full assurance) in verse 5—than Sanderson, who argues that conjectures and ethical faith, or probable faith, are sufficient. But negatively lawful things are not from faith because they cannot conform to any Word of God. To do something from faith is to do it knowing it is pleasing to God and a service to Christ (v. 18): "For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God." And verse 22: "Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God." But such faith cannot be the knowledge by which I know this is neither commanded nor forbidden by God; for then I would stroke my beard in faith, lift straw in faith, close my eyes, or cough while speaking, for all these are negatively lawful. But no one would say these are done from faith, except someone who would expose all theology to mockery and ridicule. Moreover, to eat in faith, about which Paul speaks there, would be to eat with the same fullness and assurance of conscience as coughing while speaking or stroking one's beard; and to serve Christ in the use of indifferent things would be to serve Christ while stroking one's beard, than which nothing more absurd could be said. But who would believe that Paul called that faith "before God" and faith that does not condemn but makes a man blessed, as in verse 22, which is nothing other than conjectural knowledge by which I know that stroking my beard is neither commanded nor forbidden by God in His Word?

5. If negatively lawful things are truly lawful, which can be done by us and commanded by rulers, then another Ark to represent Christ incarnate, another circumcision other than that which was Jewish, other sacrifices as they represent Christ now dead, the killing of a lamb, the Paschal lamb, and all Mosaic ceremonies could be introduced into the Church, provided: (1) the Jewish intention and significance are absent; (2) they are

regarded as neither necessary nor binding on the conscience. For all these are negatively lawful, that is, neither commanded nor forbidden, except in the way things not commanded are prohibited, which is our opinion. For we maintain that this is a good consequence: "This religious observance is not from God, therefore it is unlawful."

6. What is negatively lawful, i.e., what does not contradict God's Word, also does not contradict natural reason or the Law of Nature, which is part of the Word. But what does not contradict natural reason cannot in any way be commanded by rulers. For:
7. If rulers can command what is negatively conformable to natural reason, then their will, devoid of all practical and natural reason, would be the rule and law of all constitutions and canons; and thus their mere will, without reason, would be law, which is absurd.
8. Then there would be no more natural reason for ceremonies than if they commanded that all should dance in the cemetery or that all approaching the temple should shout, "Two times three is six."
9. If what is neither commanded nor forbidden by God's Word or natural reason (like the sign of the cross or the surplice) can be justly commanded by rulers, then they could justly command idle actions, and thus sins, which is blasphemous. Proof of the major premise: An action that is assumed to be moral, which is formally by a subject of the Kingdom of Christ, who in that action is bound to consider the edification of his neighbor and the glory of God, yet which is neither commanded nor forbidden by Scripture or the practical light of natural reason, is idle; like deliberately dancing every morning before a certain tomb in the

cemetery. But actions negatively conforming to God's Word are such; therefore, etc.

Proof of the major: Because Scripture and the light of natural reason either command or forbid all moral actions. Indeed, it implies a contradiction that an action is moral, such as wearing a surplice to signify pastoral innocence, and yet is neither commanded by Scripture nor by natural reason (which rightly is part of Scripture, just as the Law of Nature is part of the Moral Law). For then composing a syllogism in *Barbara* would be a moral action for the same reason, and yet it flows from a principle that is not moral at all, but from the habit of art. And the sign of the cross either emanates from the light of natural reason—which no one would say—or from the light of Scripture, which the opponents deny, or from the habit of religion, and thus from God's Word, which they would not claim.

7. A moral action is not morally lawful if it lacks that which formally constitutes it as lawful or legal. But a moral action that is negatively conforming to God's Word, that is, which is neither commanded nor forbidden by God's Word, lacks that which formally constitutes it as lawful or legal. Therefore, a moral action negatively conforming to God's Word is not lawful. The major is certain. Proof of the minor: Because if a moral action negatively conforming to God's Word lacks the will of God commanding it in the Word, it lacks that which formally constitutes it as lawful or legal. But a moral action negatively conforming to God's Word lacks the will of God commanding it in the Word. Therefore, etc. The minor is that of the opponents. The major is evident: Because the commanding will of God is the formal reason of what is lawful, and the forbidding will of God is the formal reason of what is unlawful, as the slaying of a child by the father is lawful if God commands it to Abraham; but the

same slaying is unlawful solely because God forbids it. To eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge is in itself indifferent before God's prohibition was revealed to Adam; and to eat it when God forbids it is unlawful, but to eat it if God commands it would have been lawful.

Objection. Concerning doctrinal or substantial matters, the commanding or forbidding will of God is the formal reason for what is lawful or unlawful. To this, I respond:

1. **Doctrinal** is defined by them as that which God commands in His Word, in the manner of the rituals in the Lord's Supper; for example, bread, wine, eating, and drinking are doctrinal. And if God had commanded the sign of the cross, it would have been doctrinal. Conversely, a **ritual** is defined as that which human authority commands; for instance, if human authority were to command circumcision, it would be considered a ritual. Thus, they say that the commanding will of God is the formal reason for what is lawful in those matters where it is indeed the formal reason for what is lawful, and where it is not, it is not. They cannot define "doctrinal" otherwise than to say it is that which God teaches us in His Word.
2. There is no sound reason to regard human will as the formal reason for what is lawful. If this were so, then sin would be transgression against human will. But theologians rightly teach that John defines sin as the transgression of the law—namely, divine law. However, this definition would not be accurate if it were true that some sins against God would be transgressions of human law.

Romans 14:14 "I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who considers anything to be

unclean, to him it is unclean."

Most interpreters explain this passage as indicating that foods, in themselves, are now, under Christ, neither clean nor unclean. But if a person believes in his conscience that some food is unclean, then to him it is unclean, so that he would be sinning if he ate it, just as much as if it were forbidden by the Law of God as unclean.

Question. Do the Remonstrants teach correctly, in *Apologia* c. 25, fol. 289, 290, that the Word of God, although in itself and by its nature has binding power, nevertheless does not actually bind anyone except the understanding? And thus, as it is believed to be understood with all possible diligence and prudence: because no one is bound to follow the true sense of the divine Word against his own conscience, even if that conscience is in error.

This is a pernicious question—whether the Word of God obliges to assent, or whether it is the conscience that obliges. The Remonstrants maintain that the conscience is what binds the act, so that a person is obliged to accept the sense of Scripture as true, which he himself in his conscience, even if erroneously, believes to be true.

We, however, say otherwise:

1. People are punished who refuse to believe God speaking in the Scriptures, even if their conscience either poorly or not at all understands what the sense of the Word is (Numbers 14:11-12; Luke 1:20; 1 Kings 13:21-22).
2. No one is obliged to sin. But to follow an erroneous conscience is to sin. How blasphemous, therefore, are the Remonstrants in *contra Vedelium* 1.1.c.2 when they state: "When the conscience

is in error due to invincible ignorance, which is either necessary in a person or remains even after all possible diligence has been applied, then the person is obliged to follow the dictate of that conscience, just as if it were not in error; he would be sinning if he acted against it because the act of the will must conform to its nearest rule." From this, I argue: If the conscience dictates to a father, from Zechariah 13:3, that he ought to stab his son for speaking lies in the name of the Lord, then the father is obliged to stain his hands with the blood of his son, just as if he rightly understood that place in Zechariah; and indeed, he would be sinning if he did not commit that horrendous act of killing his own son. Assuming he has used all possible diligence to understand:

1. He has prayed.
2. He has compared the antecedents with the consequences.
3. He has carefully examined the phrases.
4. He has considered the purpose accurately.

Likewise, from many Scriptures in the Old Testament, Jesuits would be obliged to stab our King with a sword, believing themselves bound by conscience to kill a heretic king, because the act of the will must conform to its nearest rule.

3. Our erroneous conscience does not free us from the binding right that the Word of God holds over our consciences. For the Word has dominion and rule over us to captivate our understanding in obedience to God. For one sin does not give us the right to commit another sin. To think and judge wrongly about the Word of God is a sin. Are we therefore obliged to another sin, namely, to follow that erroneous judgment?

4. It is necessarily in us, after the fall, the wisdom of the flesh, which is most hostile to God, which the Gospel declares to be foolishness (Romans 8:7; 1 Corinthians 2:14). Are we then obliged to distrust Christ and to reject Christ, sinning if we do not follow an erroneous conscience?
5. The Remonstrants do indeed concede that a person is obliged to abandon an erroneous conscience when the error concerns necessary matters, obvious to all; for such error is vincible and culpable. But when that erroneous conscience remains, asserting that Christ is not the Savior of the world, and that things happen by chance, not providence, still no one is obliged to follow the true sense of the divine Word (which truly says, Christ is the Son of God and the world is governed by providence) against his conscience, even if in error; for the Word, not understood, does not actually bind.
6. The right which the Word of God has over men is absolute, not dependent on mental error or our knowledge as a condition without which it would not actually bind us to assent to God's Word. The judgment of conscience is indeed a necessary condition and proper approximation of the Word to the mind and will; but it is not what formally obliges us; nor is it the condition of the obligation that the Word holds over our consciences. It is rather the condition of our understanding and duty. Therefore, theologians rightly teach that an erroneous conscience binds but does not obligate. It binds because a person cannot act against an erroneous conscience without sinning.

Thus, Bonaventure states in *2 Sententiarum*, dist. 39: "Whoever acts against his conscience, believing that God has forbidden something,

even if he errs, despises God, because to despise the King's messenger is to despise the King himself. Conscience, however, is the messenger and judge appointed by God; therefore, to despise it is to despise God." Therefore, the pagan, Menander, said: "For all mortals, conscience is God."

Thus, conscience can render an otherwise good action evil; for example, when one holds that it is true and pious to believe that God governs things by His providence; but if one holds this against the light of his conscience, believing it to be false, that opinion is impious and unlawful by accident, for him who maintains the true doctrine against the judgment of his erroneous conscience. But conscience, as conscience, does not obligate; only as it is well-informed by the Word of God does it obligate. Hence, the formal reason for obligation is the Word of God, and the light of conscience is only a necessary condition, not of obligation (for obligation is absolute), but of proper understanding and true practice.

The Remonstrants reply in *contra Vedelium* 1.2.c.2: "This right always remains whole and inviolate. But the right that the Word of God has over men is not a right whereby a person is obliged to assent to the sense of the divine Word without judgment, much less against the judgment of his own conscience, that is, so long as it remains and asserts that this sense is false. For thus the right of God would oblige a man to what is sheer sin."

Response. The right that the Word of God has over men is not indeed a right that obliges a person to assent to the Word of God without judgment or against judgment; that is true. But I provide a third position: it is a right obliging men to assent, indeed with judgment, but a correct and true judgment, and one that is in agreement with the Word of God. Even if people do not have such

judgment but rather the opposite—namely, a false and erroneous one—this does not, on that account, nullify the actual right of the Word of God over men due to their erroneous conscience, which is a grievous fault in them. For God reveals His mysteries to the humble and to those who diligently search His Law.

2. If an absolute binding right remains to assent to the sense of the Word of God in any way, whether with correct judgment or erroneous judgment, then the actual right remains whereby we are obliged to sin; which is to fall into Scylla while they wish to avoid Charybdis. Let them say, I ask, whether the Word of God has the right to oblige a person, who in his erroneous conscience thinks that the Son of Mary is an impostor, to assent to the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which seem to support his erroneous conscience that Christ is an impostor. Thus, the Word has a twofold right: one potential, whereby people are obligated to assent to God's Word, and another actual, whereby they are obligated to assent with correct judgment.
3. The right and obligation to assent to the Word of God, even with an erroneous conscience standing, is the foundation of that foul error in which they wish not to subject the mind to the Law of God, because it is seen as a purely natural power, which is absurd. Thus, a person would be obliged, without sin, to believe that chance and fortune rule, because it would appear to his erroneous conscience that this comes from the Word of God, while the righteous are oppressed and the wicked prosper.
4. That conscience does not oblige us to action which we are obliged to lay aside. But we are obliged to lay aside an erroneous conscience. Therefore, the argument holds. The major premise is that of the adversaries. The minor premise is evident because

having a culpable conscience is a sin; therefore, we are bound to lay it aside. The Remonstrants do not deny, *ibid.*, that when the judgment is culpably erroneous, both the assent and the judgment are evil and displeasing to God. Therefore, either God obliges people to sin and to that which is displeasing to Him and evil, or no one is bound to follow an erroneous judgment.

But they say that an erroneous conscience is not itself the fault, but having an erroneous conscience due to one's own fault is the fault.

Response. If having an erroneous conscience is a fault, then following it as a guide is also a fault. 2. It is false to say that a person does not sin by following an erroneous conscience. And if a person is obliged to follow it, as they say, then that person is obliged to sin, and does well by the very act of sinning. For one does well by doing what one is obliged to do.

9. An injury to the Word of God does not fall back upon God Himself if a person is obliged to a false and erroneous interpretation of the Divine Word.

Objection. "What will he do," ask the Remonstrants, *ibid.*, "who believes this to be the true sense of Scripture, which is nevertheless false? Should he accept it as true, though it is false, or reject the sense of the Word, which he believes to be true, against his conscience?"

Response. I provide a third option. He is bound to do neither, but he is bound to lay aside the erroneous judgment and follow the true sense.

An Objection May Be Raised. If an erroneous conscience does not oblige but binds inasmuch as a person cannot act against its

dictate, then if the erroneous conscience dictates that one should not pray, the person is obliged not to pray. If it dictates to the judge that the murderer should not be punished by the sword, then the judge is obliged not to punish the murderer with the sword. For if in such a case the person does not abstain from prayer, and the murderer is punished with the sword, then the erroneous conscience does not even bind because it acts against the dictate of the erroneous conscience.

Response. Even if the erroneous conscience dictates that one should not pray, it does not follow that the person is obliged not to pray, simply. An Arminian magistrate believes in his erroneous conscience that it is not lawful to kill a murderer; and he does not dare in conscience to act against the dictate of an erroneous conscience, for it binds; therefore, he is bound to desist from his duty and not kill the murderer. I deny this conclusion. He is bound not to kill, in respect to the erroneous conscience, but he is not bound, in conscience, not to kill. However, it must be shown that he is simply bound not to kill. He is bound to lay aside the erroneous conscience and to kill.

Although an erroneous conscience negatively binds to the non-performance of an act in a certain way—namely, the erroneous one in the act—it does not bind to the error itself; therefore, in no way does it truly bind. Thus, the Scholastics say that an erroneous conscience suffices for vice, not for virtue; it entangles but does not bind.

There is one binding to the act, another to the erroneous mode of the act. An Arminian magistrate is bound to abstain from punishing a murderer concerning the erroneous conscience that binds; that is, he is bound not to punish in an erroneous way with an erring

conscience. However, he is still obliged simply not to abstain but to punish.

Objection. If an erroneous conscience imposes an obligation or bond not to do contrary to what it dictates should be done, then the knowledge of conscience has the force of law (Romans 14:14). "To him who considers (though by an erroneous conscience) that something is unclean, to him it is unclean." But that which obliges is an immediately constituted rule by God. Therefore, an erroneous conscience is, by accident, though not in itself, a law. So argues Thomas Goodwin in his English treatise on the Aggravation of Sin, page 45.

Response. I distinguish the major premise. If an erroneous conscience imposes on a person the obligation not to do contrary to what it dictates, then it has the force of a negative law, that is, obliging to non-performance or abstention from an act in such a way; this is true. If it has the force of a law simply, and as an immediate rule, this is false.

John Gerson, Part 1, "On the Nature and Quality of Conscience,"
Treatise on the Three Things that Contribute to the Gravity of Sin:

"When conscience dictates those things which are beside the Law of God, conscience itself binds and obliges, but not absolutely—instead, it binds in a qualified sense and under a certain disjunction or alternative: either to do what it dictates, or to lay it aside. But in those matters where it dictates against the Law, it binds, but in no way to what it dictates; rather, it binds absolutely to lay it aside."

An error does not bind or oblige; it entangles. Or (if you prefer) it obliges one to lay aside the error. An erroneous conscience binds to suspend an action where the action is not necessary. It binds to the

negative, not to the affirmative. It binds in such a way that to oppose an erroneous conscience is a sin; but not in such a way that following it when it is in error becomes a virtue.

Ludovicus Meratius states in Volume 1, "On the Goodness and Wickedness of Actions," Disputation 3, Section 2, Point 8, that the common opinion is that a vincibly erring conscience obliges both negatively and positively, and indeed to sin—not indeed per se and absolutely, but per accidens and hypothetically, because the person does not wish to lay it aside, though it is within his power to do so. He proves this from Galatians 5:3: "I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law."

Response. This opinion is false. For whatever someone is thus obliged to do is sin, whether they are obliged to it per se or per accidens; and it is sin either per se or per accidens. But God has not placed any binding force in conscience to sin in any way. 2. The reference to Galatians 5:3 does not conclude this: for Paul does not mean that the circumcised person is obliged to sin because he is bound to fulfill the whole law. This is foolishness; for to fulfill the whole law is to obey God, not to sin.

The other argument of Meratius is this: if an erring conscience obliges negatively to not abstaining from a lie, then from that erroneous conscience, one is positively obliged to lie; for not abstaining from a lie is lying.

Response. Good man, you are wholly mistaken. For an erring conscience does not oblige to not abstaining from a lie simply and according to the substance of the act; rather, it obliges to not abstaining in a particular way, namely, with an erring conscience. Thus, it obliges one to abstain from the manner, not from the act itself.

Chapter 2:

On God

TITLE ONE

ON THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

COLOSSIANS 1:10

That you may walk worthy of the Lord...

Increasing in all knowledge.

It is asked, is not the true and right knowledge of God commanded, and the conformity of the mind with God? The Remonstrants, in their argument against Vedelius (Book 1, Chapter 10), assert: "Speculative knowledge," they say, "is nothing more than a passive reception, which falls under a command no more than feeling, seeing, or hearing. The mind is not capable of a command. Only the will is capable of a command. Knowledge, as a holy attention, pious care, and praiseworthy endeavor to seek divine truth, is commanded to us, because knowledge is not commanded for its own sake," (as they argue in their Apology, Chapter 2, folio 40), "but for the sake of worship and piety."

But on the contrary:

1. Knowledge itself, in and of itself, is commanded. "And you, Solomon, my son, know the God of your father and serve Him with a whole heart." (1 Chronicles 28:9). "And be renewed in the spirit of your mind." (Ephesians 4:23). Therefore, the mind itself must be renewed to the image of God.

2. Because Paul prayed to God that He might give the Ephesians the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Himself (Ephesians 1:17). And he gives thanks to God that the Corinthians were enriched in all knowledge (1 Corinthians 1:5).
3. Because knowledge in the mind is part of the image of God (Colossians 3:10). It is a virtue pleasing to God (Jeremiah 9:24; Hosea 6:6) and necessary for man's salvation (John 17:3), pertaining to the first commandment of the Decalogue, and is listed among the virtues of Christ our Savior (Isaiah 11:2). And the Law (Matthew 22:37) requires that the whole soul, and all its faculties and inclinations, be conformed to God.
4. Because ignorance of God and a false conception of God—when we think of Him as being like a piece of wood or any created thing—is a grave sin (Isaiah 40:18; Acts 17:24, 29). Otherwise, there would be no sin in conceiving of God as a sort of elderly king, clothed in gold, purple, and jewels.
5. Because ignorance of God is the cause of all other sins and of the temporal and eternal ruin of men (1 Samuel 2:12; 1 Corinthians 2:8; Hosea 4:1; Luke 19:42; 2 Thessalonians 1:8).
6. Because it is a Socinian and heretical notion to think that we can be saved through the observance of God's commandments while we erroneously conceive of God in our minds and are ignorant of God, His Nature, Attributes, and Operations, as they are revealed in the Scriptures.
7. Because those who believe in their minds that God delights in the sacrifice of infants would not be sinning.

8. Because knowledge itself of Christ—of His Natures, Offices, and Person—and correct faith, as distinct from practice, would not be worship of God. But the very knowledge of God, One and Triune, is worship commanded for its own sake.
9. Because if only what falls under an act of the will were commanded, it would be in vain for thoughts, primary inclinations of the soul, and the mind to be conformed to the Law of God.
10. If the mind is not subject to the Law, and if all corruption of the will and affections, after the Fall, arises from the darkness of the mind and the less clear presentation of the object to the mind—this, which appears to be the opinion of the Arminians, would make man, from birth, to be a creature of angelic purity and innocence, in whom the only defect is some dimming of the mind, which in itself cannot sin against any law of God.

Title Two

On God According to His Essence, His Unity, and His Essential Omnipresence.

1 Corinthians 8:6

"But to us there is but one God."

There is, of necessity, such a Being. Therefore, it is asked, Is God, where there is perfect Unity, perfect Simplicity by His very Nature, most Simple, and free from all composition—whether of act and potency, of substance and accidents, or any multiplicity and diversity? The Remonstrants deny this in their Apology, Chapter 2, folio 41–42, following the impious Vorstius, in his notes on Disputation 3, Thesis 1.2, page 146, and Apology, Chapter 2, page 4.

But we say otherwise:

1. God is absolutely perfect and immutable. Therefore, in God, there are no component parts, no mixture, no composition, because parts are inherently less perfect than the whole. He who is, in essence, Jehovah—existing as the most simple, primary, and perfect essence, possessing existence absolutely and independently—is most simple. But first, this is true of God, as written: "I AM WHO I AM has sent me to you" (Exodus 3:14). "I am Jehovah" (Genesis 15:7). "The LORD is His name" (Amos 9:6).
2. Where there is no multiplication or dissolubility, there is the highest simplicity. But in God, these things do not exist.
3. Every composition involves some mixture of potentiality and perfectibility. Yet there is nothing that can perfect God.
4. The attributes, relations, and modes of subsistence in God are not like forms that qualify, activate, or inform God, as whiteness is in milk or justice in a man. Rather, they are God Himself, considered in different respects and presented to our intellect in different ways. Just as a man remaining in the same place and unchanged may appear to one as on the right and to another as on the left, so too the distinction between God's attributes and essence arises from modes, not in a formal way as distinct entities or essences, nor modally as being and the existence of being are distinguished, nor in terms of potentiality as parts to the whole; but this distinction is rational, indeed, a rational distinction—just as we distinguish Socrates into subject and attribute. Thus, the intellect understands, not by will, etc., so even the formal differences in our imperfect and inadequate concepts differ.

5. Something real would be added to God, and there would be a new accession of real entity to Him whenever He becomes Creator, Pastor, Father, Redeemer, Protector, Savior, Lord; and if He were to annihilate creatures, as He can, new entities would be taken away from God.

6. If something real were added to the essence of God by decrees, creation, redemption, personal relations, it would either be created or uncreated. If created, then at least the decrees of God would be created entities, coexisting and coeternal with God; and God would not be simply eternal; and new creations would approach God and recede, which would be a true change. If, however, it is uncreated, then something uncreated would be temporal (for being Creator, Redeemer, Pastor, occurs to God in time), which implies a contradiction. If (as Smiglesius rightly says in volume 1, On God, Treatise 2, Disputation 3, On the Immutability of God, Question 2, Section 18), some relation or form could come anew to God, there would be an entity that is not necessarily existent; it would also imply a composition of subjective potency and formal act, since things entirely distinct in reality cannot coalesce into one without a composition of act and potency.

Acts 17:27

"...He is not far from each one of us."

It is asked whether God is omnipresent not only in power and operation but also according to His very Essence, since, as the Remonstrants say, if so, God's essence would be diffused everywhere, and He would be present in sewers, flies, idols, demons, and in hell itself. Thus, the Remonstrants deny this and say in their Apology, Chapter 2, folio 43. And, good God! who would not define that this

atomic and topological presence of the Divine Essence and of the three divine Persons, I do not say merely in heaven and earth, in sewers, in the most foul idols, in demons, in hell itself; but even outside the heaven and earth, etc.? So also Vorstius responds in his Apology, Chapter 6, page 10-11. And likewise Socinus, in the fragment of his Catechism on the Knowledge of God, Chapter 11, page 58.

But we teach that the Essence of God is present everywhere.

1. Psalm 139:8: "If I ascend into heaven, You are there; if I make my bed in the grave, behold, You are there." Jeremiah 23:23-24: "'Am I a God at hand,' says the Lord, 'and not a God afar off? Do I not fill heaven and earth?' says the Lord." Isaiah 66:1: "Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool." 1 Kings 8:27: "Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You; how much less this house that I have built?" Acts 17:27: "... though He is not far from each one of us." Ephesians 4:6: "One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."
2. If the Essence is not everywhere, it must be in some specific and determined place, so that it is here and not elsewhere. I ask about the place where the essence of God is not: either it can be there, or it cannot. If it can be, then the essence of God can begin to be in a place where it was not before. But this is true spatial change.

If it cannot be there, then:

1. There is a creature that excludes God's Essence.

2. There is no contradiction in creatures being where His power and operation are. It is absurd, therefore, for God to act where He Himself cannot be.
3. There is no reason on God's part why He cannot be in that creature, since He could have created the heavens in the same place where the center of the earth is.
4. Because God would not operate in the Elect if He were not in them; nor would He know the reins and thoughts if His thought and operation were where He Himself cannot be, and Essence would be separated from power.
5. Because nothing is more perfect than the Divine Essence. But if the essence is in all and everywhere, it is more perfect than if it were only here and not elsewhere.
6. Because Christ walking on earth was not truly God if the Essence of God was not wherever His Humanity was.
7. Because God could not create infinite worlds outside these imaginary spaces, for it would be necessary for Him to begin to exist where He did not exist before.
8. Because it is a gross notion to imagine the Essence of God being polluted by sewers and demons; just as this does not happen to the sun's rays shining on dung. They imagine that God is polluted by physical contact with things and morally by contact with idols and demons; by contact with sewers, He would be physically polluted. Yet the sun's light, having nothing contrary but darkness, is not tainted by the filth heap.

9. If God were polluted by His presence with the vilest things, He would be polluted even by His operation in the most vile and wicked acts. Why, then, would He not cooperate with the entities of demons, flies, etc.?

10. Demons, idols, etc., are either preserved immediately and directly by the divine Essence itself or mediately by God's conserving power. If the former, then the Arminians are grievously mistaken. If the latter, this conserving power is either God and thus His Essence and the issue remains, or it is a creature. If it is a creature, then the same question returns regarding that which is preserved. If it is a creature, it either preserves itself and so creates itself; for conservation is continuous creation, or it is preserved by God, either mediately, which is absurd, or immediately. And why should not the same be said equally of demons and idols, which are without a doubt the creatures of God?

TITLE THREE

On the Trinity.

1 Corinthians 8:6

"But to us there is but one God."

It is asked whether there are three essences in God or only one. The wicked Vorstius, in his response to the Apology, Article 1, says: "Where there are three that are truly distinct from one another, and where specific actions pertain to each, there are certainly three distinct entities, and thus three distinct essences or entities." He adds that the divine Persons are true hypostases and substances, not merely modes of subsistence. Similarly, the impure Smalcius, in his response to the refutation of Smiglecius, Chapter 4, folio 39, states: "Where there are two, there must be two essences."

But we, together with the Orthodox, maintain that there is only one essence in the Trinity.

1. Because there is but one God, with a single and unique essence, and there is no other God besides Him. Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:39; 1 Corinthians 8:6.
2. If there are three distinct divine essences, there are three distinct natures of Deity, and thus three gods; and Vorstius becomes a tritheist. This impious doctrine is also asserted by Arminius in his response to the Thirty-One Articles concerning himself and Borreus, and in his Declaration of his Sentiment, page 125: "For the Son, both as Son and as God, has the Deity from the Father. For if the Son, as God, has Deity from the Father, He has a distinct essence and deity in number." For Deity, as Deity, without implying personality, is generative; and Deity, as Deity, is generated—thus there are two deities in number. The same must be said concerning the Holy Spirit. This is impiously asserted by the Remonstrants in their Declaration, Chapter 3, Thesis: "The Son, therefore, and the Spirit are of the same Deity with the Father; or the divine essence and nature, absolutely and commonly considered, are truly co-equal." But when Deity is commonly considered, it is like a genus with respect to species, as the impious Vorstius taught, making God a genus to the three Persons. It is certainly true that three humans share the animal nature, yet they are not the same and one animal in number. Yet they say that the three Persons share the divine nature, absolutely and commonly considered, but they do not assert that there is one essence and Deity in number, but rather they are co-equals in Deity, as if there were three deities.

3. If there are three distinct essences here, then there are three Infinites, three Omnipotents, three Intellects, three Wills; not three that share the same Infinity, the same Omnipotence, and the same Intellect and Will. However, though the Persons are not mere modes of subsistence, they connote substance; yet they do not connote three substances, with each Person having its own substance, but rather all have one substance in number.

Romans 9:5

"Who is God over all, blessed forever."

It is asked whether the Son is αὐτόθεος ("God of Himself") and God "from Himself." Arminius, in his Declaration, pages 124–125, denies that He is αὐτόθεος, whether as Son or as God: "For in no different respect can the Essence of God be said to be communicated to the Son, because these are contradictory." And he criticizes Dr. Trelcatius the Younger for calling the Son, as God, αὐτόθεος, "for if so, the Father would only nominally differ from the Son (as Sabellius asserted), and we would fall into tritheism, for thus there would be three gods who together would collaterally have the divine essence." Vorstius says the same in his Apology, Chapter 4, page 46. The impious Johann Geisteranus, in his confession, states that "in time, the Son received His deity from the Father." So too does Socinus, in Theological Lectures, folios 106–107, who denies that He is truly God.

We, on the contrary, affirm that Christ is essentially and truly God.

Isaiah 9:6: "He shall be called Mighty God." John 1:1-3: "The Word was God." Romans 9:5, Colossians 1:15, 1 John 5:20. Therefore, He is God of Himself; He possesses the divine nature as God, from none other.

2. If the Son, not only as Son but also as God, has an essence communicated from the Father (for a communicated essence is distinct from the essence that communicates), then there must be two essences here: one communicating and the other communicated. The same must be said of the Holy Spirit; thus, there would be three essences, three deities, and three gods; and it would be Arminius, not Trelcatius, who is the Tritheist.
3. If the Son, as God, is not God of Himself, then He is not God essentially. To be God and to be from another is to be God and not God at the same time, for God essentially is independent. Thus, the Son would be a lesser god than the Father. There would be one supreme God and two lesser gods, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
4. It is customary for Arminius to invent contradictions in his own mind. But if, in no different respect, it can be said that the essence is communicated to the Son and not communicated to the Son, as Arminius imagines, then, in no different respect, the essence is in the Father δύναται (potentially) and in the Son γεννάται (generated), which is contrary to what the Church has consistently taught against Sabellius: in no different respect is the divine essence incarnate in the Son and not incarnate in the Father. In the Son, it is personally incarnate; in the Father, taken absolutely, it is not incarnate.

Philippians 2:6

"Who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God."

It is asked whether Christ is truly God, co-essential (ὁμοούσιος) and consubstantial with the Father, according to the mind of the

Arminians? Some of them say so in words, but in reality, they deny it; hence, we have just reason to suspect them of Arianism.

1. When the most distinguished professors of Leiden rebuked the Remonstrants for abstaining, in their Confession—where the chief articles of faith and fundamental doctrines ought to be included—from the terms "ὁμοούσιος" and "consubstantial," they responded in their Apology with nothing substantive. Instead, they say they do not wish to anathematize those who hold erroneous views concerning the Trinity and the person of the Son and the Holy Spirit, just as the ancient Church maintained communion with those who believed that Jesus Christ was merely a man among men. Apology, Chapter 3, folio 50: "An irresistible argument proving the Deity of the Son cannot be derived from His divine worship."
2. Vorstius, in his reply to the Apology, Article 10, Chapter 3, states that the Father is rightly called God "κατ' ἔξοχὴν" (in the highest sense) in the Scriptures, and is truly the source of all Deity, possessing a certain prerogative over the Son. This prerogative of Deity, by which the Father is the source of the Son, is why the Son is not God "κατ' ἔξοχὴν." The Remonstrants, in their explanation of the Lord's Prayer, desire that the true God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, be sanctified, speaking here of the Son and the Holy Spirit. They refer the statement "Holy, Holy, Holy" (Isaiah 6:3) solely to the Father.
3. Apology, Chapter 18, folio 190: They interpret the glory which Christ is said to have had (John 17:5) with the Father before the world existed, not as the glory of His deity but as a glory conferred upon Christ in time, which He had from eternity in the decree of God, not in actuality and reality. Confession,

Chapter 19, Section 2: They assign the tribunal solely to the Father, as if, by being the judge of all, He alone were the true God.

4. In Apology, Chapter 2, folio 39, they say they do not concern themselves with such vanities: "Is the worship due to Christ the same as the worship of God? Is the foundation of this worship His divine nature, or another dignity, of which even the human nature is a partaker? Then, does it terminate in the Person as such? Or in the Person insofar as the divine nature is in Him?" Certainly, if it is in vain to say that Christ is worshiped because the divine nature is in Him, they clearly indicate that there is no excellence of the divine nature in Christ for which He should be worshiped. And if it is true that the same worship is due to Christ as to the Father, they doubt whether the divine nature in Christ is the same as that in the Father. For they think that Christ deserves inferior worship and a subordinate veneration, and hence they institute a particular chapter on the veneration of Jesus Christ, from which it is evident that they consider Him to be a God inferior to the Father and deserving of lesser worship—the kind of worship that the Arians thought should be given to a most holy man. So says Smalcius in his response to new errors, Chapter 23, page 207, and Socinus, against Wieck, Chapter 4, folio 160: "There is no other reason to trust in Christ than as in a second or instrumental cause of our salvation."
5. Apology, Chapter 121, folio 138: They speak in express terms of Socinus. "For this honor given to Christ is not the honor by which Christ, as Mediator, is worshiped above God Himself, or as the highest and supreme Lord to whom that honor is due in Himself; God forbid. God always retains this honor and glory

solely for Himself." If they acknowledge Christ to be God, consubstantial with the Father:

6. Why is the honor shown to Christ not the honor due to Him as the supreme Lord?
7. Why do they not say that God keeps this glory solely for Himself, both as God and as Christ? But they say that God (not mentioning the Son but implying the Father) always keeps this glory solely for Himself.
8. They say it is vain to dispute whether the mediatorial honor is due to Him insofar as the divine nature is in Him or insofar as the human nature is in Him. Yet here they say it would be sacrilegious, with a protestation of "God forbid," and hence idolatrous to give the same glory to Christ the Mediator that the Father keeps for Himself. But it would not be idolatry unless they believed that the Deity in the Mediator is a participatory and created Deity.
9. If it would be "ἑθελοθησκεία" (will-worship) to worship the Son unless there is a positive precept in the New Testament for worshiping Him, then the Son is not to be worshiped for the Deity that is in Him, but because of the command of God. But the former is expressly stated by Arminius in Disputation 39, Article 1, and Disputation 34, Article 1, where he says that two things are required for Christ to be religiously worshiped: 1. The command of God to honor the Son. 2. That the Son performs certain offices for the benefit of men to secure their salvation. Therefore, Christ is not worshiped for the same reason that God the Father is worshiped, i.e., not for His Deity. For the Father is to be worshiped by virtue of the first commandment of the Decalogue, and even if there were no new command in the New

Testament to worship Him, nor any offices performed by Him for the benefit of men. Only God is to be worshiped with religious worship, Matthew 4:10. Hence, if Christ is not to be worshiped unless He performs certain offices for the benefit of men, He is not God; but He is worshiped for those offices performed and the positive command of the Father. Arminius there claims that Christ is only a secondary object of worship, but God is the primary object. Yet, if Christ is God to Arminius, He is also the primary object of worship.

10. Arminius, in Disputation 4, says nothing about the essential kingdom of Christ, which pertains to Him as God, in common with the Father, but only speaks of the mediatorial kingdom.
11. Arminius states in Disputation 44, Article 3, that we should trust in Christ as in Him who has been made the author of salvation so that He could set before us the way to eternal life in covenant with us. But in the same way, we should trust in Moses as the one who proposed the way to eternal salvation.
12. Arminius denies that Christ, as God, is "αὐτοθεός" (God of Himself), as we saw above.
13. The Remonstrants say that many of the Fathers deny that Christ is consubstantial with the Father. But I believe this was for two reasons:
14. Hilary, in his book on Synods, and Athanasius, in his letter on Synods, teach that the Fathers at the Council of Antioch denied that the Son was ὁμοούσιος (of the same essence) with the Father in the sense of a participated deity, as Paul of Samosata claimed. And I believe this is the view of the Arminians; thus, He is ὁμοούσιος with the Father by grace.

15. Because Jerome writes against the Luciferians that the whole world wondered to see itself become Arian. By the command of Constantius, a Synod was held in Nicea of Thrace, where it was decreed that the Son is not consubstantial with the Father but similar. When the Fathers at Ariminum, terrified by the Emperor, subscribed at the Synod of Sirmium, they decreed that the Son is neither ὁμοούσιος nor ὁμοιοῦσιος (similar in essence) to the Father but merely similar in all things; and this Synod was entirely Arian, to which Pope Liberius and Hosius, the bishop of Corduba, subscribed. Add that Hilary understood "ὁμοιοῦσιος" to mean "ὁμοούσιος," and Augustine, against the Arian Pascentius, expounded "similarity in substance."

Hebrews 1:6

"And let all the angels of God worship Him."

The question arises: Is Christ, as man, to be worshiped? And as man, is He the formal object of worship? The Remonstrants assert this (Apology, Chapter 16, p. 134).

We deny it.

1. Because no creature, but God alone, is to be worshiped. Deuteronomy 6:13; Matthew 4:10. But Christ as man, or Christ's humanity, is a creature; and worship is a glory proper to God, which He does not give to another (Isaiah 42:8).
2. Because the humanity of Christ is not an idol.
3. Because it favors the Arians and Socinians by depriving us of the argument by which we prove that Christ is true God, in that all the angels worship Him (Hebrews 1:6).

If they say that a lower form of worship is due to His humanity,

We respond:

1. If this is understood to be the worship of religious adoration, as it should be here, it is contrary to Scripture.
2. It is against the consensus of the orthodox Church, which has taught that Christ is to be worshiped with the same honor as the Father.
3. It would open a door to all forms of idolatry, such as the worship of images and angels, if it were lawful to confer the honor of lesser worship to creatures.
4. Scripture does not recognize any kind of honor of religious adoration due to Christ merely on account of the office imposed upon Him by the Father, or granted to Him out of mere grace, for the sake of the mediatorial office.

Romans 9:5

"Who is God over all, blessed forever."

The question arises: Should we acknowledge in Christ a twofold communication of deity? One by the mysterious and ineffable generation, and another by the gracious communication of divine power and supreme glory; and therefore a twofold sonship? This is what the Remonstrants assert (Apology, Chapter 3, folio 48).

We deny it.

1. Because if the deity was communicated to Christ once from eternity and once in time, there would be two deities in Christ: one eternal, the other temporal; and so Christ would be two gods, which is blasphemy.

2. Because through the incarnation and resurrection from the dead, Christ did not acquire any new deity that He did not have before; rather, He was only declared to be the Son of God with power by the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:4). Therefore, it is the manifestation of a pre-existing deity, not the communication of a new deity that is to be understood here; for He Himself raised Himself from the dead by His own divine power (John 2:19), and He Himself took upon Himself our flesh (Philippians 2:7).
3. Even though Scripture says that He received power and glory from the Father through the resurrection from the dead, this does not mean a temporal deity was given to Christ; for then the Father would not glorify His Son with the glory He had with the Father before the foundation of the world (John 17:5), but with some new glory of deity acquired later.
4. Nowhere in Scripture does it say that Christ, by His incarnation and resurrection from the dead, became God or was deified; rather, He was exalted and made the Prince who obtains a name above every name because, having set aside the state of humiliation, He is declared to be the consubstantial Son of God and proclaimed, in both natures, as the supreme Lord and Judge of the Church, despite the world's treatment of Him with death, ignominy, and insults.
5. Because a twofold sonship implies two persons; and though that which is born of Mary is called the Son of God (Luke 1:35), it does not follow that in that nativity, a new Son and Person was born; but only that, in that nativity, the pre-existing Son of God assumed human nature in the unity of His pre-existing Person.
6. Because nothing new in terms of deity or power could be added to Christ, the consubstantial Son of the Father, for nothing can be added to God unless He were to change. Therefore, a

temporal deity cannot be added to God; and so, it is only a manifestation of divine glory.

They argue that Scripture asserts that glory is given to Christ and that Christ received a name and power.

Response: To give glory to God, to ascribe power to Him, does not mean the real giving of glory to God; rather, "to give" here means to declare the glory given or pre-existing glory, as Joshua says to Achan: "My son, give glory to God" (Joshua 7:19). Nothing is more frequent in the Psalms and throughout Scripture.

7. To say that the deity was communicated in time and that there is a temporal deity is a contradiction in terms; it means deity and non-deity. For whatever begins in time is not deity. Hence, it is clear that when the Remonstrants assign two deities to Christ—one by ineffable generation and another by temporal bestowal of glory—they are not affirming that the Son of God is true God. For in true God, nothing can be added or taken away in time; and the communication of deity pertains to Christ as God; and thus, according to the Remonstrants, He would not be God of Himself.

8. It is absurd to say that Christ is worshiped "κατὰ χάριν" (by grace) as if He were not a true formal object of worship, i.e., deity.

They might argue that Christ is to be worshiped in a double manner: one that pertains to Him as God, and another that pertains to Him as Mediator. But this is said without Scripture or reason.

Response: The worship due to Him as God results in the worship of the Person in humanity "κατὰ μέρος" (in part); therefore, a different

worship is falsely fabricated, no more so than if there were two kinds of blood, two crosses, two cleansings of leprosy, demon possession, or death; one worship that pertains to Him as God, another that pertains to Him as man or even as Mediator. Thus, there is no double worship.

9. The ancient Church, against Nestorius, who divided the Persons and attributed two kinds of worship to Him, defined Him to be one Person with two Natures, and to be worshiped with one and the same adoration as the God-man (θεάνθρωπος).

It is asked whether Christ, as Mediator, is to be worshiped?

Response: Whether "as" (quatenus) or "insofar as" (reduplicatively or specifically). Reduplicatively, it denotes the formal reason for worship; and it expresses the reason why He alone, always, and necessarily is to be worshiped. Only God, not the Mediator alone, is to be worshiped; nor is the mediatorial dignity the formal and adequate reason why the Son is to be worshiped; for the Father is to be worshiped no less than the Son, as is the Holy Spirit. However, if taken specifically, the term does not express the reason for which He alone, always, and necessarily is to be worshiped. As man, in that sense, man is wise, sees, is a geometer, a musician; but not every man, always, necessarily, is wise, a geometer, laughs. Therefore, if in this question "as" is taken specifically, Christ is to be worshiped wholly "as Mediator." This means that the Person of the Deity who is Mediator, and even for that reason, because He is Mediator and has undertaken, executed, and continues the mediatorial office for our good, is to be worshiped. But if it is taken reduplicatively, "as Mediator," He is not to be worshiped. For the mediatorial office is not the proper, formal, and adequate reason for worship. Otherwise, neither the Father nor the Holy Spirit would be worshiped.

Matthew 28:19

"Baptize all in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

The question arises: Is the Holy Spirit the true God, consubstantial with the Father and the Son? The Remonstrants say they cannot prove the Holy Spirit is God because He is worshiped, noting that the Scriptures are full of references to the Father and the Son being worshiped, but nothing concerning the Spirit. (Confession, Chapter 2, and Apology, Chapter 2, folio 51). They claim that just because the Son or the Holy Spirit is called "Jehovah," it does not conclude that the Son or the Holy Spirit is God, as the name "Jehovah" is often taken nominally and frequently attributed to created angels. In this way, they easily dismiss all the places where the Son and the Holy Spirit are called "God" and "Jehovah."

We respond otherwise:

1. **Isaiah 48:16** - "The Lord, Jehovah, and His Spirit have sent Me." **Isaiah 63:14** - "The Spirit of Jehovah led them quietly; so You led Your people to make for Yourself a glorious name." Therefore, the Holy Spirit is to be praised and worshiped as the leader of the people out of Egypt unless they wish to interpret "Spirit" not as a person but as the power and operation of God, as the Sadducees, Antitrinitarians, and Sabellians take the term "Holy Spirit."
2. The Creator is to be worshiped because He is the Creator, by all creatures. The Sanctifier is to be praised and glorified, and in Him, we are to trust, for He leads us into all truth as the supreme and infallible teacher, who, as the principal cause, sends the ministers of the Church. But the Holy Spirit leads us into all truth as the supreme and infallible teacher (John 16:13)

and, as the principal cause, sends the ministers of the Church (Acts 13:2 and Acts 20:28).

3. He is to be worshiped in whose name we are baptized. But we are baptized in the name of the Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:19).
4. He is to be worshiped who distributes gifts to each in the Church as He wills. This the Holy Spirit does (1 Corinthians 12:11).
5. **Song of Solomon 4:15** - "Awake, O north wind, and come, O south wind; blow upon my garden." That is, "O Holy Spirit, who blows where He wills" (John 3:8), make my garden fruitful. Indeed, the example of the Church worshiping the Holy Spirit shines upon us here, as seen in 2 Corinthians 13:14, Acts 13:2-3, Acts 4:24, and Revelation 1:4, compared with Isaiah 6:3, Hebrews 3:7, and Acts 28:25.

TITLE FOUR

On Knowledge

Acts 15:18

"Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world, or from eternity."

The question arises: Is there in God a "middle knowledge," a mixed, conditional knowledge—i.e., a knowledge of things outside of God, which, concerning their future occurrence, in no way depends on God, and which is neither a knowledge of vision nor a simple intelligence? The Arminians affirm it. Jacobus Arminius, in Disputation 4, Theses 43, 45, says, "Though that middle (knowledge) must necessarily intervene in matters depending on the freedom of the will." This view is also held by the Pelagianizing Papists, especially the Jesuits: Ruiz on Thomas, on the Knowledge of God, Disputation 49, Section 2; Vasquez on 1 Thomas, Disputation 674,

Question 14, Article 13; Fagundez, Volume 1, Question 14, Article 13; Arrubal, Volume 1, Question 14, Article 13, Disputation 46; Arriaga, in Logical Disputation 14, Section 6; Lessius, on Effective Grace; Ludovicus Molina in 1 Thomas, Question 14, Article 13, Disputation 17, and in the work on the concord of free will with grace, Disputation 52.

There are two types of knowledge (without mentioning the reflexive knowledge, purely natural, by which God knows Himself): one is the knowledge of vision, whether intuitive or determinate, by which God knows all beings outside Himself, which are, were, or will be, or are not. The other is simple intelligence, by which He knows all possible things; and it is called natural, indeterminate, and abstractive. But a middle knowledge, by which God knows future contingencies that will happen under a certain condition before any decree of God, is a blasphemous invention.

1. Because there would be another cause, apart from God's will, why things possible from eternity began to be future and transitioned from the state of possibility to the state of futurity; which cause would either be non-existent or mere chance if God saw future things before His decree.
2. There would be a temporal cause for an eternal matter (for the futurity of things is eternal; it did not begin to be future), or future things would have no cause at all if they were future and foreseen as such before God's will.
3. Because many wise connections—admirable wisdom and providence of God, such as these: "If Job is afflicted by Satan, he will humbly submit to God; if Judas is tempted, he will betray Christ; if the Church is oppressed, it will believe and pray"—all

these connections would precede every act of God's will and middle knowledge.

4. Because God would be compelled by fate to approve future entities before His decree, since He cannot either procure or permit their futurity. Therefore, God's dominion over and providence for contingent acts would be null, for these acts have their futurity before any act of the divine will, and hence, before any act of foreknowledge and omnipotence.
5. Because, in those evils that come to us through the ministry of contingent causes, no comfort should be sought from God's will, for they were future by fate before any decree of God.
6. Because no hope or prayer should be conceived either for the procurement of contingent goods or the aversion of contingent evils, if they occur apart from God's will and are future without God willing them.
7. Because the determined number of acts and contingencies, of conversions and non-conversions to Christ, calling upon the Gospel, would lie absolutely with the created free will, not with God and His will; for as many conversions and no more, and as many non-conversions and no more, are future before any will of God; and God cannot convert more than He does, nor non-convert more than are non-converted. O iron Fate, which holds dominion over Jehovah!
8. Because that which is unknowable—what is to be without the will of the First Cause—is supposed by this knowledge to be knowable, to be actually future, and to be actually known, although it is merely possible, and nothing more. For things before the act of the divine will are merely possible, and in no

way future, but indifferent to being or not being future; and so they cannot be known as future, no more than what is not visible can be seen, or what is not audible can be heard.

9. Because a certain and determined number of the elect and non-elect would not depend on God's will but either on fortune or the created free will. For before any decree of God, as many and no more, nor any fewer, are likewise going to believe, and therefore be saved; and as many and no more, nor any fewer, will ultimately resist God's calling and therefore be damned.
10. Future things would be future of themselves, not by God's will; non-future things would not be future of themselves, not by God's will; which overthrows all providence. For in God, there would not be a certain and determined number of all contingent actions, of all troubles, and of all happy outcomes that occur through the ministry of contingent causes, nor of all the acts of free men, of the elect and the reprobate, and of angels, good and evil. For all these things are future and foreseen as future by middle knowledge before any act of the divine will.

TITLE FIVE: On the Will of God and Its Certain Execution

Romans 9:19

"Who hath resisted His will?"

Question: Are the decrees and free volitions and actions in God something distinct from His essence, and is it false what our theologians say: "Whatever is in God is God"? And are there any accidents in God? The Arminians, especially Vorstius, in his *Apologia*, page 43, affirm this.

We deny it.

1. Because the volitions of God, though they are not external denominations but vital actions of God, still include two things:
 - The essence of God, existing in this particular manner.
 - A relational aspect of reason to things outside of God's will. This can be said, in a way, of God's external actions; thus, the volition of God is nothing but God willing, through Himself and by His essence, not by a willing power distinct from the act, as it is in us. The things willed externally, and even created things preserved and the works produced by God externally, place nothing new in God; just as being to the right or left places nothing in a man but rather presupposes a new position of another body outside the man to his right or left.

2. Because whatever is added to God, beyond or outside of His essence, is either substance or accident. No substance can be added to the infinite essence of God, for then He would not be infinite. Nor can any accident newly come upon God, for there are no accidents in Him, since no composition can exist in Him between accident and subject; no new qualification can accrue to God through the coming or going of a new accident, for then God would be subject to change.

Romans 9:19

"Who hath resisted His will?"

Question: Is there in God an antecedent and a consequent will? The Arminians affirm this.

But:

1. If the antecedent will concerns the end proposed by God, and the consequent concerns the means to the end, we would acknowledge the distinction.
2. If the antecedent will were only a complacency in a thing pleasing in itself, as it coincides with the will of the approving sign, obliging us to our duty, and the consequent will were the will of good pleasure, we would embrace the distinction in this manner.

But for the Arminians, the antecedent will is a natural desire in God, devoid of efficacy, by which He naturally desires the obedience and salvation of all mortals, yet does not effect it; this, however, applies to them insofar as they are creatures, who have not yet merited anything. The consequent will is whereby God desires the obedience and salvation of certain individuals, namely if they act worthy of the calling; otherwise, He denies them external means and salvation. But this distinction cannot be tolerated.

1. Because if God antecedently wills all to obey and be saved, yet only a few obey and are saved, then there will be an inefficacious will in God, not armed with infinite power, and He will not do all that He wills in heaven and on earth, which is against Romans 9:19 and Psalm 135:6.
2. Because in this way, God does not have mercy on whom He wills, and He hardens whom He wills, according to Romans 9:18. The antecedent will is not free; the consequent will is bound by the immutable rule of justice, whereby God cannot act otherwise than according to the reason of merits and demerits, unless He were willing to renounce His own justice.
3. The natural will, by which God, through the impulse of His nature, wills well to His creatures, is eternal; hence, it follows

that God still wills the obedience and salvation of the devils and reprobate men, bound in eternal torments, which is absurd.

4. Because it is absurd for God to antecedently will something from those whom He has foreseen will finally resist grace, having reprobated them peremptorily and irrevocably; or to will that their salvation should happen. For this love of something we know we will never attain, even in humans, suggests imperfection and unhappiness. Therefore, there is no such love in God.
5. Because an antecedent will, fulfilled, is changed into a consequent; or, if unfulfilled, being shaken off its course, ceases to be a will, just as poor men often cease to desire what they once longed for, and their hopes vanish: This would make God mutable.
6. Because He is not absolutely blessed who cannot achieve the fulfillment of His desires. But the antecedent will makes God such.
7. Because the antecedent will is reckless and without prior knowledge of the intended end; and God, by His antecedent will, intends many things without any foresight of the end, as the Arminians hold. But a will devoid of knowledge is a brute, blind, and rash appetite, inferior even to the sensitive one.
8. To will antecedently salvation for those to whom salvation is not secured by the merits of Christ and who have not yet run the race of obedience is as alien to justice—according to Arminius's rule of justice regulating God's will—as God decreeing a crown to him who has not yet fought: which, according to him, offends justice.

9. God wills with as solid a reason the eternal destruction of all mortals antecedently because it is the good of justice, as He wills the salvation of all because it is the good of the creature. Indeed, according to Arminius, the good of the creature outweighs the good of justice.
10. Because God does not only cease to will what He antecedently willed once, but also, from justice, positively wills the opposite of what He previously willed, prayed for, and swore to do.
11. The antecedent will is, properly speaking, His wish; and by the same reasoning, there would be hope in God for that which will never be, and sorrow over what is lost, which He willed to happen.
12. Because, like a reluctant shipwrecked person casting cargo into the sea, God is compelled by antecedent will to turn His sails to the consequent, as a father who, loving his son exceedingly, is compelled by the son's incorrigible obstinacy to disinherit him.
13. The consequent will concerning the wicked and hypocrites, who form the largest part of mankind, is true repentance, born of grief over the thing desired antecedently but not obtained. Therefore, they teach that God punishes unwillingly and contrary to His natural inclination.
14. The antecedent will is doubtful, uncertain, and dependent on the outcome of the creature's obedience.
15. The will of God cannot be resisted. Yet men and devils daily resist the antecedent will.

16. By the antecedent will, i.e., by natural affection, God willed to create countless worlds, angels, and men, which wills in God are eternally frustrated without any reason.

Romans 9:18

"Whom He wills, He has mercy on; and whom He wills, He hardens."

Question: Is it essential to God to have mercy and to do good, as necessary as it is for the sun to shine? Jackson, an Englishman, along with the old Anabaptists, affirms this.

We deny it.

1. Because freedom is preserved for God in dispensing His own as He wills. (Matthew 20:15)
2. Because if it were necessary for God to show mercy so as to entirely remove and completely conquer the final hardness of all, it would certainly happen. But experience and Scripture teach the contrary.
3. Because, without any force being applied to His nature, God does not will to have mercy on many, but, as the Apostle says, He wills to harden them, even if by nature and merits they are no worse than others.

Question: Does God punish men unwillingly and against His natural inclination to show mercy? The Remonstrants affirm this.

We deny it.

1. Because acts of justice are as consistent with the holy nature of God as acts of mercy; and they are just as natural to Him as these. (Exodus 34:6-7)

2. Because God as properly (if indeed this is not a figure of speech) laughs at the destruction of the wicked as He rejoices in the salvation of the righteous. (Proverbs 1:26)
3. Although the exercise of mercy, as it pertains to us, is more suitable to God's goodness, yet the attribute of justice is as essential as mercy. (Exodus 34:6-7)
4. God does all things according to the counsel of His will. Therefore, He does nothing unwillingly or against His own inclination. (Ephesians 1:11)

James 1:17

"With whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

Question: Is God immutable, and do the Arminians deny His immutability? Corvinus, against Molina (6.5. f.10), states, "It can be said that hypothetical decrees, considered separately in their parts, may change: because a condition, with respect to man, may either be fulfilled or not; and thus it either exists for a time or ceases to exist for a time, and then begins again." So Vorstius, in his *Amica Duplex* (c.1, p. 6), teaches that God may fall from His intention and that His primary intention may change into a secondary one. (*Apologia*, c.9, fol. 105). They claim men can render their election null and void and God's counsel ineffective. They distinguish election into peremptory and irrevocable, and non-peremptory and revocable.

We teach that no change can occur in God, neither subjective change, because nothing can be added to or taken from the infinite, nor can anything equally good happen to Him. (Bradwardine, *De Causa Dei*, lib. 1, cap. 1, fol. 6). Nor can terminative mutability be attributed to God, for He says of Himself, "I am who I am." Things that change are not, nor do they remain, as they are.

Terminative immutability is where the intellect and will of God do not change because of a change in the object understood or willed, nor because of changes in effects outside of God. Not simply, because God does not change His judgment; and nothing becomes good to God that was not already seen as good by Him, as the Scholastics teach.

For this reason, which I do not approve, since God beholds all possible things and wills them from pure liberty, not because of the goodness He sees in the things themselves (for the things willed are not a formal reason for God to will them; God does not will things outside of Himself because they are good, but from His intrinsic freedom), it does not follow that change results from passion or moral inconsistency: rather, if pure "to will" were changed to pure "to not will," out of His intrinsic freedom, then terminative change would be in God.

Indeed, if God, having rightly known two things, were to choose one as a greater good and then afterward another as a lesser good, repudiating the former, there would be no change in God's intellect; hence, there would be no change in will from different acts of knowing, for He knows both objects equally; yet there would be a change because God's will would not relate in the same manner to the one object now and to the other before; but Scripture argues from God's immutability to the immutability of the thing willed: Therefore, if He willed something and afterward did not will it, there would be terminative change in Him. (Malachi 3:6) "For I, Jehovah, do not change; therefore, you sons of Jacob are not consumed." Thus, if things outside of God were to change and be otherwise than God had decreed them to be, then God would be terminatively changed. Therefore, if the sons of Jacob had been consumed, whom God had decreed not to be consumed, Jehovah would be changed.

Likewise, 1 Samuel 15:29: "The Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent." Therefore, if God's sentence stood firm in rejecting you and appointing David to the throne, and Saul had not been rejected from the throne, whom God willed to be rejected, then God would have made a lie and repented. Therefore, terminative change is not to be ascribed to God, nor can God will today His glory for whom He did not will it yesterday.

2. Because, Psalm 33:10, "Jehovah brings the counsel of the nations to nothing; He frustrates the plans of the peoples." Verse 11: "But the counsel of Jehovah stands forever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations." (Isaiah 46:10) "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Romans 9:19) "Who can resist His will?" (Hebrews 6:17) "God, willing to show the immutability of His counsel, etc."
3. God is not in potentiality concerning anything; but from eternity, His will has been determined to every volition and non-volition, even though things outside of God could have been otherwise. For nothing is willed or not willed, except that from eternity God either willed or did not will it. He does not begin anew to will or not to will anything.
4. It is blasphemous what Vorstius says about God in *Notis* (disputation 6, thesis 34, 35): "As for those things that God leaves indefinite (namely, those which fall under our free will), there is no certain will of God concerning them." For then God's will would remain in balance and at a crossroads until contingent things either actually existed or did not exist, and His will would remain changeable at the nod of a cause operating contingently: which is what the Remonstrants said above when

they claimed that future contingents are neither known nor necessarily future concerning the divine will.

5. Nor does it matter that God willed ceremonial worship from eternity, and that this worship has now ceased, because from eternity He willed that worship to endure for a time. But from this, it does not follow that His will was temporal or has now vanished, for He now wills that worship only for a time.
6. Because it is blasphemous to say that God begins to will something anew or to cease willing it anew (as if God, newly, begins to will and destine for glory a man whom He has not destined for glory from eternity, and again, determines to destine Peter for glory, whom He destined for glory from eternity). Because, in this way, true repentance, new volition, and a new frustrated intention would follow many old volitions that were previously in Him.

Therefore, our theologians argue that God is not mutable, for nothing can seem new to His knowledge or will, such that He judges good what He had previously judged not good due to a newly arising reason in the object. But if He loves Peter for eternal glory, whom He previously hated unto death, or conversely, because of a newly arising reason in the object, since he believes and again does not believe, He is truly changed, as all our theologians argue. And by the same reasoning, there is no primary intention in God, from which He sometimes falls away, with a subsequent secondary intention succeeding.

1. Because, as it is written in Job 23:13, "What His soul desires, that He does."
2. Because the counsels of God are eternal and immutable. (Psalm 33:11; Isaiah 46:10)

3. Because for God's purposes to fail is a sign of misery and punishment among creatures. (Job 22:28; Psalm 33:10; Isaiah 8:9; Job 5:12-13)
4. No one can resist the will of God. (Daniel 4:35; Romans 9:19; Psalm 113:5), even in those things that come to pass through contingent causes, as these passages demonstrate.
5. Because it is contrary to infinite wisdom that God would will, intend, desire, pray, supplicate, and wish — as the adversaries teach — for that which He knows He will never attain, when, in fact, He could attain it if He so willed; for such behavior would not befit a prudent man.
6. Because Paul raises the same objection in Romans 9:6: "Has the word of God failed? Has the word and covenant made with Abraham concerning obtaining salvation failed?" That is, "Has the intention of God expressed in that covenant become void?" He answers in verse 6, "The word of the covenant has not failed." And he denies the conclusion: "Israel has failed" (that is, Israel according to the flesh). Therefore, the covenant and intention of God have not failed because the intention of God was concerning the salvation of the children of the promise, not those according to the flesh.
7. Because it is the height of imperfection and dependency for the divine will to aim at an alternative end if the primary end fails, as if overpowered by the creature.
8. A secondary intention presupposes that something has occurred contrary to the intention of God, and therefore something accidental in relation to God.
9. Because God does not cease to call even those who are obstinate and have fallen into sin against the Holy Spirit. Does He, therefore, intend their obedience and salvation? If He does not intend it, then, according to the adversaries, He calls them with deceitful, simulated, and feigned will. If He does intend it, God

cannot have a primary intention here, as the adversaries admit; therefore, this distinction does not hold in this case, nor, by similar reasoning, in the calling of others.

10. Because a primary intention changed into a secondary one implies a change in the divine will.

MATTHEW 6:10

"Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

Our prayers are the means by which the will of God is fulfilled.

Question: Should the distinction between the Will of God's Good Pleasure (*Voluntas Beneplaciti*) and the Will of His Command (*Voluntas Signi*), as proposed by the Arminians, be accepted?

Answer: No. For according to them, by His Will of Good Pleasure, God wills the same things to happen that He wills to happen by His Will of Command; and they hold that the Will of Good Pleasure is the same as the Will of Command, except that the former is hidden while the latter is revealed to us. Thus, Arminius says in *Disputation 4, Thesis 58*.

But we teach that the Will of Good Pleasure is the decree of God, both concerning good things, which He necessarily will give and accomplish, and concerning evil things, which He permits to be done by others. The Will of Command is simply God's approval and endorsement of something as morally permissible and honest, even though the realization of that thing was never decreed by God.

Therefore, God wills and approves by His Will of Command many things that He has never decreed by His Will of Good Pleasure to bring to pass. For example, He wills the obedience of Judas, Herod, and Pilate, and yet decreed that they would crucify the Lord of glory, by His permission.

2. Because God approves by His Will of Command the perfect obedience of His Law, yet by His Will of Good Pleasure, He decreed from eternity that none, except Christ, would perfectly fulfill the Law.
3. Because God preaches the Gospel to many who are obstinate and approves of their repentance, yet from eternity He decreed not to give them the effective grace without which they cannot repent.
4. Whatever God has decreed to be done or not done by His Will of Good Pleasure will necessarily be done or not done in its due time; it is, therefore, the simple Will of God, which He cannot fail to accomplish, whatever He has willed and decreed to be done. (Matthew 27:35; John 19:36; Matthew 2:15, 17, 18; John 2:22). Yet God approves as good many things which He has never decreed to happen.

Hence, it is false to claim that we posit contradictory wills in God. We do not teach that God approves, that is, has decreed from eternity, that what He commands should be done or what He prohibits should not be done. Nor do we teach that God's approving will infers that He has decreed from eternity to accomplish what He approves, unless we impose a barrier.

Related Question: Is it God's intention, by the invocation of all in the Visible Church, that all and each one obey and be saved? The Remonstrants say, in Articles 2 and 3, page 10:

We deny it. 1. Because God's intention does not fail, as has been proven. Yet not all obey and are saved.

2. Because He who is infinitely wise does not intend what He knows He will never achieve.

3. Because the Law says to all, "Do this, and you shall live." Yet God does not intend perfect obedience from all mortals; otherwise, He

would intend to make the death of Christ futile.

4. God preaches the Word to many for the purpose that they may be hardened, as Scripture says (Isaiah 6:9; Matthew 13:14-15), which even our adversaries concede.

5. Because God does not choose all in the visible Church unto glory, therefore...

Related Question: Since God not only approves of the obedience of the reprobate as something fitting, which they are obliged to perform, but also gently invites, beseeches, and implores them, and laments, grieves, and complains over their disobedience — does He, therefore, intend their obedience? The Remonstrants say, Article 1, page 57:

We deny it. 1. Because from gentle invitation, one can only conclude an obliging call upon the creature to obedience, a serious approval and complacency that God has toward obedience as something holy, owed to Him, morally pleasing, suitable, and salutary for humans. Thus, these emotions in God add nothing beyond a mere complacency concerning obedience, except a certain kind of intensity and earnestness of divine obligation to it, which testifies that God has seriously commanded obedience from all and that men are bound to it, and that such obedience would be uniquely pleasing to Him and salutary to men if it were performed, even though He has decreed that it should not be performed due to human vice.

2. Because from God's grief over the disobedience of the reprobate, it cannot be concluded that He had the intention that they should actually obey, any more than one can conclude that there are truly human passions, vain desires, frustrated prayers, and the unhappiness of a grieving God who cannot fulfill His own desires.

3. For God, preserving the liberty of the creature, through motivations He has hidden in the treasures of His wisdom, as Arminius testifies, can infallibly procure their obedience if He had

decreed, intended, and earnestly desired it from eternity as much as humans desire to achieve that which they sorrow and grieve over its lack of achievement.

Question: What should we think of the distinction between God's Will as efficient and permitting? We acknowledge it; here, however, the Arminians disagree with us.

Efficient Will is that will which is the primary and highest cause of all positive beings; permitting will, on the other hand, affirms one thing and denies two. It affirms the positive act of the Will of Good Pleasure; for it is not a mere negation of will, as the Arminians claim. For God wills that sins should occur for the sake of His glory by His permitting will. The Arminians contend that by His permitting will, God wills nothing but merely does not will that others are allowed to sin. Hence, it is an idle and non-acting will, or rather a negation of will than a true will or volition, according to them. But to us, the permitting will denies two things: 1. It denies moral efficiency, for God is not the cause of those things He permits. 2. It denies approving will, for what God permits, He does not approve nor prescribe to the creature to do.

EPHESIANS 1:11

"He works all things according to the counsel of His will."

Question: Has God absolutely decreed all things, even contingencies, from eternity? Arminius expresses his position in these words in *Article 7, p. 143*: "The term 'determination' is ambiguous. It can mean either the determination of God (by which He decrees that something should happen) in such a way that, when any action, movement, or impulse of God is established, the secondary cause remains free, both in power and in the exercise of power, to act or not to act, so that it may suspend its own action; or

in such a way that, when the action, movement, and impulse of God are established, the secondary cause does not remain free, at least not in the exercise of power, to suspend its own action, but is necessarily inclined to one side or the other before the act itself is determined or produced by a free creature." According to the former, God has determined contingencies to either side by His eternal decree; according to the latter, not so, because it would be a contradiction for something to be both contingent and necessary. Thus, the Remonstrants argue in their *Apologia*. We judge these words of Arminius to be false, blasphemous, and mere fabrications designed to please the people.

1. Because a determination of contingent acts to one side, so that either this side or that, or a free act or non-act, may follow, is a determination to neither side; and a determination to neither side is no determination at all, but indifference, which is plainly contradictory.
2. The determination of contingent acts of faith, for example, of Peter, such that it remains possible for Peter's faith to follow or not, is the same as if Arminius were saying that, after as well as before God's determination, Peter's faith remains undetermined. But for God to determine something to one thing that is not determined to that one thing after the determination is mere mockery of the reader.
3. The other part of this distinction is not determination. And what can be meant by this in such an unfortunate division, no one can imagine, except someone who would say that man is rightly divided into man and non-man, or that stones are divided into two parts, some that are stones and some that are not stones, or fish, some that are fish and others that are not fish.

4. This determination of God leaves all contingent acts in no state of futurity; but all free acts can equally occur or not occur, even after all of God's volition, action, and impulse, so that no free act is future until it actually happens. Thus, the decree of God is that everything is possible, but nothing is future. Therefore, God decrees free acts in the same way He decreed the deliverance of Christ from death by more than 12 legions of angels; or as He decreed the existence of three or four worlds, or the repentance of the Tyrians if they had seen miracles. And so, when God decreed that Peter would believe, it is the same as if He decreed that Peter could, by God's grace, believe; and when He decreed that the soldiers would not break Christ's bones, it is the same as decreeing that they could break Christ's bones. When He decreed that Peter would speak tomorrow, it means He decreed that Peter could speak or not speak tomorrow. But no sane person would say that the possibility of acting or not acting is determined and decreed by God, for before any decree of God, Peter can, by God's grace, believe or not believe, can speak or not speak; indeed, the potential to act or not act, or to be or not be, is no more subject to God's free decree than God can decree that God should be infinite. Nor do possibilities fall under God's free decree, because before and without God's decree, all possibilities are possible. What is decreed by God are futures, not possibilities.

5. According to this opinion, God contributes no more by His decree to the futurity of contingent acts than Peter's will or Peter's walking does when the sun is shining. God's will is not the cause of the futurity of things but leaves future contingencies to "may be" or "may not be." Thus, the futurity of things is, from eternity, from themselves, which is absurd. For if a thing is by God's will as its cause, it cannot be future without the same; and

if things exist by God's providence, things that are future are by God's providence. For as many things are present, so many things are future, and so many future events. It is more absurd than absurdity itself to claim that the number of future events does not depend on the will of God, for it is impossible for something created to exist that was not from eternity future.

6. If God has not determined future contingencies from eternity, nor has He willed them from eternity, nor does His will determine them in time, then God begins to will and determine them in time, and He wills something in time that He did not will from eternity. This is because He does not absolutely will or determine them in time. And if the free creature does not determine itself, God would neither will nor determine that act. Therefore, there is in God a present will that was not future unless we had willed it.
7. But Scripture and reasoning from Scripture refute Arminius here. Isaiah 14:27 decrees irrevocably the destruction of the Chaldeans by the Medes and the liberation of His people by Cyrus, the executor of His counsel (Isaiah 46:10-11). It decreed the division of Christ's garments, the piercing of His hands and feet, His crucifixion (Matthew 27:35; John 19:24; Psalm 22:18; John 19:18), the non-breaking of His bones (John 19:33-36). It decreed the calling of the Gentiles and their free response both from the preachers' side and from those responding to God's call (Isaiah 11:10; 49:1-2, 21-22; 54:1-3; 60:4-5; 66:12; Acts 2:8-10, 24, 46-47; Romans 9:24-26).
8. Because He predestined the appointed times and the boundaries of human habitation (Acts 17:26).

9. Because He decreed, in 2 Samuel 17:14 (Hebrew: commanded), to frustrate the counsel of Ahithophel.
10. Because He decreed from eternity to give the land of Canaan to His people, who nevertheless freely fought and journeyed to possess it, freely using strategies and war apparatus (Psalm 78:69). "He built His sanctuary like the heights, like the earth which He established (fixed) forever."
11. Because God "works all things according to the counsel of His will" (Ephesians 1:11). Therefore, He decreed all things from eternity, whether contingent or necessary, because God does nothing in time that He did not decree to do from eternity.
12. Lot, and those things most fortuitous, depend on God's providence as the first and sure cause. And if someone accidentally kills a traveler with a falling ax-head, the Lord says, "I have killed him" (Deuteronomy 19:5; Exodus 21:13; Proverbs 16:33). Therefore, the most contingent and fortuitous things are decreed by God from eternity.
13. Because it is contrary to God's wisdom that there should be contingencies not predestined by His wise will.
14. Because it is against God's justice that there should be free acts of His servants and punishments of the wicked that are not absolutely willed by God, such as the acts of plundering Job, defiling David's bed through adultery and murder, killing the wicked Ahab in battle, and the blasphemous King Sennacherib of Assyria in his idol temple by his sons (Isaiah 37:37-38).
15. Because it is in vain that we pray and trust God to avert evils arising from contingent causes unless those are done by His

absolute will.

16. Because it is in vain that we fear God in such calamities and humbly submit to His will, and likewise in vain that we gratefully receive goods derived from contingent causes unless they are done by God's absolute will.

Question: Has God decreed all future contingencies by a conditional decree, and does this suffice to preserve divine Providence, as the Arminians teach?

We declare that their so-called conditional decree is blasphemous and unworthy of God. To better understand this, according to their view, a conditional decree is one by which God has decreed that contingencies shall be, on the hypothesis that He foreknows them—whether by Scientia Media or some other unimaginable means—prior to decreeing that they will occur. It is as if God were to say, "I decree that Peter shall believe, because I foreknow that he will believe, or that My will shall determine him to believe (which comes to the same thing); but I decree nothing about the free acts of creatures until I foreknow that they will occur, or that some contingent cause will produce those acts before My will determines them." In other words, "I decree that contingent effects shall be if they are to be; and if they are not to be, I decree that they shall not be." But this decree is blasphemous for the following reasons:

1. Because in this way, all future contingencies are prior, in regard to their futuration, to any decree of God; and thus the effects of secondary causes are prior to the first cause and its will.
2. It contradicts the freedom of God that future free acts should exist prior to God's free decree.

3. It is contrary to the wisdom of God that effects should be future before the act of God's wise will.
4. It is against justice that the incest of Absalom should have futuration before the act of God's will punishing David's adultery by that act, and that Job's plundering should precede the will of God, who chastises Job and tests his faith and patience.
5. It involves God in fatalism and compels His omnipotence, freely operating outwardly, to contribute to acts that have futuration before any decree of His own, so that no effect would occur without the influence of the first cause.
6. There would be no room for holy fear, humble patience, due gratitude, hope, and confidence, humility, prayer, fervent supplication, or careful use of means when men are pressed by calamities arising from free and contingent causes or when they obtain goods from contingent causes, such as from kings, nobles, friends, enemies, the industrious efforts of farmers, or the care and labor of craftsmen. For there would be no reason to look to the will of God in all these things that have futuration before any act of the divine will.
7. Because God would do nothing by His mere grace in free acts if all these acts had futuration before any act of gracious will.
8. Because all contingent effects would occur by chance, before, and therefore apart from, any act of divine will; and divine Providence, and hence God, in the procurement or non-procurement of free acts and contingent effects, would be nothing but a non-acting principle, a mere title, a name without reality.

9. Because it contradicts the rule of providence over all beings that all contingencies should be future before the act of God's will.

Luke 21:18

"But not a hair of your head shall perish."

Question: Does Fortune reign, according to the Arminians? They deny it; we prove that Fortune rules over everything according to their doctrine.

1. Because contingencies occur, with respect to God who knows and orders them by His providence, apart from intention: therefore, they happen by chance in relation to God. This follows from Aristotle, followed by the Conimbricenses College in *Aristotle's Physics*, Book 2, Chapter 7, Article 1, and by Francisco Murcia de Lallana, *Physics*, Book 6, Question 1, Argument 10. Likewise, Julius Sirenius in Book 5 of *Providence* says that sins occur by chance and randomly.
2. Because the will to permit sin comes after the impulse and inclination of the created will; and therefore, anyone is permitted by God to sin if they desire to do so. Therefore, all evil free acts do not depend absolutely on God and occur outside God's intention; thus, they occur by Fortune.
3. Because God has determined nothing about the outcome of contingent events—whether they fall this way or that—from eternity; just as Fortune has determined nothing about them. Because God has left all things to the possibility of being or not being.
4. Because regarding persecutions rather than non-persecutions, to calamities and afflictions which we suffer from contingent

causes—whether to be endured or not to be endured; to good things received or not received from secondary contingent causes; to prosperity or adversity, wealth or poverty, good reputation or infamy, honor or dishonor, life or death, which arise from contingent causes—God contributes no more primarily, as the infallible cause determining them, than does Fortune. Therefore, Fortune reigns.

5. Because Proverbs 16:33 says, "The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the Lord." But this is false, for the judgment and determination of the lot, whether it be white or black, is from either the hand that draws the lot, or from the lots themselves, or from God, or from Fortune. It is not from the hand, for it is a blind and indifferent touch with no light or instinct guiding it to draw this lot rather than that. Nor is it from the lots themselves, for the entire question concerns the lots, which in themselves are determinable and indifferent. Nor is the judgment from God, for our adversaries deny that God determines secondary contingent causes; they teach that He concurs with them in a universal, indifferent, and determinable manner, which does not include grasping the white lot rather than the black one. Therefore, it is solely from Fortune, or from pure and absolute contingency, whereby contingent causes, freed from any predetermined action of God, and notwithstanding all divine action, can either act or not act. This, indeed, is a cause superior to God, which is not governed by God but is Fortune itself, blind and capricious. For if there is Fortune, there is no Providence; and if there is Providence, there is no Fortune.
6. Because if the certain and determined number of contingent and free actions does not rest upon divine Providence, it rests upon

blind Fortune. This is the Arminian doctrine. They condemn our teaching that with respect to God's active providence and decree, contingent and free causes cannot produce more contingent actions than they do.

7. There is no reason to give thanks to God for avoiding an evil that comes from contingent causes. For they teach that God cannot determine a contingent cause to act if it is indifferent to non-action, and God cannot determine it to refrain from acting if it is inherently indifferent to action. Therefore, we should give thanks to Fortune instead.

Romans 11:23

"God is able to graft them in again."

Question: Does God retain dominion over free actions according to the Jesuits and Arminians? They say He does; we deny it.

1. Because, with the concept of *Scientia Media* in place, all contingent actions have their futurity before the free decree of God. Yet God cannot have dominion to bring about their existence or to prevent it, which would make them future prior to any act of His will.
2. Whoever truly has dominion over a free action, so that it happens rather than not, must be able to ensure that, when all the necessary conditions for acting are in place, the free action occurs rather than not. But according to our adversaries, God cannot do this, for they say He would thereby destroy freedom.
3. Legal scholars rightly define dominion as the proper right of each person to use a thing for any lawful purpose. Yet God

cannot use Peter's will to will rather than not will, standing by the definition of freedom as they propose.

4. God does not possess dominion over the exact number of free actions of angels and men; therefore, He does not have dominion over these actions. For, according to the adversaries, the number of actions elicited by a free will—whether more or fewer—is not determined by God's decree or action, but solely by the created free will.
5. Jurists rightly deny that the same thing can be owned in full by two people; for the will of one in using it can oppose the will of the other using the same thing. The Arminians, however, assert that dominion over "not willing rather than willing" belongs to the created will, even when all conditions on God's part for action are in place. Thus, it cannot belong to God, who often wills not willing when man wills, and wills willing when man does not will, as our adversaries teach.
6. One does not have dominion to dispose of a matter if they cannot dispose of it as they wish but only as another, who resists them, wishes to dispose of it. Thus, an heir and a wife (as the jurists say) do not have perfect dominion because they cannot dispose of property without the consent of a guardian or husband, who may resist. Therefore, God does not have dominion to dispose of the actions of the will unless the created will, which often resists God, consents.

Question: Does God have sufficient dominion over free actions according to Scripture, such that He could ensure a free action occurs rather than not occur? The Remonstrants and Jesuits attribute such dominion to the free will but not to God. We, however, ascribe such dominion solely to God.

1. Because, as Ephesians 3:20 says, "God is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us." Therefore, He can give faith, love, repentance, and perseverance, and the acts of those virtues which we ask for daily, above what we ask or think. Romans 11:23 states, "God is able to graft them in again," indicating that He can bring about the free conversion of the Jews. 2 Corinthians 9:8 says, "And God is able to make all grace abound toward you." Romans 16:25: "Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel... to Him be glory." Romans 14:4: "God is able to make him stand." Jude 24: "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling." 1 John 4:4: "You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because greater is He that is in you than he who is in the world." 1 Peter 1:5: "Who are kept by the power of God." John 10:29: "My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand." Matthew 19:26: "With men, this is impossible; but with God, all things are possible." Romans 15:13: "That you may abound in hope, by the power of the Holy Spirit." Nehemiah 1:10: "They are Your servants and Your people, whom You have redeemed by Your great power and by Your strong hand." This power was exercised over free actions in Pharaoh, who freely released the people, through Moses and Aaron, who freely preached and performed miracles, and through the people who freely went out.
2. Because God can convert and save more, and not convert and damn more, than He does; if it so pleases Him. Acts 26:29, Romans 11:23.
3. Because God has greater and more absolute dominion over created wills than the created will has over itself.

4. Because God has the right to use every created thing for any lawful purpose (thus, dominion is defined); therefore, God can use the created will and free actions to be or not to be, as He knows is conducive to His glory.
5. Because if God did not have dominion over the number and kinds of human and angelic wills, there would be no determined number of the elect or the reprobate; if God's Providence did not have dominion over as many volitions of humans and angels as He saw fit to occur or exist.
6. Because if the created will were the first to exercise dominion and not God, then it would be the first operator.
7. Prayers and supplications for the unfailing submission of the will to filial obedience could not be made unless God, by His invincible dominion, could procure those acts rather than non-acts.
8. Faith, repentance, and gratitude towards God for the good or evil free acts of men and angels would utterly collapse unless they relied on God's dominion, who could procure the free act rather than the non-act.
9. The praise and glory for conversion rather than non-conversion would not be due to God but to the created will if the created will, and not God, had dominion over the acts of conversion rather than non-conversion.

1 Thessalonians 4:3

"For this is the will of God, your sanctification."

This is the central question between us and the Arminians regarding the will of God concerning sin. Therefore, let us establish the state of the question as follows:

Does God will that sin should occur by His permission?

The status of the question must be carefully defined.

1. It is agreed between us that God foresees sins before they occur —between us (I mean) and the Jesuits; although the Arminians, blasphemously, deny that God foresees future sins.
2. It is agreed that God concurs in the material acts of sin, although there is considerable controversy regarding the manner of this concurrence.
3. That God brings good out of sin.
4. That God neither causes nor creates sin.
5. That God forbids, prohibits, and hates sin.
6. That God, knowing and willing, permits sins.
7. That God is not the author of sin, regardless of what our adversaries may slanderously claim.
8. That even if a decree of God intervenes concerning the existence of sin, men who sin are not excused.
9. That by the will of sign, or approving will, God in no way wills sin.

Thus, we do not ask:

1. Whether God is the cause of sin, as Gregory of Valencia claims.

Nor,

2. Whether God wills sin in the same way He wills punishment. For God positively wills and brings about punishment.

3. Nor do we ask (as the Valentinians assert) whether God incites men to sin under the appearance of good. For man is impelled to action while preserving his freedom, but not in any way toward evil.

4. Nor (as Arminius states in "Anti-Perkins," p. 698) do we inquire whether men are moved by any act of God to will or do evil. For none of us asserts that God moves men to will or do evil.

5. Bellarmine, incorrectly in "De amiss. peccati," Book 2, Chapter 3, asks whether God is the author of sin.

Nor,

6. Do we inquire (as Vorstius states in the appendix to "Amica Dupl.," p. 36-37) whether God wills what is ordinarily in His Word, commanded under penalty of death, to be done by us contrary to His will, both antecedent and absolute. We do not acknowledge such a question; for we do not teach that God wills by His good pleasure that which He does not will by His good pleasure. There are no contrary wills in God here; rather, He approves and commands certain things as good, which He decrees to do, and disapproves and prohibits certain things as evil, which He decrees to permit, to be done, and to do for His glory.

Nor,

7. Do we inquire (as the Tridentine Fathers dream) whether the work of sin is equally the work of God as the work of obedience.

But our adversaries teach here:

1. That God intends and decrees to accomplish everything that He commands and enjoins by His will of sign. We deny this.
2. They teach that God in no way wills that sins occur; rather, God is unwilling, inactive, and passively permitting the occurrence of sin. We assert that God is willing here.
3. They teach that God wills what is drawn out of sin, namely, that God does not will the existence of sin, even as a means to manifest His divine glory. Instead, from the hypothesis that sin exists, with God unwilling, He wills the good of justice or mercy that is elicited from sin. We teach that God permissively wills sin to occur, not simply as sin, but as a means to manifest the glory of His justice and mercy.
4. They teach that permission is merely a passive and idle regard of God, by which He does nothing but leaves the free will of the creature to sin or not to sin. We reject the fiction of idle permission as repugnant to Providence.

Thus, the question is:

Does God not merely by a naked and idle permission, but by some active and positive act of His permitting will, actually will that sin should exist, as it is a means to manifest divine glory; while, in the meantime, disapproving and detesting sin as an evil, albeit willing it as, in the general sense, a useful good, in that it conduces to the illustration of God's glory? Or has God decreed that sin should occur, by His permission, through the failure of the creature, insofar as sin is a means to His glory? Our adversaries deny it. We prove it.

1. Genesis 45:7: Not Joseph's brothers, but God sent him into Egypt. Acts 2:23 and 4:27: Because those who crucified Christ did nothing other than what God decreed should happen. And in

Acts 13:29: They fulfilled all that was written concerning Christ.
1 Kings 22:20-23: A lying spirit in the mouth of the prophets sent by God lured Ahab to battle, forbidden by God, to perish there.
2 Samuel 24:1: God incited David to number the people of God.
2 Samuel 12:11: That Absalom wickedly defiled his father's bed, God ascribes to Himself: "I will do this thing before the sun."
1 Chronicles 5:26: God stirred up the spirit of Pul and others to lead the people into captivity.
2 Chronicles 21:16-17: Jehovah stirred up the spirit of the Philistines and Arabs against Jehoram, who invaded Judah.
Isaiah 45:7: "I am the Lord, creating light and forming darkness, making peace and creating evil."
Job 1:21: "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away."
Ezekiel 14:9: "I the Lord have deceived that prophet."
1 Corinthians 1:19-20: "He confounds the wisdom of the wise."
2 Thessalonians 2:11: "God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie."
1 Peter 3:17: "It is better, if the will of God be so, that you suffer for doing good than for doing evil."
Revelation 17:17: "God has put it in their hearts to give their kingdom unto the beast."

2. God, by His free ordination alone, imposes upon all the descendants of Adam the necessity of contracting original sin. Therefore, He wills that sin should occur by His permission.
3. Because He permits sin for a determined end, which He does not achieve without sin.
4. Because God knowingly and willingly moves the wills of men in such a way that they sin; and He could so move them that they do not sin, but He does not will to move them otherwise.
5. Because He uses devils and men in the act of sinning as His instruments to execute His judgments. Assyria is the rod of

God's anger (Isaiah 10:5), the hired razor (Isaiah 7:20), Babylon is the golden cup in the Lord's hand (Jeremiah 51:7), the hammer of God (Jeremiah 50:23), Nebuchadnezzar, the servant of God (Jeremiah 25:9; 27:6).

Question: Does God will sin insofar as it is a punishment for sin? The Jesuits and Arminians deny this. We assert and prove:

1. **Romans 1:26:** Because of idolatry, God gave them over to vile affections: "For even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature." Verse 28: "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient." **2 Thessalonians 2:11-12:** "For this cause, God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth."
2. Because God threatens hardness of heart and sins as punishment. **Isaiah 6:9; Matthew 13:13-14; Acts 28:26-27.**
3. Because God threatens His people that the Assyrians, Chaldeans, and others will devastate them and lead them into captivity. Yet this devastation itself was a grievous sin.
4. All that is just by participation derives from the first Justice itself. It was just that the bed of David was defiled by incest, for he had defiled his neighbor's bed. It was just that Nebuchadnezzar punished the idolatry of the people with slaughter, the sword, and captivity. And it is just that the one who is detestable to Jehovah falls into the company of a harlot. **Proverbs 22:14.** Therefore, this is from the first Justice itself.

2 Thessalonians 2:11

"For this reason, God will send them a strong delusion."

Question: Is sin a punishment for sin? The adversaries deny that sin is formally a punishment for sin. They assert that the entitative act is a punishment, that permission is a punishment, and that sin is a punishment causatively and demeritoriously. But they deny that sin is formally and properly a punishment. We prove the opposite.

1. The Scriptures cited above prove it. Add to these **2 Samuel 12:11; 2 Samuel 16:11; 1 Kings 22:20-21; 2 Chronicles 32:31; Isaiah 19:14; Isaiah 29:10; Romans 11:8; Proverbs 22:14.**
2. Because that which deprives a person of the highest good, namely, God, and the good of reason (and which inflicts a stain and guilt on the soul), and that which deprives a person of the required good of legal righteousness, turning them towards creatures and rendering them most vile, is a very grievous punishment. Yet sin, as such, does this.
3. Because God threatens sin as a punishment, as in the devastation and captivity of His people by the Assyrians and Chaldeans.
4. Because all persecutions inflicted on the saints by wicked men are grievous sins and simultaneously chastisements and punishments inflicted on the servants of God.
5. Because it is just that the wicked should be hardened and filled with all unrighteousness, as Paul says in **Romans 1:29-30.** Therefore, this is a punishment justly inflicted by God.

Question: Since punishment is involuntary and a passion, and sin is voluntary and an action, does it follow that sin cannot be a punishment? This is what the Jesuits and Arminians assert. We deny it.

1. Because the stain, disgrace, guilt, and aversion from the highest good — which are penalties within sin — are involuntary. For the sinner would wish to be free from these and enjoy the illicit good.
2. Not every punishment is involuntary. For if a doctor gives wine as a punishment to a stubborn patient, then drinking is voluntary to the patient, yet still a punishment. Likewise, the penalty of loss, as distinguished from the penalty of sense, is often inflicted on one who is unaware, who is neither voluntary nor involuntary in respect, as is evident in the wicked who are fattened for the day of slaughter without knowledge and are blind. **Psalm 73:2-6; Job 21:2-6; Jeremiah 12:1-3; Hosea 4:13-14.** For example, a drunkard is punished while being carried to prison by officers, even though he is not unwilling to be taken there.
3. Because a depraved habit, original sin, and corrupt inclinations in a person, which are condemned by God's Law, would not be considered sins if only actions were to be considered.

Question: Is God merely a passive permitter and accidental cause of hardening, leaving it to human choice to be hardened or not, according to one's will? The Remonstrants affirm; we deny.

1. Because God often threatens hardening as a punishment. Yet, punishment is not left to the discretion of the one punished. A

judge is negligent and remiss who allows the guilty to decide whether they will be punished or not.

2. Punishment is a good thing, and punitive action is a good work of justice. But it is absurd to say that something just could be from the first justice only by accident.
3. All that is just from an accidental cause must proceed from some principal cause. Therefore, if a sinner is punished with sin, it is either a work of justice instituted by God — or it results from chance, which is abominable, or from the sinner himself, which is absurd since he, as such, acts unjustly against God.
4. Punishment is inevitable for the creature to whom God threatens it. Therefore, it is not left to the discretion of man to be hardened or not.
5. Because if God merely permits by a passive permission through opportunities and the preaching of the Gospel, which men abuse to harden themselves, then God has no more part in the hardening of Pharaoh than in the hardening of David and the saints, for He presents the same occasions which they might misuse to harden themselves.
6. Because there is no reason for anyone to pray that God might avert hardening or to give thanks to God for a softened heart if God were merely a passive permitter, allowing man's Free Will to determine itself to harden or not. We do not pray to God for what He does not have in His will; if He is in no way an active and perfect cause here, God does not have the culpable hardening in His power.

Question: Does God prohibit the act itself or rather the malice of the act in His Law? The Arminians affirm that the act itself is formally prohibited: in the Synodical writings, Article p. 235, and Arminius in *Anti-Perkins* p. 730. They assert that God cannot predetermine an act without necessarily predetermining its malice, because the act itself is formally prohibited by God's Law. Thus, Arminius claims that eating the fruit of the Knowledge Tree is itself sin, with all its disorder consisting in the fact that this act of eating has its place in the number and order of human actions. We, on the contrary, contend that entitative acts, as such, are neither commanded nor prohibited.

1. Because entitative acts, neither morally please God nor morally displease Him; for simply acting is neither morally good nor evil, but rather it is good or evil depending on how one acts.
2. Because God gives the Law to man as an ethical agent capable of blessedness. But to perform physical acts pertains to man as a physical, not an ethical, agent.
3. Because those acts that are formally commanded and forbidden are those that make us blessed or miserable. But entitative acts are not such; rather, they involve walking in the Law of God, **Psalm 119:1**, or deviating from it.
4. Because God formally commands what the saints implore Him to grant grace to accomplish, and forbids what men commit when destitute of grace.

Question: Are acts and malice distinguished in all sins? The Arminians deny this, but we always affirm the distinction.

1. Because no act is essentially disordered; for if an act were essentially the disorder itself, this would be sheer Manichaeism. Just as snow is white, but is not the whiteness itself, so form or privation, pertaining to the acts to which they adhere, are predicated concretely but not abstractly.
2. Scripture makes this distinction: "Cease to do evil," **Isaiah 1:16**; "Take away the evil of your doings," **Hosea 5:15**; "Their works are works of iniquity," **Isaiah 65:2**; "Now the works of the flesh are evident," **Galatians 5:19**. Therefore, one thing is the work, another is the sin adhering to the work.
3. Arminius admits that eating itself is a natural act, having in itself no disorder. But the prohibition of the Lawgiver does not annul the nature of the natural act, nor does it transubstantiate it into the disorder itself.
4. Because the act is a real and positive entity; while the disorder is a moral and privative entity.
5. The act is metaphysically good and the proper effect of the first cause; whereas the disorder is essentially evil.
6. If the act were prohibited in itself, then the contrary act, which pertains to supernatural goodness, would be in itself commanded; and thus our physical act would be essentially obedience itself, which is absurd.

Question: Is sin essentially opposed to God? The Arminians affirm this, teaching that sin is opposed to the Nature of God. We answer that there are two kinds of opposition. One is internal, such as exists between two accidents, like heat and cold. The other is external, which is a non-congruity, such as between things that are primarily

diverse, like substance and quantity. In the former sense, there is no opposition between God and creatures; nor is sin opposed to God in a privative sense, because the privation of the Highest Good cannot exist, as it would imply the destruction of God. Neither is sin opposed to God in a contrary sense, because such opposition exists only among accidents. Nor is it opposed relatively, for if sin were posited, God would be removed; or if God were posited, sin would be removed—an absurdity. Nor is there a contradictory opposition here, for in this way every creature would be opposed to God: since God is not a man, not a tree, not an angel. It follows, then, that sin neither nullifies God nor anything of the Divine Nature. Therefore, it only removes something approved by the free Will of God, namely, it removes the rectitude that the free will of God requires to be in the actions and faculties of our soul. And nothing, by the existence of sin or its being, is placed that is contrary to either God, or the Nature of God, or the essential properties of God, nor even to His Will or Decree: For who has resisted His will? **Romans 9:19.**

Question: Does God concur in the entitative acts of sin with an indifferent, universal concurrence that is determinable by a secondary cause, such that it is not from God but from the secondary cause that the effect of the will is good or evil, forbidden or commanded? This is affirmed by the Jesuits and Arminians. We deny this and declare their position absurd and contrary to the Holy Scriptures.

1. For if it is not from God, but only from the determining will, that an action of the will is good or evil, then it would be in vain to pray that God would grant us favor and grace with men, and prayers would need to be addressed to fortune or to free will, in whose power lie either grace or hatred. It would also be in vain

to implore God for acts of believing or repenting, rather than for not believing or not repenting.

2. Because it would be in vain for God to promise us good things or threaten us with evils that happen through free agents, for these goods or evils are such by the created will, not by God.
3. Because it would be in vain to give thanks to God for deliverance from evil or the bestowal of good by free agents; it would be in vain to trust in Him, to hope, to fear Him; and when afflicted by enemies, to submit our wills patiently to Him, hoping that He might grant us the free acquisition of good, or avert present or imminent evil.
4. It will not be the Lord's judgment, but that of the judge, who determines God's concurrence toward an equitable or iniquitous judgment as he pleases.
5. Because the acts of believing or repenting are no more from God concurring in this manner than the acts of resisting God's call.
6. Because God cannot convert more than He does, nor leave more in their natural blindness than He does.

Question: Does God predetermine secondary causes in all their actions? The Jesuits and Arminians deny this. However, we assert that all secondary causes are predetermined by God; from which it follows that free causes, though under God, determine themselves and determine other, inferior causes. This is proven by the arguments presented earlier, to which the following may be added:

1. Because the first cause is also the first determiner.

2. Because God uses the wills of good and evil men, His angels, and devils to bestow benefits or inflict punishments on humans; He uses false prophets to deceive Ahab, the Assyrians as the rod of His fury, Nebuchadnezzar as His servant and hammer in all the bloody designs he devises against God's people, for chastising and humbling His Church; and He uses Herod, Pilate, and the Jews to crucify the Savior and fulfill all that is written concerning Christ. **Acts 13:29.**
3. The praise and glory of God's particular providence and the wise and glorious governance of the world would perish if the predetermination of their actions were in the hands of devils and men.
4. According to our adversaries, all the actions of devils and wicked men would occur not only beyond the intention of God but also against His will, assuming that God would not desire any material acts of sin to exist. However, if predetermination is in the hands of free creatures, they could perform all their acts against God's will.

Question: If God predetermines the will to the material acts of sin, does this make Him the author of sin? The Jesuits and Remonstrants claim that we make God the author of sin by this very assertion.

We deny this.

1. Because the concurrence of God is after the manner of a physical cause, which is not subject to any law given to rational creatures. However, causing sin is an entirely moral act.
2. Because the role of the first cause necessarily requires that God provides a predetermining concurrence to all secondary causes.

Yet, this role does not require that God be the author of sin.

3. He is the cause of sin who truly contributes moral efficiency to sin. But the predetermining efficiency is wholly abstracted from all moral efficiency.

Question: Does the primary and most general obligation excuse God from being blamed for an evil action, even though He provides a general and indifferent concurrence to it? The Jesuits, Fasolus, Ruiz, Arriaga, Penottus, and Arminians say it does, because, as far as God Himself is concerned, He does not directly and expressly produce such a type of action that is really contrary to His Law; rather, He would prefer that it not be produced at all and provides a concurrence that is inclined towards the good, which is then twisted by a created will toward evil against God's intention. We deny this.

1. If God's preference that an evil action not occur frees Him from the association with guilt, then our predetermination would free Him even more. For, with predetermination, God not only prefers that the evil not be done (which is a feeble and pitiable will, unworthy of God), but also, by the legislative will of His command, He prohibits, condemns, and effectively detests evil as an abominable thing.
2. If a man were to provide such concurrence and determinability for an evil action to another man, as God does, he would sin and be the cause of sin. For example, if a man knowingly helps another to enter through a window, knowing that theft or murder will follow, even though non-theft could also result from the entry, he would be the cause of the theft. Unless one says that God is freed from this crime because His concurrence is physical and above all law, this reasoning will never be resolved.

3. If the obligation of the first cause excuses God from the association with crime, predetermination renders Him even more excusable: 1. Because it is the office of the first cause; 2. It does not overthrow freedom; 3. Predetermination does not incline toward evil, but only toward the mere act; 4. Although God does not expressly and directly will to produce such an action, yet indirectly and virtually, according to them, He is compelled by the secondary cause to will it; and thus, He becomes more subservient as the cause of sin, being forced to will an evil action against His preferred will.
4. What is this obligation of the first cause? Certainly, it is a certain propriety by which it is fitting that the first cause concurs with secondary causes lest perhaps secondary causes remain inactive forever and are void of all action. But again, the question arises, whence comes this necessary propriety of concurrence? Certainly, in man or angel, who are subject to the law, such causation would be unseemly and vicious. But if one is above the law, it would be seemly. Therefore, God concurs decently only because He is above all law.
5. An indifferent concurrence is truly causative, even if it is determined to cause. Therefore, this concurrence will equally be a co-cause of the crime as much as predetermination. For predetermination abstracts from evil in the same way as it abstracts from its effect, just like an indifferent concurrence.
6. Nor would God cease to be the cause of a sinful act (unless He were excused by the fact that He is above all law) because He does not determinately bring about the act but is determined by the secondary cause. Otherwise, one who kills a man,

determined by the will of another, would not be the cause of homicide.

Question: Is God's good pleasure the primary cause of all moral goodness in creatures? The adversaries deny this. We affirm it.

1. Because no entitative act is essentially, by itself, and by its nature, good and just. Therefore, every act is just by the free will of God.
2. Because God freely establishes this as a law for rational creatures: because He wills that a father should preserve his son alive, as part of the image of God; if it had seemed good to God, He could have established that this be a part of His image, as when Abraham was commanded to sacrifice Isaac his son to God.
3. Because He who is the cause of being is the cause of goodness.
4. Because there is no created good which is not from the first good in itself.
5. Because no good external to God restricts or limits His will so that He would will it because it is good; He does nothing good external to Himself because it is good. For He can always do a greater and better good to infinity. Therefore, a thing is good because it is willed by God, not the other way around—He does not will it because it is good.
6. But when good is complex and specified as good by the object, such as loving and worshiping God, the entire complex is willed by God because it is good. But this is the will of complacency, which is directed toward a complex object because it is good.

Question: Is the will and predetermination of God the same as the fate of the Stoics or the Manichaeans? The adversaries assert that God's decree of predetermination is equivalent to fate. On the contrary, we maintain: if fate is the will of God, then we do not hesitate to affirm that all things happen by fate.

1. Because if our fate is such, then Jehovah Himself is fate. And with this fate established, things necessarily happen, even though they are most contingent. Isaiah 14:27 and 46:10, 11. Jehovah has decreed the destruction of Babylon; therefore, it will necessarily happen. The Medes are the free executors of this fate. Jehovah has decreed the liberation of His people; therefore, Cyrus will necessarily and yet freely liberate them. Jehovah has decreed the piercing of Christ's hands and feet and the non-breaking of His bones; therefore, these things will necessarily come to pass.
2. Because God has absolutely decreed all beings that are to exist and their modes of existence. Therefore, God has absolutely decreed that the soldiers would freely mock Christ and that the owner of the donkey would freely give it to Christ when He asked for it.
3. Because future contingencies could not be under the dominion of God's will unless they necessarily occurred once God's decree is established.
4. The glory of a particular providence determining a certain number of good and evil actions—of the elect and the reprobate, of the converted and the unconverted, of temptations and victories through God's grace over temptations—would be over and done with.

5. Neither faith, prayer, hope, gratitude, fear, desire, nor our patience in God (all our actions and those of our enemies and friends, who pursue us with grace and favor, determining, numbering, procuring, ruling, governing, and deciding) would rest upon anything unless God had decreed from eternity that free acts should necessarily occur.
6. Because this is the fate of God; Divine fate is the cause of the act, not the cause of the malice attached to the act. Augustine, in his "Confessions," Book 4, Chapter 3, says: "They say it is from heaven that you have an unavoidable cause of sinning, and Venus or Saturn or Mars has done this." But the fate of the heathen was the cause of the malice itself.
7. Because the predetermining decree is just and good, inasmuch as it only determines positive entities. But the pagans called the stars themselves evil. Basil, in his "Hexaemeron," Homily 6, says: "Evil stars attribute the causes of their own malice to their maker; for if malice is a natural property of the stars, then surely the Creator Himself will be the author of malignity."
8. Because God's predetermining will harmoniously works with elective freedom and assists liberty in its natural mode of acting, to elicit free acts with a necessity that is free and a freedom that is necessary. There is no greater necessity here than my own necessity, whereby it is necessary for a free cause to act, given the hypothesis that it does act. Cyril of Alexandria, in Book 5 on John, Chapter 5, says that pagans accuse God of placing in heaven a force that impels men to evil. And Nemesius, in "On the Nature of Man," Chapter 35, argues that those who speak thus remove the nature of contingency from free will.

9. Because by the predetermining decree, things that are good by nature are created. But the fate of Simon Magus (as Vincent of Lérins states in "For the Antiquity of the Catholic Faith Against Heresies," Chapter 34) was that God created human nature in such a way that, by its own intrinsic movement and a certain necessary impulse of will, it could do or desire nothing other than to sin.

Romans 8:32

"He who did not spare His own Son..."

Question: Is the same sinful action, which is committed by sinful instruments, also done by God as the principal agent? The adversaries falsely accuse us of teaching that the same sin is committed by God as the principal agent, and by men and devils as instruments; thus, they claim, God is the primary and chief cause of sin. Such is the charge of Bellarmine, Stapleton, and the Arminians.

However, we maintain that the action of God and of sinful men is the same only in its material being, not in its moral being. It is the same action in its material aspect, as is evident:

1. The Sabeans took away Job's goods, and God, through the Sabeans, took away the very same goods. But Job was not despoiled of his possessions twice—once by God and once by the Sabeans.
2. When David's concubines were taken away through incest, God, through Absalom who defiled his father's bed, chastised David by this very act. Therefore, it is the same material action of God and Absalom.
3. In Isaiah 10:12, God completes His work in Zion by punishing the Church through the Assyrians, who oppressed God's people as the rod of His wrath (verse 5).

4. God punishes His Church by means of the King of Babylon, as His servant and hammer, through slaughter, sword, and captivity.

Yet, the action of God and men is not the same in its moral being, for God acts justly from all four causes while punishing His Church through sinful instruments. The action of the instruments, however, is morally unjust and wicked. God, being above every law given to men, does not sin; whereas, men, if they were to use other sinful men in the act of sinning in the same way, would sin grievously. The holy nature of God is not a law unto Him, such that He may not exercise a supreme, eminent, judicial act through sinful instruments.

Question: Does this mean, therefore, that God is not the cause of the effect (namely, malice), though He is the cause of the cause (namely, the act), because God concurs with a universal and indifferent concurrence in the act, and His concurrence is not the cause why an act is a supernatural and good act rather than an act forbidden by God's law? Thus say the Jesuits and Arminians. But we teach that God is not the cause of malice, even though He is the cause of the act.

1. God is not the cause of malice because He is not bound to impart rectitude to the act; man, however, is bound, as Scotus states in *Distinction 34, §1*.
2. The concurrence of God is, as it were, physical and necessary, not moral; nor is God here subject to any law.

Question: Do we agree with the Libertines in this doctrine? The Remonstrants say yes. We deny it.

1. Quintinus, the impure swine, said that in the thief, God steals; in the fornicator, God commits fornication; in the perjurer, God

- lies. Such things even malice itself does not dare to impute to us.
2. Quintinus claimed that fornication, theft, and lying are holy works of God.
 3. Such things are not to be condemned unless one thinks God should be condemned.
 4. The Libertines assert that all evil deeds are equally the works of God and men, both materially and morally.
 5. The Libertines maintain that it is unjust for men to be judged and condemned, and that there is no final judgment. We condemn such doctrines to the abyss.
 6. The Libertines say that those who accuse others of sin are hypocrites, abusing the passage in Matthew 7:5: "You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye."
 7. The Libertines have extinguished the conscience of sin and considered the irresistible providence of God, which they deemed the author of all wickedness, as their conscience. We teach nothing of the sort.
 8. The Florentines claimed that sin is merely an opinion or imagination and means nothing to God. We maintain that sin is a violation of God's holy law.
 9. The Libertines sought to indulge the flesh and live luxuriously and extravagantly. We have not so learned Christ.
 10. The Libertines taught that men do not truly sin, nor are they subject to the wrath of God. We hold, teach, and defend the opposite.

Question: Is it a frivolous distinction to teach that God hates sin and yet wills its existence? Arminius claims this distinction is absurd (*Anti-Perkins*, p. 701). We deny his claim.

1. Because for God to hate sin does not mean He intends that sin should never exist. It is false to assert that God decreed that the

crucifixion of the Savior, the sale of Joseph, the captivity of His people by the Assyrians and Chaldeans, the defection of the ten tribes from the house of David, or Job's despoiling by the Sabeans should not exist.

2. Because sin, in itself, is morally evil, dishonorable, and an object of displeasure and disapproving will. Yet the existence of sin can be considered good, useful, and conducive to God's glory; and all temporal good that exists was decreed by God from eternity.
3. Because Arminius falsely imputes to us in his explanation of our distinction that we teach God wills and approves of the existence of sin and does not hate the existence of sin. But God hates sin and the existence of sin in terms of its immoral nature and yet has decreed to permit it to exist as something useful in His greater purpose.
4. Twisse correctly notes that Cato the Elder desired Carthage to exist as an enemy and a means to exercise the virtue of Roman youth, and yet he also desired it not to exist, that is, he hated Carthage. Moreover, I add, Peter rightly desired that Christ would spare Himself from being killed by wicked enemies, and because he did not will it, Christ justly called him Satan; yet Peter was also bound to hate that killing as a sin (Matthew 16:21-23).

Question: Are all good and evil acts individuated and determined by God in their numerical singularity and unity? The Jesuits and Arminians deny this, arguing that the number of acts and their occurrence depend on the created will, not on God's determining will. We, however, affirm the opposite.

1. Not a sparrow falls to the ground, nor does this chance occur rather than that, without God; therefore, no act occurs rather than another without God's determination.

2. Because God could not accomplish more good through free creatures than He does, nor could He prevent more evil through them than He does prevent.
3. Because the precise loss of Job's goods, the specific death of Christ, the particular devastation of the people by the Chaldeans, are all attributed to God.
4. Because the number of beings would not exist without God; nor would the abundance or scarcity of grain, livestock, money, favor, hatred, actions, injuries, or benefits, which often arise from free causes, exist without God (contrary to Deuteronomy 28).
5. Because it would not be of God that Christ was crucified rather than stoned; that He was put to death rather than Barabbas; that Solomon, not Adonijah, became heir to David's kingdom; that the counsel of Ahithophel was rejected rather than accepted.
6. Because the number of the converted and the unconverted, the elect and the reprobate, would not be from God; for conversion would depend on the created will, not on God's will.
7. Because the created will would be the primary determining factor.

Question: Is permission merely a passive non-efficiency, a relinquishment of the will, leaving it in its natural indifference to act or not act? This is what the Jesuits and Arminians assert. We deny it.

1. Because permission is often an act of punishment. But no creature is given the freedom to decide whether it will be punished or not, even after the sentence has been pronounced.
2. Because if permission were so, it would also apply in good actions; and then the holy angels, Christ, and all the saints

would be permitted by God to ultimately fall away, since their will is not coerced towards the good.

3. Because, in the case of devils, murderers, and all those enslaved to the devil, in whom the will is not coerced, the same permission would exist as in the elect and the regenerated.

Question: Is the permission of sin merely moral persuasion? Arminius asserts this. We deny it.

1. Thus, God would permit sin in the same way as Cicero or the devil.
2. Because permission would just as much make sin impossible as possible, just like dissuasion from sinning does.
3. Because if God only permits by persuasion, there would be no reason to give thanks to God for preventing sin, nor any reason to pray for God to prevent it. For it would be within our power to either heed persuasion or not.

Question: Given permission, does sin necessarily follow by a logical necessity? Arminians deny this. The Remonstrants, in their Confession, Chapter 6, Thesis 3, and Arminius in *Anti-Perkins*, page 667, reject it. We affirm it.

1. Because permission is the negation of the efficacious grace required to avoid a particular sin when temptation is urgent, here and now. And with the negation of grace at the moment of temptation, sin necessarily follows.
2. Because Scripture argues from the granting of permission to the occurrence of sin. God permitted Pharaoh to detain His people and Sihon to deny passage to them. Therefore, Pharaoh detained, and Sihon denied passage. Likewise, God did not permit Abimelech to violate Sarah, Abraham's wife. Therefore, he did not violate her (Genesis 20:6). God did not permit His

people to commit the abominations of the nations. Therefore, they did not commit them (Deuteronomy 18:14). The same logic applies in Genesis 31:29, 1 Samuel 25:32, Psalm 106:41, and Acts 17:30.

3. The permission of sin is often a punishment for sin. But there is no punishment unless sin follows permission.
4. Because it is necessary for a form or privation to be present in a suitable subject at the appropriate time. Therefore, when grace is denied (as in permission), it is necessary for the privation — namely, sin — to be present.
5. To claim that, given permission, the permitted sin does not necessarily occur undermines the very foundation of fear of God, trust, fervor in prayer, humility, and gratitude. For it is pointless to pray earnestly or fearfully that God would not permit us to sin or hand us over to a reprobate mind if, given permission, we could refrain from sinning.

Chapter 3:

On Election

(Romans 9:11)

The Question: Is there a twofold election unto salvation?

One that is indefinite and general, by which God chooses all believers to salvation without regard to any particular persons; and another

that is definite and specific, by which God elects certain individuals to glory by name, considering them as those who will ultimately believe? The Arminians affirm; we deny.

1. Because an indefinite election is not truly an election; for in such a case, no individual person is appointed unto salvation. Rather, it merely prescribes a way of obtaining salvation to all indiscriminately, which can coexist with the eternal reprobation and condemnation of all. But the election spoken of in Scripture does not coexist with the damnation of the elect. As Romans 8:30 says: "Whom He predestined, He also called; whom He called, He also justified; whom He justified, He also glorified."
2. Because an indefinite reprobation could also coexist with the eternal salvation of all, which is absurd.
3. Election is a specific, indivisible act concerning certain individuals who are ordained unto glory, just as some portion of clay is prepared for honor (Romans 9:21).
4. Because in such a scheme, men would be elected twice: once in a general election, and again in a special election.
5. Because election is an act of divine love, which separates certain persons from others unto glory. As Ephesians 1:4 states, "He chose us in Him," and Romans 9:30. But in this general election, God would pursue Judas and Simon Magus with as much love as He does Peter and Paul.

The Question: Is there in Scripture any kind of election or predestination other than that of specific, definite, and certain persons? Or is it rather a matter of all indiscriminately, provided they should choose to believe? The Arminians, in the Hague

Conference, page 34, and Corvinus against Tilenus, page 53, claim that the decree of election is nothing other than a decree by which God decided to justify and save those who are faithful in Christ.

We, on the other hand, teach that Election pertains only to certain persons.

1. **Thus says the Scripture:** "Many are called, but few are chosen" (Matthew 20:16). "For the sake of the elect, those days will be cut short" (Matthew 24:22). "The children were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad..." (Romans 9:11). "So too at the present time, there is a remnant chosen by grace" (Romans 11:5). "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit" (John 15:16). Therefore, they were chosen to believe, not because they had already believed.
2. Because they are defined by specific pronouns: "Those whom He predestined..." (Romans 8:30).
3. Because there is a fixed number of the elect; as many as believe in time—no more, no less. "As many as were appointed to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48).
4. Because the elect are written in the Book of Life: "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20); "whose names are in the book of life" (Philippians 4:3); "but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life" (Revelation 21:27). Those who are thus designated in the mind of God are not "wandering souls" or floating about in some general notion, as the Arminians propose (conditioned upon 'if' and 'so').

5. Because that supposed election applies to all and each, if they should believe, while the election in Scripture does not apply to all; for not all are elect, and not all are given to the Son by the Father.
6. Because Christ specifically recognizes the elect as His own, as His own sheep (John 10:16), as a particular flock, as those given to Him by the Father (John 17:9).
7. Because this election concerns the means of salvation; therefore, it is not an election. For in the decree of election, faith is given or denied to whom God wills, as He chooses or does not choose them. But by the will concerning the means, faith is given to none.
8. Because this kind of election could coexist with the eternal salvation of all, and so it would not be an election or the choice of some while passing over others; and it could coexist with the eternal damnation of all.

The Question: Does God predestine some to glory incompletely, revocably, temporarily, and not absolutely—namely, those who only believe for a time? Does He, however, predestine others to glory completely, irrevocably, and absolutely—namely, those whom He foresees will believe ultimately and die in faith? The Arminians affirm this (Apology, Chapter 9, folio 104).

We, on the other hand, consider revocable and changeable election to be utterly blasphemous.

1. Because the counsel of God is immutable to the heirs of the promise (Hebrews 6:17). It is directed toward a specific person, namely Abraham (v. 13-15), who, according to our adversaries,

could have failed. Yet, his obedience was not compelled, even after God's oath, but was freely given. And as it says in Romans 11:29, "For the gifts and calling of God are ἀμεταμέλητα," those things of which God cannot repent. Therefore, the Jews are not completely rejected but are still, in regard to election, beloved by God. Similarly, Malachi 3:6 says, "For I, the Lord, do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed." Thus, if they had been consumed, those whom God decreed would never be consumed, Jehovah would have changed. And if those whom God destined for glory did not attain glory, God would have changed.

2. Because, as Romans 8:30 says: "Whom He predestined, He also called; whom He called, He also justified; whom He justified, He also glorified." But if a man were not peremptorily elected before the end of his life, God would predestine many whom He would never glorify. Then the Apostle's order would be inverted, and it would have to be said: "Those whom God justified, those—and no others—He predestined."
3. Because no one would be elected in this life nor possess in this life the promise of eternal glory. For a person would be as much a revocably and incompletely elected one as a revocably and incompletely reprobate one. But many are elected in this life, as stated in Ephesians 1:4, Matthew 20:16, and Matthew 24:25. Indeed, Christ desired that His disciples should rejoice in this life because their names were written in the book of life (Luke 10:20).
4. Because a revocable election involves a changeable will in God and a mutable love, contrary to what Scripture says about God's

eternal love, affirming that those whom He loves, He loves to the end.

5. Because, in such a scenario, God would have to confirm and rescind His eternal counsels and decrees hundreds of times, as often as a man believes or disbelieves.
6. Because new decrees would begin and end in God over time, while the old ones would recede.
7. Because no one could have hope, confidence, joy, or Christian consolation in the sense of election, which is nevertheless commanded to the elect in the Word, as in Luke 10:20, "Rejoice that your names are written in heaven."
8. Because, if Pilate could say, "What I have written, I have written," much more would God say, "Those whom I have written in the book of life for eternal glory, I have destined for eternal glory."
9. Because Christ would falsely say to some, "I never knew you" (Matthew 7:23), since He would have known them at some time as His own, as those for whom He died and whose salvation He seriously intended, just as much as for others who persevered in constant faith and piety.
10. Because it would be a poor argument for Christ to say that He must call many from the Gentiles because, as He says, "They are my sheep" (John 10:16), meaning, in my eternal predestination. But there would be no such conclusion if they were only revocably elected and not certainly elected before the end of their life. For they would not be Christ's until they died in faith;

but then, what would be the use of calling them to faith if they were already dead?

11. If we are chosen "before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1:4) and "grace is given to us according to His purpose before times eternal" (2 Timothy 1:9), then there is no vacillating or fluctuating election dependent on the final acts of free will in which men expire.
12. Because with both complete and incomplete election standing, no election to adoption can be imagined; and therefore, to the faith which Paul speaks of in Ephesians 1:5. For, according to the adversaries, we are chosen temporarily because we believe, and we are not chosen at another time because we do not believe.
13. Because no wise person would appoint a man, whom he foresees will never attain his end, to an end even temporarily. As if God were to say, "I foresee Judas to be eternally damned and never to attain eternal glory; yet I appoint him temporarily to glory, fully knowing that I will eventually revoke and change my destined will."
14. Because such a promise would exist in Scripture: "Do this, and you will be irrevocably elected," meaning, after death, you will be elected to glory, and that irrevocably. But such a promise is found nowhere in Scripture.
15. Because it would be false to say, as Psalm 33:10-11 does, that "the counsels of the nations are changeable and can be dissipated; but the counsels of God cannot be rescinded but remain immutable to all generations." For the counsels of God appointing Judas to glory could be confirmed and rescinded

before Judas's death since these counsels are revocable according to Judas's pleasure.

16. Because Peter, by believing finally, would irrevocably choose God and be the cause of his own peremptory election; and grace would not be more due to God because Peter is irrevocably elected than because Judas is irrevocably elected. For Judas could, if he wished, be irrevocably elected just as Peter. For in this general decree ("I will irrevocably and peremptorily elect to grace all who ultimately die in faith: Peter, if he will; and Judas, if he will"), God contributed no more to Peter's irrevocable election than to Judas's.

EPHESIANS 1:3

"As He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy."

The Question: Is the election of one person rather than another to glory made by the sole free will and absolute good pleasure of God? Or is it rather based on foreseen faith as the cause, condition, or quality required in the object?

To clarify the state of this question, note the following:

1. **Predestination is from eternity**, although the Remonstrants are no longer ashamed to say that election, contrary to what has been believed up to now, is a temporary and transient act.
2. **God did not decide rashly**, but by a definite counsel, concerning the final state of all men.

3. **The question is not** whether the proximate cause of election and reprobation is in God—namely, His will; but whether there is something outside of God, in man, that determines God's will to choose one and to reject another.
4. **It is agreed that**, in general, the cause of predestination is the will of God. Therefore, the Remonstrants write in their Scriptural Synod, Article 1, pages 5-6: "There is one kind of predestination in general, to life and death; another of this or that person, who dies in faith or unbelief. The first decree is most free and has no other cause than the pure and absolute will and pleasure of God."
5. **The question is not why, in general**, some are elected and some are reprobated. For the glory of His justice and mercy, and the beauty of the world, are the reasons why some are reprobated and some elected. But the entire question concerns comparative election: Why is this portion of the mass of clay destined for honor, and that portion for dishonor?
6. **It is agreed that here** God's dominion, mercy, and justice must remain unimpaired and whole.
7. **God does not rashly consign all men**, either permissively or positively, to two ends.
8. **God's predestination is not the cause of sin.**

Through the Absolute Decree, we do not mean a decree devoid of all knowledge; for God has a reason for His decree.

2. Nor do we mean a decree without any knowledge or awareness of the final cause, which is the glory of God.
3. Nor do we mean a decree that is so absolute as to exclude all means that serve the execution of the decree; for Peter is ordained to glory in such a way that he is also ordained by the same decree to all the effective means that bring him to glory.
4. Nor is it so absolute as if it would force the will against its freedom, as if the decree must stand whether the will wills or wills not, as our adversaries slanderously claim. Rather, the decree of predestination is absolute in this way: that the good pleasure of God ordaining Peter to glory rather than Judas is not influenced by any cause moving or inclining Him causatively or occasionally, nor determined by any order of God's justice or truth, nor by any merit-based cause or moving cause out of congruity, nor by any quality, disposition, or condition in Peter himself.

Therefore, the question arises: Is faith a prerequisite condition, quality, or duty required in the one whom God elects to glory, or is faith rather the effect and fruit of His election?

In this entire question, the Arminians conduct themselves deceitfully.

1. For Arminius posits four decrees concerning predestination:
 1. An absolute decree of sending a Savior into the world.
 2. An absolute decree to save those who repent and to condemn the impenitent.
 3. A decree concerning the means necessary for faith and repentance, to be administered sufficiently and effectively.
 4. A decree to save certain particular persons whom He foresees will ultimately believe, and to condemn those

whom He foresees will remain impenitent.

Whether all these decrees or only the second, or both the second and fourth are to be noted in the question of predestination is not made clear. Elsewhere, they make the second decree the entirety of predestination (Hague Conference, p. 34). Thus, the question is vain: namely, what cause exists outside of God, for why He decreed from eternity to save the repentant and to damn the impenitent? It is like asking what cause exists as to why those who fulfill the Law are saved, or why the Rechabites who do not drink wine are rewarded by God.

2. Concerning the predestined persons, they act deceitfully. For they teach that there is no election or reprobation of infants, the mentally infirm, the insane, the deaf, and all those who have never heard the Gospel, as if for them neither heaven nor hell is prepared, and they are consigned to these two places by no predestination of God, but by the blind force of chance.
3. They do not distinguish, in their questions or theses, between complete and immutable election and incomplete and mutable election. For it is one question to ask why Judas is chosen for a time, and another to ask why he is irrevocably predestined to death.
4. Concerning the prerequisite condition and cause of election, they do not deal sincerely; for they assert that Christ is the meritorious cause of election (if indeed they acknowledge any merit in Christ). And how He is not the meritorious cause of the non-election of others—namely, of reprobation—I do not see.
5. They falsely assert that predestination to the means of salvation and to faith is common to all and every individual; that is, God

has decreed that all mortals should believe, provided they are willing. Yet they do not usually say that God has decreed to bring all and every one to the fruit of faith—namely, eternal glory, provided they believe.

We, in opposition to them, teach that the reason God from eternity chose Peter and not Judas to glory and to the faith of the elect is neither faith nor final obedience (including conversion and the performance of good works, as Grevinchovius states on p. 37), nor the merits of Christ, nor any foreseen quality in Peter, but solely the free good pleasure of God, against the Arminians.

- Because men are chosen to glory before they have done anything good or evil. Romans 9:11: "In order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of Him who calls."
- Because God has mercy on whom He wills, and He hardens whom He wills; from the same lump, the potter makes some vessels for dishonor and others for honor, simply because He wills. Romans 9:18, 21. Therefore, election is not based on the worthiness or unworthiness of the elect.
- Because God raised up Pharaoh for this ultimate purpose, that through his destruction, the glory of God's power and justice might be declared; and others, so that the glory of His mercy might be declared. Therefore, God, moved by His own will alone, aims at these ultimate purposes (Romans 9:17).
- Because God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him in love. Therefore, He chose us that we might believe. For faith is the

chief part of holiness. Hence, He chose us by His own will alone, not because we were holy and believing (Ephesians 1:4).

- Because He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will (Ephesians 1:5). This pertains to faith, through which we are counted as the sons of God (John 1:12; Galatians 3:26). Therefore, it is not because of faith, nor by reason of foreseen faith.
- Because we did not choose Christ, but He chose us and appointed us to bear fruit (John 15:16). But if we are chosen because we believe, then we would have chosen Christ first.
- Because 2 Thessalonians 2:13 says, "God chose us ἀπ' ἀρχῆς," that is, from the beginning (eternally, as in Proverbs 8:23, John 1:1), for salvation through the sanctification of the Spirit and belief in the truth. Therefore, He did not choose us because we believe, but chose us to salvation so that we might believe.
- Because in Acts 13:48, the Holy Spirit gives this reason why the Gentiles believed while the Jews did not: "As many as were appointed to eternal life believed." Therefore, the free will of God in choosing is the reason why we believe, and faith cannot be the reason we are chosen.
- Because all those given by the Father to the Son come to Him and believe (John 6:37; 17:2, 6, 9, 24). Therefore, this giving (that is, election) is the reason they come and believe, and hence, faith cannot be the cause or reason for election.
- Because Romans 8:29-30 states: "Whom God foreknew (as His own, John 10:27; Psalm 1:6; Matthew 7:23), He also

predestined; whom He predestined, He also called; whom He called, He also justified; whom He justified, He also glorified." Therefore, the cause and primary reason for calling and justification, and hence for faith, is predestination. Justification and faith, therefore, are not the cause or reason for predestination.

- Because 1 Peter 1:2 says that the elect are "according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." If we are elect unto sprinkling and therefore unto faith, we are not elect because we have already been sprinkled or have believed.
- Because if election is not certain or dependent on God's free will as its certain cause, if we are chosen because we believe, then according to the Arminians, it is certain that we can either believe or not believe, even when all necessary conditions are present. Thus, election becomes as uncertain and contingent as an act of our will.
- Because if God's good pleasure were not the cause and reason why one is chosen rather than another, but rather the free act of believing, which is absolutely within our power to do or not to do, as they teach, then the glory of the election of Peter rather than Judas would belong to free will, not to the gracious will of God. For the gracious will in the general decree to save all who believe is not the reason why Peter is chosen rather than Judas. For under God's decree, all could be chosen or all could be reprobated. Neither is election from foreseen faith the reason why Peter is chosen rather than Judas, because that which is not the cause of itself cannot be the cause. The reason why Peter is

chosen rather than Judas is because Peter believes; and the reason why he believes rather than does not believe is his free will. And certainly, Arriaga, Molina, and the Jesuits (who teach that God, only with the preceding middle knowledge, knows who will ultimately believe and obey God's call and who will not if placed in this or that order of things; therefore, He effectively chooses to glory him whom He foresees will ultimately obey, and does not choose him whom He foresees will not ultimately obey) also teach that it is in Peter's free will that there should be an eternal election of Peter in God, or that it should not be.

- Because Peter would distinguish himself from Judas because, by freely believing, he makes himself the object of election, which Judas does not do because he does not will to.

Acts 13:48

"And as many as were appointed to eternal life believed."

The Question: Is faith the effect of election? The Synod's first article (page 9) states, "Faith can be called the fruit of election unto grace, insofar as by the benefit of those means, which are supplied by grace, man is not only made capable of believing but actually does believe; yet faith does not necessarily arise from this election or the giving of grace, as fruit arises from a tree."

But we, on the contrary, teach that faith arises from election, as an effect from its cause.

1. Because those whom God immutably destines to the end, He also destines to the efficacious means. Romans 8:30: "Whom He predestined, these He also called."

2. Because we are predestined unto adoption, therefore unto faith (Ephesians 1:5). For by faith, we become and are called the children of God (John 1:12; Galatians 3:26). We are chosen unto salvation through the sanctification of the Spirit and belief in the truth (2 Thessalonians 2:13), unto the sprinkling of the blood (1 Peter 1:2).
3. He who grants faith to one and not to another, from a certain intention to give faith to this one and not to that one, does so from an infallible intention to save. Because this intention is nothing other than election unto eternal salvation. But God grants faith to this one rather than that one from a certain and infallible intention, knowing that this granting is salvific and fruitful to this one and not to that one.
4. Because if God makes known the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself (Ephesians 1:9), and reveals the mysteries of the kingdom to some and not to others, because it seemed good to Him (Matthew 11:25), and opens the heart of one and not another, because He has had mercy from eternity on one and not the other, then God gives faith because He pursues some with the eternal benevolence of granting glory. If the former is true, then so is the latter.
5. God cannot make His Word, which is the power of salvation to those who believe, effective for salvation and conversion unless He has eternally decreed to give salvation to such. But God first does this; therefore, He later decrees it, and by the virtue of this decree, the former act occurs.
6. All spiritual blessings flow from election as from their cause (Ephesians 1:2-4); therefore, so does faith.

7. Faith is not the fruit of election unto grace if, despite that election, people may never believe.
8. Because final faith is given by God neither rashly nor without counsel unless God chooses the one to whom He gives faith for eternal glory. For an adequate means is given without counsel if it is not according to the pre-established decree of the deciding will. But it is absurd and impious to attribute such rashness to God, the most wise ruler of the world.
9. Because as many as were ordained to life believed (Acts 13:48). Therefore, they believe because they were ordained to life.

The Question: Is the complete decree of Election that God has decreed to give glory to men if they believe? The Remonstrants affirm; we deny.

1. Because in election, the will of God to save this one rather than that one—Peter rather than Judas—is fixed and determined (Romans 9:11). But in this decree, God has no more decreed glory for Peter than for the traitor Judas; He decrees it equally for both, insofar as they believe.
2. Because this decree could stand with the glorification of all, or with the eternal damnation of all. But election necessarily appoints some to be saved, leaving others: for it includes the efficacy of certain means (Ephesians 1:3-4).
3. Because in this way, all men would be elected individually. But Christ says: "Many are called, but few are chosen" (Matthew 20:16; 22:14).

The Question: Does God save in time in the same order as He decreed to save from eternity? In time, He saves those who persevere in faith and obedience; therefore, He decreed from eternity to save them in the same way. (Fulgentius, *Book 1 to Monimus* and *On the Incarnation and Grace*, last chapter.) "He does not accomplish in His work otherwise than what He has arranged in His eternal will."

Response: Smising, Volume 1, *On God*, Treatise 3, Discussion 6, *On Providence*, Question 8, No. 579: The proposition ("In the same order God saves in time, He decreed to save from eternity") is true with respect to the eternal decree regarding its execution. For the execution and order that God maintains in execution were decreed from eternity; just as whatever God does in time, He decreed to do in the same order from eternity. But this is not the decree of eternal Election, but the decree of the execution of eternal Election, which differs greatly. Otherwise, God does not save except Lydia the sinner, listening at this hour and place to Paul, believing, and praying, etc. Therefore, sin, hearing of the word, repentance, prayer, such and such words of prayer, in such and such a place, with such a preacher, etc., would all be required in choosing; which our adversaries would not say.

But in this sense, the proposition—"in the same order God saves, for the same condition He saves, for the same reason He predestined men to eternal glory (namely, because He finds them believing, and not because He predestined them to believe), therefore He chose them to eternal glory from eternity"—is denied and is in question. The proposition ("In the same order God saves in time, He decreed to save from eternity") is not admitted with respect to the decree, concerning the eternal and gracious intention and election unto glory.

With this distinction, Smising states, Augustine and sometimes the Greek Fathers establish that election to glory is sometimes gratuitous and from grace, and sometimes from foreknowledge of merits and from justice. But undoubtedly, he is mistaken, for the Greek Fathers were in error. Augustine, however, after the rise of Pelagius and having more experience in these controversies, consistently teaches that election to glory is entirely gratuitous.

The Question: Is predestination an act of God's justice or truthfulness, or rather of His absolute good pleasure and supreme dominion? The Arminians contend that it is an act of justice and is restricted by justice just as the actual giving of life is restricted. We assert that it is an act of God's supreme good pleasure.

1. Predestination is an act of God who shows mercy on whom He wills, because He wills; but the giving of glory is an act of truthfulness, because He has promised.
2. Because predestination is absolute and unconditional, whereas the giving of life is conditional, based on the hypothesis that one has kept faith and fought the good fight.
3. Predestination is like the act of a potter who, from the same lump, makes one vessel for honor and another for dishonor, and to whom the clay may not reply, "Why have you made me like this?" (Romans 9). But the giving of life is not such an act: for there is a condition in man as to why eternal life is given to one rather than another; because the one to whom it is given believes by the special grace of God, while the other does not believe, and therefore it is not given to him.

Ephesians 1:4

"He chose us before the foundation of the world, or, from eternity."

The Question: Was the election to glory made from eternity? The Remonstrants in their Apology, Chapter 8, folios 190-191, say it is not an eternal and immanent action in God, but an external, transient action that began in time, contrary to what has been commonly believed until now. We assert that it was made from eternity.

1. Because Ephesians 1:4 says, "God chose us before the foundation of the world." 2 Timothy 1:9 says, "Grace was given to us before times eternal." Psalm 90:1-2: "Lord, you have been our dwelling place in all generations. Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever you had formed the earth and the world..." Romans 9:11-13: "Before the children had done anything good or bad... Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated." Isaiah 54:8: "With everlasting kindness, I will have mercy on you."
2. Because Christ was chosen before this world existed (1 Peter 1:20).
3. Because if election began in time, it would be a temporal promise, and God would say, "Believe, and you will be elected to glory."
4. Because if predestination to glory were equivalent to calling, Paul would not have distinguished them: "Those whom He predestined, He also called" (Romans 8:30).
5. Because election is immutable (Romans 9:11; Hebrews 6:17). But a transient action begins and ends.
6. Because God would will and decree something new, which He had not decreed from eternity; He would do something in time

that He had not decreed from eternity to do, which would be rash.

7. All the arguments of the Holy Spirit about God's eternal decree in Scripture would be null and vain (Jeremiah 1:5; Isaiah 14:24; 2 Timothy 1:9).

The Question: What is the nature of God's absolute and free good pleasure (as mentioned by Paul in Romans 9) in the matter of election? The Arminians state that it lies in the absolute right of God to establish whatever conditions for justification and glorification He chooses—whether faith, good works, or, as others teach, eating the fruit of a tree or any good work—and that in this, God's freedom shines forth (Romans 9), for He has decreed to have mercy on believers, to save believers, though He could have saved the doers of works or had mercy on the doers of works.

We, on the contrary, although we concede that God has absolute freedom in choosing these or those means, maintain that God's most free will and good pleasure in the matter of election lie in this: that He chooses this person rather than that one for eternal glory.

1. Because the Arminians are compelled with their leader, Corvinus, in Chapter 9 of Romans, to understand by the elder brother the Law, and by the younger, the Gospel or the covenant of grace, and so God hates the Law and the doers of works before they have done anything good or evil, and He loves the Gospel and the believers before they have done anything good or evil.
2. If God's absolute freedom in election stood in the choice of these conditions of the Gospel and faith, rather than the Law and

works, then the Law and the Gospel would be such subjects about which it could be said that they do good or evil.

3. The Law and the Gospel are not born of a woman.
4. God has mercy on the Gospel or faith and hardens the Law.
5. God hates the Law before the Law was born of a woman; these are empty dreams.
6. But the whole text cries out that Paul is dealing with persons, not with the conditions of the two covenants: for he introduces Isaac and Ishmael, Jacob and Esau, and Pharaoh, among whom He loves some, has mercy on some, hates some, hardens others, and does not have mercy on them.

The Question: Since God has chosen us in Christ (Ephesians 1), and God blesses us in Christ with all spiritual blessings, does it therefore follow that Christ is the meritorious cause of our election and predestination to glory?

Response: Certainly not. The Scholastics teach that no cause is given for predestination concerning the act of willing or predestining, but concerning the things willed (namely, grace and glory), Christ is indeed the meritorious cause.

3. Predestination is not so much grace itself as it is the eternal preparation and ordination of a person to grace.
4. By the term "blessings," we mean the promised gifts of grace. But predestination to glory or the willing of good in God is not a promised gift in Christ. For all promises are "Yes" and "Amen" in Christ (2 Corinthians 1:20).

The Question: Are all and every mortal—whether insane, deaf, infants, Indians, and those outside the visible Church—either elected to life or reprobated? The Arminians deny that there is an election of such persons, claiming it applies only to those within the visible Church and adults who possess the use of reason. But we assert that there is an election or reprobation of all and every mortal without exception.

1. The deaf, the insane, the Indians, and infants have immortal souls, and after death, they are either tormented in hell or enjoy eternal blessedness with God. Therefore, by the eternal providence of God, and consequently by predestination, they are destined from eternity to possess one of these two states, and in time they are sent to them; otherwise, God would be an arbitrary agent ruling by blind chance.
2. Some outside the visible Church either sin or do not sin. If they sin, they are capable of punishments and rewards, and God will render to each according to their deeds on the day of Christ's coming when He will judge them and the whole world. Therefore, from eternity, He has appointed some for rewards and others for punishments. If they do not sin and are not bound by the law of nature, they are therefore unpunished perjurers, liars, adulterers, and murderers, and are without hope of reward even if they are chaste, just, temperate, and despise vain glory.
3. Those who sin without the law will perish without the law (Romans 2:12). Therefore, they are destined to punishment from eternity.
4. Romans 9:11: Paul says, "Before the children were born," God chose one and reprobated the other.

5. God leaves some born of good parents to their natural hardness, like Esau and Absalom; others born of the most wicked He calls effectually. This proves that God has the freedom to elect or reprobate infants.
6. Many infants are preserved alive, and God deems them worthy of the Gospel and a gracious conversion; others, He removes from their midst by the sword, burning, and slaughter, whether in the womb or hanging on the breast, as seen in the destruction of the Sodomites, the Amalekites, and others. Therefore, God has the same freedom concerning the eternal fate of infants.
7. The Remonstrants concede that prayers benefit infants (Article 1, page 46). But to what end, if election or reprobation has no place in them?
8. How, according to the doctrine of the Remonstrants, is grace given in Christ to all mortals, whether in or outside the Church—even to Indians and Americans—for whom the Savior died? How does God will all and every one to be saved, and that the Gospel be preached to all, if neither election nor reprobation pertains to such people?

The Question: Are the Remonstrants correct in teaching (as stated in their *Scriptural Synod*, Article 1, page 7) that glory should be considered:

1. Under the aspect of a final end, and
2. Under the aspect of a reward?

They teach that when considered under the aspect of a final end, God elects all to glory (John 3:16; 2 Corinthians 5:19; 1 Timothy 2:4) because He wills all to be saved, and from this election, He is

effectively moved to provide the necessary means. And this election is not peremptory, so that neither faith nor salvation necessarily follows from it, since even after this election, it could happen that all remain unbelievers (page 9). But they say that it is a peremptory election when God, considering glory under the aspect of a reward, has decreed to give it peremptorily as a reward for performed obedience, and the object of this is a dying man; the giving of a Savior and faith precedes this election. Thus they teach.

We judge this doctrine to be blasphemous.

1. Because there is no election of all and every one according to the Scriptures, or even according to sound reason; it is a contradiction in terms and is no election at all.
2. By the same reasoning, eternal destruction would have to be considered both as a punishment and as an end. And so, God would have reprobated all and every mortal from eternity and destined them to destruction as an end, which is absurd; because God equally wills all to be damned if they do not believe, by an act of justice, as He wills all to be saved if they believe, by an act of mercy. For if there are certain natural affections in God antecedent to His rewarding mercy, by the same reasoning, there are such affections in Him antecedent to His punishing justice.
3. Because it is absurd for God to choose some to eternal glory as to an end whom He in no way chooses to glory as to a reward; for He ordains men to glory and does not ordain men to glory in this way.
4. Those truly regenerated are called elect in this life. Matthew 24:25 speaks of such as these, whom false Christs attempt to

seduce. Ephesians 1:4 speaks of such as these who, in this life, are endowed with every spiritual blessing in Christ. 1 Peter 1:2 speaks of such as these who are sprinkled with the blood of Christ and believe. Acts 13:48 speaks of such as these who believe because they are ordained to eternal life. But by this doctrine, no one is elect unless he is a man who has died and expired in faith, unless it refers to an election by which Pharaoh, Judas, and all the reprobate are elect, which is absurd.

5. Because those whom God predestined, He also glorified (Romans 8:30). That text cannot be understood of peremptory election whose object is a man dead in faith unless the sense is: those whom God predestined to die in faith, He also effectively called and justified, which would be the height of absurdity. And it would be false if it spoke of a non-peremptory election, for not all such are glorified, as they themselves teach.
6. Because no wise person elects men to an end by means which he knows will be ineffective and to an end which does not exist.

The Question: Is Christ the meritorious cause of election? That is, does God love no one to eternal life, nor can He elect anyone to eternal life, unless the merit of Christ is the cause of that election? The Arminians affirm this; we deny it.

1. 1 Thessalonians 5:9: "God has appointed us to obtain salvation through Jesus Christ." Therefore, the appointment of us to salvation as an end precedes the merits of Christ, by which we obtain salvation. For if a physician decides to cure a sick person by bloodletting, then the bloodletting does not precede that decision. Ephesians 1:5: "He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ." Therefore, Christ is the means of adoption and cannot be the cause of predestination to adoption.

2. If Christ is the meritorious cause of election, He must either be the cause simply, and as one who is dead, or as one apprehended by faith. If the former, then because Christ died for all and every individual, as the Arminians, Jesuits, and Dominicans teach, all are elect to glory. For if the cause is posited here, the effect seems necessarily to follow; unless they say that God, notwithstanding the meritorious cause, chooses some and not others. And so certainly, He chooses freely and not moved by a meritorious cause. If Christ is the meritorious cause of election as apprehended by faith (as the Arminians teach), then faith will be the moving cause of God's will to choose. But faith is the effect of election; for we are predestined to obtain salvation through faith (2 Thessalonians 2:13), through the sprinkling of the blood (1 Peter 1:2).
3. Because God chooses us before we do any good or evil. Therefore, not because in Christ, as our sponsor, satisfaction has been made to divine justice (for God, being moved by no external cause, chooses us rather than others), but because He has mercy on whom He wills. Therefore, the merits of Christ do not determine God's will.
4. Because predestination, concerning the act of predestinating, is the eternal will of God. And all Scholastics teach that there is no cause of the divine will outside of God Himself, except for Alvarez, Vasquez, and some more recent ones, who obscure the matter with crude distinctions.
5. Because God decreed from eternity that the merits of Christ should be the cause of our salvation. But it is contradictory for the merits of Christ to be the cause of our ordination and election to salvation; for then the merits of Christ would be both

the antecedent cause of election and the effect consequent to election. For this is our very election: the decree of God by which He appoints us to glory as an end and to the participation in the merits of Christ as a means leading to this end.

The Question: Does God love and cherish no one except insofar as they are in Christ, at least unto eternal life? The Arminians affirm; we deny.

1. Because God loves the elect before He gives or sends Christ to them; for if He had not loved the elect unto life, He would not have given His Son to death for them. John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son," etc.
2. Being in Christ through faith is a temporal act. Therefore, it cannot be the cause of God's eternal love.
3. In God, there is a twofold love: One is ἀγάπη, or the love of benevolence. The cause of this love can no more be given than the cause of God Himself; for this love is God Himself, loving men unto life from eternity. By this love, He loves us while we are still enemies, dead in sins, and perishing in our blood (Romans 5:10; Ephesians 2:2-3; Ezekiel 16:7-9). Our temporal actions cannot change God from hating us to loving us or transform Him from one who hates into one who loves us with a new affection and love. The other is the love of complacency. This is a quasi-temporal and transient act in God, arising from our good actions, just as its opposite—namely, the act of displeasure and abhorrence—arises from our evil actions. John 14:21: "He who loves me will be loved by my Father." And verse 23: "If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him." But if we speak of love properly so-called, no one can love God unless they are first loved by God, as is written in 1

John 4:19: "We love because He first loved us," namely, with the love of benevolence and free beneficence, to which, after the gifts of grace in Christ have been bestowed, there soon follows the love of complacency, which, when certain conditions are met, is necessarily in God as the Judge of the world, according to His Word by which He judges men.

4. Neither the merits of Christ nor our own good or evil actions can transform God from a loving to a hating God, or from a hating to a loving God, for with Him "there is no shadow of turning" (James 1:17). The merits of Christ indeed reconcile us to God and make it fitting that God, in keeping with His truth and justice, should grant the remission of sins, eternal life, and the righteousness of Christ, which He has freely decreed to give from the love of His most free eternal election.

Our adversaries object in vain for election from foreseen faith, arguing that "without faith it is impossible to please God." By the same reasoning, they could say that no one can please God so as to be chosen for glory unless he is born, hears the Word, and is converted to Christ; for the Apostle, in Hebrews 11:6, speaks of such complacency. But by another complacency of good pleasure, God embraces many who are neither converted nor believing, as is evident in Galatians 2:20: "Who loved me and gave Himself for me." And Galatians 1:15: "Ὅτε δὲ εὐδόκησεν ὁ Θεὸς"—"when it pleased God to reveal His Son in me." Likewise, in Titus 3:4, "the χρηστότης καὶ φιλανθρωπία of God" appears to men before they believe and while they serve various lusts.

The Question: Because God has absolutely destined some to eternal glory, does this mean that Christ cannot merit grace, favor, and eternal glory for them? The Arminians argue that it is not

necessary for Christ's merits to procure glory and the right to glory for those whom God has absolutely destined to eternal glory without any merit of Christ. But we teach that the merits of Christ are perfectly consistent with absolute election to glory.

1. Because God thus destines to glory, He also destines to the participation of the merits of Christ through faith.
2. Because there is no contradiction in someone being absolutely elected to inheritance and also absolutely elected to grace, by which he is made fit for the actual possession of the inheritance.
3. Because 2 Thessalonians 5:9 says, "God has appointed us to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ."
4. Because God so destines men to glory without merits that no one will actually possess glory unless the merits of Christ are applied to him.
5. Our opponents argue in vain: "No one whom the Father chooses through Christ as Mediator is excluded from peremptory election to salvation. But according to us (they say), the Father chooses no one to salvation through Christ as Mediator. Therefore, etc." We respond that "through whom," as the Author of salvation, although not as the meritorious cause of predestination to salvation, does not exclude one from election to salvation. Both the major and minor premises are false. For a king may destine a beggar clothed in rags to participate in the inheritance of his kingdom and be adopted as a son, yet it does not follow that he is still a ragged beggar when he is actually crowned. A general may assign an unarmed man to battle, yet it does not follow that he is unarmed when he goes to battle. Likewise, because Christ is not the meritorious cause of the

decree of election to glory, it does not follow that He is excluded from the decree of election as the means of executing that decree and as the Author of salvation.

Question: Can a conditional promise of some good be subordinated to the immutable decree of God, by which that good has already been absolutely destined for the one to whom the promise is made?

The Remonstrants deny this, but we affirm it.

1. For God absolutely destined the throne of the kingdom to David in Christ, and this was done with an oath (Psalm 89:35-37). Yet a conditional promise was made to David's descendants, that they would walk in God's commandments (1 Kings 3:14; Psalm 132:11-12). God absolutely decreed to save His Son from Herod; yet, His safety was conditional upon His parents fleeing to Egypt with the child.
2. Means and ends are not in conflict: it is not contradictory for Peter to be chosen for glory absolutely, and for God to work faith irresistibly and absolutely in Peter. Therefore, neither do a conditional promise and an absolute decree conflict.
3. The conditional promise of the Arminians contradicts the absolute decree, for their conditions are taken not from Holy Scripture but from the books of jurists, those conditions that are indifferent and absolute to be or not to be, whatever the decree of God. These conditions are free from all dominion of Divine Providence and depend on that absolute contingency. We do not acknowledge such conditional promises but only those which God, by His grace, works irresistibly in His elect. These do not conflict with the absolute decree of God, any more than the

willing of an end conflicts with the willing of means to that end in God.

Question: Can faith be both a condition required as a duty and a free act of obedience by the elect, and at the same time be a thing promised by God and irresistibly effected in us by God?

The Remonstrants deny this, but we affirm it.

Both sides concede that faith is a condition and a free duty. But the Remonstrants deny that it is also a thing promised and irresistibly effected by God, which we affirm.

1. For it is promised that the heart will be circumcised (Deuteronomy 30:6), a new heart will be given (Ezekiel 36:26), and that all will be taught by God (Jeremiah 31:33-34; John 6:44-45). It is also promised that all flesh shall see the salvation of the Lord (Isaiah 40:5) and that the Spirit of grace and supplication shall be poured out upon the house of David (Zechariah 12:10-11). Therefore, faith is promised.
2. Because the faithful pray for faith, and prayer relies on the word of promise.
3. Because the saving knowledge of God in Christ is promised (Isaiah 11:9; Jeremiah 31:34), and the knowledge of Christ, by which men are justified (Isaiah 53:11), which is nothing else but faith.
4. Because the Spirit is promised, by whom they will see the Lord whom they have pierced (Zechariah 12:10-11). Therefore, faith is promised.

5. Because faith is the gift of God, which excludes all human boasting (Ephesians 2:8; Philippians 1:29).
6. Because the saints give thanks to God for their own faith and the faith of others (Ephesians 1:15-16).

Question: Do we reverse the natural order by stating that the object of predestination is man, who is to be created and not yet created, because God thus decreed to glory from nothingness?

The Remonstrants assert this, but we deny it.

1. Because God has made all things for Himself, He decrees to give existence to man that He might be glorified.
2. Because it is asked, for what end did God decree to create the world from eternity? For from eternity, the world was non-existent. Certainly, it was to glorify Himself. Therefore, God decreed non-existent things for His glory.

Question: Do anxiety, fear, and caution in the use of means contradict the absolute election to glory?

The Remonstrants assert this in Article 1, page 265 of Corvinus against Molina, Chapter 24, Section 30. We deny it.

1. For those who are absolutely destined for glory are also absolutely destined for blameless holiness (Ephesians 1:4). The greatest part of holiness is pious anxiety and caution not to offend God (Proverbs 28:14; Philippians 2:12).
2. Because pious anxiety is a thing absolutely promised by God in the New Covenant (Jeremiah 32:40) and therefore absolutely

decreed.

3. Because this opinion assumes that people know they are absolutely elected to glory before they obey God with pious fear and religious anxiety and avoid sin; which is false. Such knowledge would be mere presumption. No one knows they are absolutely elected to glory who does not walk in fear and pious anxiety. How can anyone know they are absolutely elected to anxiety who is not anxious?
4. Christ knew He was absolutely destined to die at a certain hour; yet He piously fled from and avoided His enemies (John 11:53-54; Mark 1:54; John 10:39; Luke 4:29-30). And this is the consequence of the Holy Spirit: Christ's hour had not yet come; therefore, no one seized Him. Unless the hour had been absolutely destined, at which it was necessary for Him to die, this consequence would not hold. For if the hour was conditionally appointed, upon what condition was it appointed? Namely, if the Jews captured Him at that hour; no other condition can be conceived. Thus, the Holy Spirit would argue: Christ died at that hour; therefore, He died at that hour; for in this matter, according to them, the condition and the thing conditioned are the same.
5. Pious fear does not contradict peremptory election or absolute election; for it is just as impossible for one who is peremptorily elected not to be glorified as it is for one absolutely elected to glory not to be glorified.
6. According to the doctrine of Scientia Media (Middle Knowledge), there is no reason for the elect to seek from God, with trembling, the grace to obey, because their final obedience

or non-obedience is before and apart from all the free will of God.

Question: Is the number of the elect determined in the counsel and power of God, so that they are neither more nor fewer?

The Arminians, by necessary consequence, deny this. We believe both the numbered total and the numbering are certain.

1. Because one who was a reprobate yesterday cannot be substituted in the place of one who was an elect yesterday (John 10:14). "I am the good shepherd; I know my own, and my own know me." (2 Timothy 2:19). "The firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, 'The Lord knows those who are his.'" (Romans 9:11) "In order that God's purpose of election might continue." (John 6:37, 39). "All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out, but raise him up on the last day." (Romans 11:28-29) "As regards election, they are beloved for the sake of their forefathers." "For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable." Prosper of Aquitaine also states, "Of these stones nothing is rejected, nothing diminished, nothing taken away."
2. Because those whom God has eternally appointed to be saved, He gives faith and perseverance so that they are infallibly saved. For those He predestined, He also called, justified, and glorified (Romans 8:30).
3. Because Jehovah does not change; therefore, the sons of Jacob are not destroyed (Malachi 3:6).

4. Because as many as were appointed to eternal life believed; not more, not fewer (Acts 13:48).
5. Because it is impossible to deceive the elect (Matthew 24:24).
6. Because the persons who are effectually called are designated, and their names are written in the book of life, that is, in God's decree — certain and determined individuals (Isaiah 49:12; 60:8-9; Hosea 1:10; Zechariah 8:22; 12:10, 12).

But, according to the Arminians, the numbered total is not within God's discretion.

1. Because God, not producing the free acts of conversion irresistibly, cannot convert and save more than those He does convert and save. For He would violate human liberty unless He left men in absolute indifference to act.
2. Because the final conversion of all to God and the final resistance to God's calling precede God's foreknowledge and His free decree. Therefore, it is in vain, according to them, that we pray for more to be saved than are actually saved.
3. Because, notwithstanding the action of the most special grace and the most invincible dominion of Providence, the reprobate can convert himself and thus pass into the number of the elect, and the elect can finally fall away and thus pass into the number of the reprobate. Therefore, the number is not determined by God's discretion.
4. Because the Arminians deny that God knows future contingents. Therefore, He does not know today how many will be saved and how many will be damned, for the conversion or non-conversion

of those not yet born, and not yet called by the preaching of the Gospel, is a future contingent. But future contingents, they expressly teach, are not even knowable to God (see the Remonstrants in their Apology, Chapter 2, page 43).

Chapter 4:

On Reprobation

Question: Is reprobation a temporal act, not an eternal one, in God?

The Remonstrants assert this in their Apology, claiming that Paul says the Jews will again be shown mercy if they do not remain in unbelief. We deny this.

1. Because the text does not say that those who are reprobate are the same in number as those from that nation who are to be saved and shown mercy again.
2. Because those who have been hardened and did not attain the promises are set in opposition to the elect; that is, to those who have been chosen from eternity and have obtained the promises.
3. Because Esau was reprobated before he was born or had done anything good or bad (Romans 9:11).
4. Because the ungodly are rejected from efficacious grace and glory in time. Therefore, they are reprobated from eternity.
5. Because there is no new will in God in time that was not in Him from eternity; for otherwise, He would be changed.

Question: Has God reprobated men from eternity absolutely, that is, without any regard to original sin, actual sin, or final impenitence, as a prior cause or condition, and solely from His own free and independent will?

The Remonstrants assert in Article 1, page 230, that sin is the meritorious cause of reprobation. We deny this.

1. Because Scripture says, "You do not believe because you are not among my sheep" (John 10:26), and, "If they had been of us, they would have continued with us" (1 John 2:19). According to the Remonstrants, the opposite would need to be said.
2. Because Esau was reprobated and hated by God before he was born or had done anything good or bad (Romans 9:11).
3. The potter has the power to make from the same lump one vessel for dishonor and another for honor. Therefore, by Paul's testimony, this same right, even more so, belongs to God over men.
4. Because God hardens whom He wills; He raised up Pharaoh so that in him His glory in justice and power might be declared. Therefore, He has mercy on whom He wills and hardens whom He wills (Romans 9:17-18).
5. Because God denies the efficacious grace of faith to Judas, which He gives to Peter, not due to any merit of free will, but because He wills absolutely. Therefore, He decreed from eternity to deny it by His mere good pleasure.
6. Because God can convert and save all if He so wills. Therefore, it is by God's absolute good pleasure that some are not converted but perish.
7. If the freely self-determining created will were the cause and maker of men's reprobation, the elect would have something in which to glory in their free will, not in God's grace; for here, one

would be reprobated from eternity because he wills, another elected because he wills.

8. It would be within the power of free will for men to pass from the number of the reprobate to the number of the elect; and the determined number of the elect and reprobate would not be at God's disposal, but at man's.
9. It would be within the power of created free will to determine whether the glory of punitive justice should be declared or not; and it could happen, if men so decided, that this glory would remain hidden forever.
10. Because a man would distinguish and separate himself by his free will from others, who by their own free will make themselves objects of eternal reprobation.
11. Because there would be no mystery here, as Paul says in Romans 11:33. Nor would there be any room for this Pauline response to the objection in Romans 9:20, "Who are you, O man, to answer back to God?" For there would be no place for the objections of carnal men in Romans 9:19, if God reprobates men because they have first reprobated Him through their final impenitence.

Question: Is the distinction between negative or privative non-election, or passing over, and reprobation meaningless?

The Arminians assert this in Article 1, pages 235-236. We, however, acknowledge a distinction between passing over or non-election (by which God can deny a benefit to a man who has deserved no evil, with His justice intact) and reprobation, by which God, from His absolute good pleasure, decreed to create some and deny them efficacious grace to declare the glory of His justice. The former act is

called logically non-election, theologically passing over, because by this very act, God, by His free will, absolutely elects some to eternal glory; necessarily (for if election were of all, it would not be election), He passes over and does not choose others to glory.

Objection: Reprobation necessarily follows from non-election; therefore, God does the same here as if He commanded someone to live for a thousand years, yet only granted them the sustaining power of life for ten days.

Response: This very argument is proposed by Paul in the person of carnal men, in Romans 9:14. For God may justly be angry with one who has been given the sustaining power of life for only ten days and then is cast away, even if God Himself, of His own free will, withdraws that power.

Question: Is there no reprobation of those who have never heard the Gospel? Or is their reprobation of a different, more hidden and inexpressible nature than that of those who are in the visible Church?

The Remonstrants assert this in Article 1, page 23. We deny it.

1. Because God absolutely reprobated the Edomites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, and other nations from His covenant and the means of grace, simply because He willed it, as can be gathered from Malachi 1:2-4.
2. Because God chose the Jews as His people and called them to the communion of grace and glory, without regard to their worthiness or holiness (Ezekiel 16:3, 8; Deuteronomy 7:6-7; 9:4-5; Psalm 147:14, 20). Therefore, He rejected all other nations from such communion because He absolutely willed it.

Question: Is absolute reprobation the primary cause of the destruction of the vast majority of humankind?

The Remonstrants affirm this. We deny it.

1. Because God is not the cause of destruction at all, unless considered as a Judge who looks upon sin as an actual existence. But in reprobation, He is not a Judge, but an absolute Sovereign. Therefore, God is not a cause at all.
2. Because in reprobation, God merely determines to deny grace, which He owes to no mortal. Therefore, He cannot be the cause of sin or destruction simply because He reprobates men.

Question: Does God create and fashion some men for destruction?

The Remonstrants deny this. We affirm that God created the wicked for the day of evil, not simply, but for His glory; and although to irrational reason it may seem unjust that God creates a man for destruction, the more sober Scholastics rightly teach that, although it may appear cruel to will someone to be punished solely from the intention of punishing, it is not cruel if it is from the intention of fulfilling the good of the universe and displaying punitive justice.

1. Because "The Lord has made everything for its purpose, even the wicked for the day of trouble" (Proverbs 16:4). "For God has consigned all to disobedience, that He may have mercy on all" (Romans 11:32). "For this very purpose, I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth" (Romans 9:17). Paul calls those predestined to death "vessels of wrath prepared for destruction" (Romans 9:22). "They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do" (1 Peter 2:8). "Certain people have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were designated for this condemnation" (Jude 1:4). "The sons of Eli did not listen to the

voice of their father because it was the will of the Lord to put them to death" (1 Samuel 2:25).

2. Many are born to afflictions, as God has eternally ordained (Job 5:7; 1 Corinthians 4:9). "God has exhibited us apostles as last of all, like men sentenced to death" (1 Thessalonians 3:3). "You yourselves know that we were destined for this." If God has created some for punishment in time, why should it be against reason that He created some for eternal punishments?
3. Because many infants, who have done no more to deserve wrath than other infants, are miserably snatched away by the sword, fire, or overwhelming floods. Therefore, God has ordained them from eternity to such calamities, for nothing happens in time that was not decreed by God from eternity.

Question: Does creation cease to be a benefit of God to His creatures because the reprobate are created for the purpose of being vessels of wrath, to demonstrate the glory of punitive justice?

The Arminians assert this in their Declaration, page 107. We deny it.

1. Because a benefit does not cease to be a benefit even if it turns into harm for the one to whom it is given, solely due to the fault of the recipient, not the fault of the giver.
2. Because existence is far better and more excellent than non-existence, even if, accidentally and due to attached misery, it might seem worse.
3. Nor will this aid the adversaries if they do not cease to measure the infinite God by human standards: for no earthly father would bestow a benefit upon his son which he knows will ultimately lead to eternal destruction, whereas if the son had

lacked it, destruction would have been avoided. Especially if the father, while preserving his paternal right, could give the grace to use that benefit in such a way that it would result in eternal happiness. But such a father here, according to them, is the Creator of all the reprobate.

Question: Does God create men, particularly the reprobate, to sin? The Remonstrants simply deny this. We make a distinction: By an approving intention, God ordains none to sin.

1. Because He hates sin.
2. Because He forbids and punishes it.

But He has preordained men to the material acts of sin.

1. Because He has absolutely decreed all contingent acts, as has been proven.
2. Because no act occurs by chance or outside the intention of God.
3. Because we rightly pray that God would effectively prevent such acts in ourselves and others. But effective prevention presupposes an effective decree concerning the effective procurement or prevention of such acts.

Yet by a permissive intention, God creates men to sin, not simply, but to illustrate the glory of punitive justice.

1. Because he who intends an end also intends the means. Here, the means is the permission of sin; given the permission, the sin occurs.

2. Because God from eternity freely decreed to withhold special grace, by which, if given, men would avoid sin.
3. Because God cannot aim for glory in a vague and general sense, or under a disjunction — whether the glory of justice or the glory of mercy, or the glory of mere legislation, and in a speculative sense or practical demonstration to angels and men. Rather, He determines this specific glory, namely, the glory of justice in the reprobate and the glory of mercy in the elect. Therefore, He necessarily intends to permit sin, which is the intrinsic foundation of both punishment and forgiveness.

Question: Is the absolute will of God the cause of all things, such that God's will can be known by the very event itself?

The Remonstrants deny this in Article 1, page 250. We affirm that the will of God is the first and highest necessity and the cause of all things, either by effecting or by permitting them.

1. Because nothing, whether good or evil, exists apart from God's intention; otherwise, it would occur by chance.
2. Because every good and every evil, which has the nature of a useful good for declaring God's glory—such as sin—comes from the first cause either effectively or permissively, and for the ultimate end (Ephesians 1:11; Revelation 4:11; Romans 11:36; Proverbs 16:4).
3. Because there is no being, either positive or privative, that does not in some way exist by the will of the First Being; for beings come into existence not by the necessity of nature but by the free will of God (Revelation 4:11).

4. Because otherwise, there would be no reason to give thanks to God, no reason to pray to Him, nor any reason to patiently rest in His holy will, if not even all the evils of fault, which are often punishments for the saints, flowed in some way from God's will.

Question: Does God need the service and ministry of sin according to our doctrine?

The Remonstrants assert this in Article 1, page 258. We deny it.

1. Because God does not need the declaration of punitive justice and mercy, since He is infinitely blessed in Himself and in need of nothing external.
2. Because if He had never created the world, angels, or men who sin, nothing of His supreme authority would have been lost.
3. Yet, assuming such a decree to display the glory of punitive justice and sparing mercy, it was necessary, by a hypothetical necessity, for sin to exist.

Question: Because God has entered into a covenant of grace with us, consisting of commandments, promises, and threats, by which He deals with men according to His truth, mercy, and justice, has God therefore renounced His absolute dominion over rational creatures to dispose of them as He wills?

The Remonstrants affirm this in the cited place. We deny it.

1. Because things that are different in themselves do not conflict, even if they are dissimilar and one cannot be the other.
2. Because Scripture clearly affirms the absolute dominion and right of God over rational creatures (Romans 9:20-22) and also

says that the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth toward His own (Psalm 25:10).

3. Because the adversaries do not dare to deny God's inscrutable dominion, for He could save more than He does, and yet He does not save more; He could increase the number of the elect and decrease the number of the reprobate, yet He does not increase, nor does He decrease.

Question: Has God absolutely willed that men do no more good than they do, and omit no more evil than they omit, according to our doctrine?

The Remonstrants assert this in Article 1, page 250. We say that if the matter concerns His approving will, it is false; but if it concerns His will of good pleasure and decree, it is true.

1. Because the measure of good and evil actions, and even the number of all beings, is absolutely determined by God.
2. Because there would be no use for prayers or thanksgiving if the number of good actions and evils, neither more nor fewer, were not in the will of God.
3. Because faith would be of no use unless it were believed that God, by His gracious will, determines precisely the number of our enemies and injuries, as well as the number of supernatural acts.

Question: Does God not absolutely will to convert and save more than those who are converted and saved?

The Remonstrants teach that God wills all to be converted. We deny this.

1. Because if God gives efficacious grace to whom He wills, without merit on the part of men, as they themselves teach, then by the same reason, He denies grace to whom He wills, without any demerit of theirs. For just as He has mercy on whom He wills, so with equal liberty, He hardens whom He wills (Romans 9:18).
2. Because God is able to save all (John 10:29; Romans 11:23; Jude v. 24), if indeed He so willed. But He does not save all. Therefore, He does not absolutely will to save them.
3. Because with God, who chooses and reprobates from eternity, the number of the elect and the reprobate is determined, which can neither be increased nor decreased.
4. Because for the few and not for the many, Christ died, prays, intercedes, and reveals Himself — and indeed because He wills it (Matthew 11:27; James 1:18; Titus 3:6).
5. Because, according to the doctrine of the adversaries (who deny that God determines the will or that He can effect more free acts than men freely produce), God cannot convert more than He converts, nor cause more not to be converted than are not converted. Therefore, God does not will to convert more than He converts because God cannot absolutely will what He cannot accomplish by omnipotence.
6. Because, if God willed to convert more than He converts, if indeed more were willing to be converted, then God's will would be indeterminate, wavering, and dependent upon the free will of the creature. He would not have absolutely decreed the number of free acts of the creature, neither more nor fewer. Nor would the election and love of God concerning the salvation of the elect be fixed and immutable, but rather uncertain and mutable.

Question: Do the warnings and promises of the Gospel conflict with the absolute reprobation of the reprobate?

The Remonstrants affirm this. We deny it.

1. Because absolute reprobation is entirely consistent with the exercise of free will, as is evident in Esau and Pharaoh (Romans 9).
2. Because God's absolute unwillingness to grant salvation does not conflict with His approving offer of salvation; for God says that He approves of the obedience of those who never obey, to the extent that such obedience would be rewarded if it were to exist.
3. Absolute reprobation and the conditional offer of Christ do not conflict any more than the peremptory reprobation of those whom God foreknows will ultimately resist His call conflicts with the conditional offer of Christ. The Arminians themselves teach that the latter two do not conflict. The reason for this greater statement is that it appears equally strange to human reason that God would present conditional promises and warnings to those He knows will never obey and whom He has eternally, irrevocably rejected based on that foreknowledge, as it does to present the same to those whom He has absolutely rejected.
4. Because those whom God has absolutely reprobated to demonstrate the glory of His justice are appointed to a denial of glory according to the order of justice, on account of their rejection of Christ in the Gospel. But the absolute intention for the glory of justice does not conflict with the actual exercise of justice.

5. The reason the adversaries claim that these two things conflict is that, given the absolute decree, the will of the reprobate would not be absolutely indifferent, with all requisites for action in place, to sinning finally or not sinning finally. But this reasoning is baseless:

1. Because it contradicts God's dominion over all free acts, which cannot be denied to God without sacrilege.
2. Because it suggests that God's will concerning the declaration of the glory of justice in the reprobate is in a state of indecision, wavering between declaring or not declaring the glory of His justice, as if it were dependent on the free choice of a creature, not upon the free will of the most free Creator.
3. Because it assumes that free conditions in creatures are indifferent to being or not being, as the jurists teach, and not determined by God's will from eternity, which conflicts with the doctrine of particular providence.

6. Because this doctrine supposes that the promises and warnings indicate to us that the will of God is conditional in itself and not on the part of the object, as if God intended the eternal salvation of the reprobate under a condition that suspends God's intention in uncertainty and indecision. But we do not deny that such a conditional intention conflicts with God's absolute reprobation; rather, we reject such an intention as unworthy of God, for it would mean that God intends the salvation of all equally and thus would intend in no case the declaration of the glory of His justice, which is manifestly false (Romans 9:17, 23).

7. The prolongation of Christ's life until His appointed hour did not conflict with His fleeing from His enemies and His diligent

care in avoiding their fury. In the same way, the absolute intention to declare the glory of justice does not conflict with the promises and warnings proposed by God.

Question: Has God decreed the declaration of punitive justice absolutely, or conditionally from eternity?

The Arminians here imagine a conditional decree of God. We deny this.

1. Because the intention of either the glory of mercy or (if God should fail in this intention) the glory of punitive justice is an intention under a disjunction, dubious and confused, and it conflicts with the infinite perfection of the divine will. It is a supreme imperfection, as if a pilot intended first to reach this harbor or that, should the first plan fail, according to the impulse or, as it were, the fortune of the winds.
2. Because, in this way, the glory of punitive justice could have remained hidden indefinitely, if it so pleased free creatures.
3. Because God says, "For this very purpose, I have raised you up, that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth" (Romans 9:17). Therefore, God raised up Pharaoh for this specific end.
4. Because, for an ambiguous and uncertain end, God would have created the noblest creatures—men and angels—when He created all other things for their certain and determined ends (Proverbs 16:4; Revelation 4:11; Romans 11:36).

Meanwhile, we by no means deny that God's will concerning the reprobate is conditional with respect to the object, although it is not so in itself. For God from eternity destined the reprobate to eternal

destruction, which they were not destined to incur except by their voluntary sins and disobedience against God who calls them.

Question: Does absolute reprobation conflict with the ministry of the Word, the command to believe, repent, and pray?

The Remonstrants assert that they do conflict. We deny this.

1. Because reprobation does not violate, nor does it necessitate by fatal force, the will of the reprobate.
2. Because the adversaries argue that commands, prayers, and the free use of such means, by which such danger is avoided, are of no effect unless the will is absolutely indifferent to acting or not acting. But it is evident that this is false, as in Christ praying for the glory He had with the Father from eternity (John 17), and yet Christ could in no way be deprived of that glory.
3. Because God's absolute intention to display the glory of His justice does not conflict with the permission of sin, by which the glory of justice is made manifest. And yet the commands to repent and pray are harmoniously subordinated to the permission of sin, as the adversaries themselves admit.
4. Because these commands aim to render the reprobate inexcusable; but not from the eternal intention of God who commands, so that they might obey and be saved, even if this is the end of the command.
5. Because it seems as alien to natural reason for God to command those to repent, believe, and pray for grace and glory whom He foreknows will ultimately reject grace and glory, and whom He calls in an ineffective manner, knowing they will never obey, as

it would be to command those to repent, believe, etc., to whom God has from eternity denied grace and glory.

Question: Does it conflict with the blessedness of God to propose an end which He cannot attain without that which is displeasing and hateful to Him?

The Remonstrants affirm this in Article 1, page 257. We deny it.

1. Because nothing detracts from God's blessedness by intending an end that cannot be achieved without sin, which does not impair His blessedness, and which He permits to happen while remaining holy and free from all stain.
2. Because sin is indeed opposed to God's free approval, but it is not properly opposed to God's nature, neither privatively nor contrarily, except conditionally, in so far as it conflicts with the immutability and holiness of God to will as just and equitable an act that He Himself has forbidden as unjust, which He could have commanded absolutely as just and equitable before that volition.

Question: Because the virtue and benefits of Christ's merits are denied to the reprobate by absolute reprobation from eternity, can the reprobate therefore not be charged with ingratitude toward God's mercy and the merits of Christ?

The Remonstrants affirm this in Article 1, page 261. We deny it.

1. Because ingratitude toward the merits of Christ consists in despising the favor of God and in rejecting the offered Christ and His benefits, particularly in not believing in the Son of God, as it is written: "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have been guilty of sin" (John 15:22). But ingratitude does not consist in men refusing to believe that God has either

elected or reprobated them from eternity; nor do the reprobate sin because God has reprobated them from eternity and has not destined to them the benefits of Christ. For the eternal volitions of God fall neither under commandments nor under our free will.

2. Because evangelical ingratitude lies in this: that men do not want to rely on Christ with confidence but treat His death and merits with indifference, as even the adversaries confess. Yet those very men who thus despise Christ are, according to the judgment of the adversaries, irrevocably, peremptorily, and completely reprobated by God from eternity. And to them, in the same decree, that effectual calling is denied, which if they had received, they would have believed in Christ and embraced His death and merits with open arms. This is the mystery of sound theology: that so many are condemned in the visible Church because they do not want to receive Jesus Christ by saving faith (though by God's eternal intention and decree, He was never preordained to them as an effectual Mediator and Savior). Thus, let irrational reason be silent.

3. Because the adversaries cannot prove this connection by Scripture or sound reason (that if God has absolutely and from eternity decreed that Christ and His death should not pertain to the reprobate, then the reprobate are not ungrateful to God because they do not want to believe in Christ crucified, by whom they might obtain eternal life).

Question: Does absolute reprobation overturn the Gospel, which says that whoever believes shall be saved, and whoever does not believe shall be condemned, because this decree says that the one whom God absolutely wills to be saved shall be saved, and the one

whom God, absolutely and out of His mere good pleasure, without any fault of his own, has destined to death, shall be condemned? The Remonstrants claim that it does invert the Gospel. We deny this.

1. Because what is subordinate does not conflict; nor does any part of the Word of God—such as the doctrine of reprobation—conflict with the Gospel. For God has so absolutely appointed some to death that no one incurs death absolutely but only conditionally, if they do not believe in the Son of God.
2. Because it is not an inversion when the order of intention and execution of the end and means varies.
3. Because a decree by which God appoints some to death, whether they be unbelievers or impenitent, would indeed invert the Gospel. But the decree of reprobation is not so absolute as to be entirely detached from all the means which are procuratively, demeritoriously, and culpably related to eternal death.

Question: Given reprobation, would it have been far better for the reprobate never to have heard the Gospel?

The Remonstrants affirm this in Article 1 of the Synod's Scriptures, page 261.

We say, by accident and from the abuse of the Gospel, that it would have been better for them never to have heard the Gospel.

1. Because it would have been better for Judas if he had never been born (Matthew 26:24).
2. Because it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Tyre in the day of judgment than for the impenitent hearers of the Gospel (Matthew 10:14-15; 11:24).

3. Because it is better to be free from the sin of unbelief against the Gospel than to be guilty of it (John 15:22).

But indeed, the proclamation of the Gospel in itself and in its primary action is a benefit of God of the highest excellence. Nor does it cease to be a benefit because it results in far greater and more grievous harm to those who abuse such a benefit. Although if we were to measure the wisdom of God by our foolish reasoning, it might seem not to be a benefit to bestow upon man that good which we foresee will result in a far greater evil.

Question: Is the doctrine of absolute reprobation a pit and precipice of despair?

The Remonstrants affirm this. We deny it.

1. Because conditional reprobation cannot be a solid foundation for hope and consolation, but rather a support for perpetual wavering, by which one is only as certain of his salvation as he is convinced of the fickleness of his indifferent free will. Therefore, absolute reprobation cannot be the foundation of despair.
2. Because no one is bound to believe that he is reprobated from eternity unless he himself, in time, finally rejects and despises God and Christ.
3. Because abundant salvation in Christ Jesus is offered to all in the visible Church, notwithstanding this decree.
4. Because God does not deny internal grace even to the absolutely reprobate, except to those who reject it.
5. Because the entire foundation of solid hope and consolation properly and directly pertains only to those who believe in

Christ. And we profess that we do not wish to promote any doctrine of election and reprobation that would suggest to all mortals a near ground for solid hope, internal peace, and living consolation. What have such persons to do with hope, peace, or consolation who give themselves over to their own desires and do not believe in Christ? But the Arminians, on the contrary, command all mortals to be of good cheer, to enjoy peace and consolation in Christ, if indeed God has willed eternal glory for them from eternity, and Christ has died for them all. According to this way of thinking, internal peace and Christian consolations pertain no less to Indians, Turks, Jews, and all even to the pagans than to those who believe in the Son of God.

Chapter 5:

On the State of the First Man

Ephesians 4:24

"And put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

Regarding the state of man before the fall, we observe:

1. That man was created upright and holy, as is described in the words of Scripture.

2. That this uprightness and righteousness were innate and natural to him.
3. That he had the ability to remain in that state and persevere, or to fall from it. From these considerations arise the following questions:

Question: Was original righteousness natural to man before the fall, or was it supernatural? That is, was it a gift innate to his nature, or was it a grace added to man after creation?

The Remonstrants say it was a supernatural gift. We say it was natural:

1. Because it was implanted and innate in the very creation of the thing.
2. Because it did not transcend the powers of nature and had its cause in nature. In both respects, original righteousness is natural.
3. Because Ecclesiastes 7:29 states: "God created man upright." The Hebrew word means "pure" or "just." The Septuagint translates it as "straight" (Ecc. 7:30). Numbers 23:10 translates as "beautiful" (Num. 12:24). Job 33:3 says "innocent." The Chaldee Paraphrase states: "God made man upright before Himself and innocent." Damascenus, in "De Fide Orthodoxa," Book 2, Chapter 14, says: "He made man pure and holy." And "upright" is there opposed to "crooked" and to those who devise many schemes or ways. Therefore, if God did not create man naturally upright, then He must have created him crooked, which is absurd.
4. Because Genesis 1:27 states: "God created man in His own image and likeness," that is, endowed with true righteousness

and holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10).

5. Because that righteousness was naturally owed to him whom God had made by nature, namely, to serve God; for God could not demand obedience from man according to his natural powers unless He had given him the natural ability to obey.
6. Because if concupiscence and inclination to evil were natural to man, then this righteousness could not be considered natural, for a form or privation exists in a subject capable of it. But if concupiscence was natural to man before the fall and man was naturally inclined to sin, and the act of sinning was only restrained by the bridle of original righteousness, as the adversaries claim, this makes God the author of sin and the author of concupiscence, which, however, does not come from God, as testified by the Apostle John.
7. Because it contradicts reason to say that man, before the fall, obeyed God contrary to his nature. Indeed, we judge it to be blasphemy what the Remonstrants state in their Confession, Chapter 15, Thesis 4: "That Adam abstained from eating the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil only with the greatest difficulty." For such difficulty in obedience could not be without blame and would be contrary to the natural love of God. Thus, guilt would have preceded the first sin, and man would have been created evil and crooked.

Objection: This image is now supernatural to fallen man. Therefore, it was also supernatural to man before the fall.

Response: This does not follow. For the image restored to us in Christ is analogically the same as the one lost, but of a different kind and of an entirely different nature.

6. What they argue about the condition of the matter — that conflicting tendencies arose, namely, toward what pleases the flesh and the sensitive faculty, and toward what appeals to reason, but not from God's intention — is of no value. They claim that rust on a sword does not come from the craftsman's intention but from the condition of the material. However, the objects of the sensitive faculty and reason are indeed different, but not contrary; and in the upright man, there was a natural harmony whereby the sensitive appetite obeyed reason, and reason obeyed God. But man would not have been created naturally upright and in the image and likeness of God if he had been inclined by the force of matter and a natural inclination to that which is opposed to God's law.
7. Thus, there would have been a struggle within man between the flesh, or the sensitive appetite — inclined toward that which is forbidden by God's law and right reason — and right reason itself. But such a natural struggle could not have failed to make man naturally miserable, for Paul miserably laments the tendency to opposites (Romans 7:24).
8. If that concupiscence which was in Adam (as they teach) is a mere power to act or not to act, then they say nothing, for in this way concupiscence would exist in the good angels, in the glorified, and in Christ, which is absurd. But if it is a quality added to the power of acting or not acting, by which man naturally inclines to sin, then:
 1. It would be natural for man to sin, and sin would be ingrained in his reason, and to obey God would be contrary to the natural inclination of the creature.

2. Man could not tend toward the object that is naturally analogous and suitable to his power when he sins, and purely natural acts would be blameworthy, which is absurd.
9. It is Manichaeian to believe that something created is morally evil.

Question: Does it not make God the author of the first sin if man sinned because God, without man's fault, denied him the grace necessary to avoid the first sin?

The Arminians, with their Antiperk, affirm this on pages 704 and 505. We deny it.

1. Because God did not withhold anything from man that was part of His image. For actual grace, or the efficacious influence of God required for the act of obedience, is not a part of the divine image. For Adam had the ability to sin and the ability not to sin.
2. Because that influence was not owed to man by any law or obligation. God cannot be the author of sin merely by withholding from Adam something that was not owed to him, even if it was necessary to avoid sin.
3. Because God denied this efficacious influence to Adam, who did not desire it. Thus, there was here a virtual and interpretative demerit in Adam, though not formal: because at the very instant when God withheld this actual influence, Adam freely willed to lack it, and by this very fact that he committed the first sin, he interpretatively willed to lack that predetermining grace, which, if he had possessed it, he would have used to avoid the first sin righteously. Nor do we find it absurd to think that the lack of predetermining grace and the culpable demerit of that lack coexist in time, even though the lack is prior in the order of

nature to the demerit; which I acknowledge to be a mystery of our theology that is not to be scrutinized.

Question: Does the first sin dissolve and free Adam from every covenant, seeing that the covenant of grace had not yet been established with him before the promise of the blessed seed, and that, as Corvinus argues against Molina (Chapter 8, §7, from his Arminius), once the first covenant is broken, the obligation to fulfill the obedience required by that covenant ceases? For, as the Remonstrants teach, the Law does not simultaneously obligate to both active and passive obedience.

We uphold the opposite.

Because all are bound to obey the Law, or the covenant of works, which was established with Adam before the fall, even after that covenant was broken.

1. "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). And death would have been the penalty even if God had never established a covenant of grace with the human race in the Mediator, Christ. Otherwise, God could not have inflicted the threatened punishment for the second transgression of the Law unless He had promised Christ as Mediator, which is absurd.
2. God reproved Adam when he was fleeing and hiding among the trees, even before the promise of the blessed seed. Therefore, Adam sinned in that moment after the breaking of the first covenant. But he did not sin against the covenant of grace, for none existed then. Therefore, he sinned against the first covenant of works. And he could not have sinned unless he was obligated to render active obedience to that covenant.

3. Because the first sin does not exempt anyone from the obligation of the covenant of works.
4. Because if this were true, perjurers, idolaters, fornicators, murderers, and parricides would not sin against the Law as it is the Law. But Gentiles who commit such things cannot sin against a covenant of grace that has never been revealed to them, for a law not promulgated in any way does not bind. Therefore, it cannot be sinned against. Consequently, the most wicked sinners would not sin at all, for "where there is no law, there is no transgression" (Romans 4:15).
5. Because if all are under the covenant of grace and freed from the first covenant of works, then no mortal would be subject to the curse of the Law as the Law, which contradicts the Scriptures (Deuteronomy 27:26; Galatians 3:10). For those who are not obligated to render active obedience to the Law are not subject to its penal curse, because a law that does not obligate to obedience does not obligate to punishment.
6. Because, if this were the case, some would not be under the Law and some under grace and Christ, the new husband, as Paul says in Romans 7.
7. This doctrine of the adversaries rests on false hypotheses.
 1. That all mortals are covenanted in the covenant of grace, even those who have never heard, even of the covenant or the name of Christ, the sponsor of the covenant; whereas Scripture comprehends only the elect, the house of Israel, and the children of promise within that covenant (Jeremiah 31:31; Hebrews 8:10-11; Romans 8:9; Galatians 5:26-27).

2. That no one is simultaneously obligated to punishment and obedience, which is true in this sense: No one is obligated to obedience in those acts for which they suffer penalties for neglect, yet they are obligated to other subsequent acts. Otherwise, the first sin would make all mortals without law and subject to no law, unless God had made a covenant of grace. And God would have made the covenant of grace out of necessity, lest perhaps men should remain without law.

8. Because the reprobate are always the children of the bondwoman and are subject to the legal covenant and its curse, since they are never in Christ.

Question: Is concupiscence a vicious privative being, or is it rather a positive quality?

The adversaries wish to assert that it is a privative being.

We make a distinction. For a positive quality is taken in three ways:

1. Physically;
2. Ethically;
3. Logically.

Concupiscence is not a physically positive quality, for every such quality is from God as a good thing in nature; nor do our theologians teach that concupiscence is a positive quality in this sense. But concupiscence is also considered in two ways:

1. Formally and in the abstract, and thus, logically speaking, it is not a positive quality but logically privative and is rather a crookedness of power than power itself.
2. However, concupiscence is considered concretely, as it denotes a subject capable of either form or privation, and in this sense, our

theologians teach that concupiscence is not a purely privative being but an ethically positive one.

3. Because it does not merely denote the absence of due rectitude in the powers but also connotes a subject capable of either form or privation.
4. Because it does not only deprive the soul of Original Righteousness, as blindness deprives the eyes of sight, but also affects the soul with a corrupt quality and inclination, as rot corrupts an apple and fever makes the body sick.
5. Because Scripture attributes positive actions to it, namely, that it opposes itself to the Spirit of God, leads men captive, and produces the works of the flesh, etc.

Question: Was there no power in Adam to believe in Christ, and therefore did he lose this power through the force of the first sin, until he is restored in Christ?

The Remonstrants deny that Adam possessed such a power. So says Arminius in his response to Article 31, Episcopius in Disputation 5, Thesis 6, and likewise Socinus in his "Theological Lectures," Chapter 34, folios 8-9.

We affirm that there was such a power in Adam. But:

1. We do not teach that there was in Adam the act of justifying faith, for such faith presupposes sin.
2. The question is not whether there was in him a passive and remote potentiality to believe in Christ; the adversaries do not deny this. Nor,

3. Whether there was in Adam legal faith; this all concede.
We assert, however, that there was in Adam, not yet fallen, a proximate power to believe in Christ.
4. Because in Adam there was the perfect image of God, as a habit; therefore, there was a power for all acts that the Creator could command of him, whether absolutely or hypothetically. For the image of God includes the power to believe all that the first truth could reveal.
5. Suppose that Adam, not yet fallen, had been shown his misery and a Redeemer who would restore him. In that case, he would either have been obligated to believe in the Redeemer in this situation, or not. If the former, then he had the power to believe, for a moral obligation in man, not yet fallen, presupposes a physical power since God cannot obligate man, not yet fallen, to an impossible thing. If the latter, then he would have been bound not to believe and thus to despair of a Redeemer, even if revealed, which is absurd.
6. Because Adam was obligated to rely upon God in all possible dangers (e.g., if tempted by the devil to sin), therefore, also under the greatest danger of sin, if a remedy were revealed. Thus, he had the power to believe in Christ.
7. Adam had the power to believe in God as Creator; therefore, also in God as Redeemer. The reason for this conclusion is that there would not be "one baptism, one faith," contrary to the Apostle in Ephesians 4:5, if these two kinds of faith were different in species. Thus, in Hebrews 11:3 and 13, by one faith, we believe both in the creation and the promises of the Gospel.

8. Adam had the power to believe all that is commanded in the Moral Law, either explicitly or implicitly; therefore, he had the power to believe every truth revealed or to be revealed by God. For the Law commands the intellect and affections to give assent to all truth.
9. Abraham had habitual love, exercising acts of love for God and in the acts commanded or to be commanded by God (e.g., in sacrificing his son, if God commanded it). Therefore, by parity of reasoning, Adam had the power to believe in what was revealed and what was to be revealed.
10. If Adam had no power to believe in Christ, then he had no pious inclination of mind to bring his understanding into subjection to God's will, which cannot stand with true holiness and righteousness that was in Adam.

Question: Was the image of God in Adam original righteousness and habitual holiness, or merely a free will to obey God without any infused or innate habit of holiness?

The Remonstrants, in their Apology, Chapter 7, Section 6, say it makes no difference whether one affirms or denies that Adam was endowed with such righteousness. Episcopius in Disputation 5, Thesis 3, and Corvinus against Wallachros, folio 55, state the same. So too Socinus in his "Theological Lectures," Chapter 3, folios 7-8, and Smalcius in his Refutation of Frantzius, Disputation 2, folios 44-45, deny that any virtues were infused into Adam's will. We, on the contrary, assert:

1. Adam was created in the image of God, and this image consists in true righteousness and holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10).

2. Because God created man upright and inclined to love God; otherwise, Adam, while sleeping, would not have been habitually good and holy.
3. Because mere potentiality and free will to obey God, without any infused virtue in the will, remains in man after the fall as something natural, innate, and essential to the will (as they teach). Therefore, it follows that Adam, by the fall, lost nothing of the divine image, no holy inclination to good consistent with the Law of God in his will; thus, man would have been equally sound and holy after the fall as he was before the fall.

Question: Was Adam created mortal?

The Remonstrants and Socinians, like the ancient Pelagians, teach that mortality naturally belongs to man.

We respond to these assertions.

Affirmation 1: If "natural" is taken to mean that which was instilled into a thing at creation, then mortality is not natural to man.

1. Because God created man such that he could not die, and if he had persevered in obedience to God, he would not have died.
2. Because not only death but also mortality is a penalty for sin. Mortality is indeed an evil and a disposition toward destruction. Thus, the warning of God states, "On the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die," i.e., "you will become mortal, and eventually you will die" (Genesis 2:17).
3. Because death and dissolution are a disturbance of the harmony of the elements and the union of the soul with the body, which

seems to be a dishonor to the Creator if it had been innate to man.

Affirmation 2: If "natural" is taken to mean that which has its cause in any way in nature, i.e., either in matter or in form, then mortality is natural to Adam's body, which was made from dust.

1. Because whatever is generated is corruptible.
2. Because that which is composed of contraries is dissoluble.
3. Because man, with respect to the body, was dust.
4. Because everything contrary can suffer from its opposite.

Affirmation 3: The possibility of not dying did not belong to man simply by virtue of his soul, but by the benefit of the Creator.

1. Because the rational soul cannot prevent the action and reaction of contraries.
2. Because the soul cannot prevent external force, compression, and suffocation, to which the body could be physically subject, if it had pleased God to bring external force upon Adam's body before the fall. Moreover, God could, according to His absolute good pleasure, bring such force upon it from an external agent, apart from any demerit of sin. But what belongs to man as something innate, by the benefit of the Creator as Creator, should be considered simply natural and a certain connatural due to nature, not something supernatural; for God, as Creator, does not confer supernatural things.

Affirmation 4: By moral obligation, Adam's body was subject neither to death, nor to mortality, nor to aging, disease, or

dissolution before sin.

1. Because, according to the Apostle, "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).
2. Because the threat "You are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Genesis 3:19) would never have been enforced if man had not sinned.
3. Because the Arminians and Socinians, along with the Papists, impiously subject man to mortality by nature. For if this were so, man could naturally die without the demerit of sin. Their reasoning is that, since they teach that original sin is not properly a sin, it seems unjust to them and contrary to the justice of God that infants should die.

Chapter 6

On Original Sin

Romans 5:12

"Therefore, as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."

This passage is illustrious and most significant, if any other, for confirming the doctrine of the Reformed Churches concerning original sin. Hence:

Question: Is there, in man, a sin properly so called, which is termed original sin, subjecting man to eternal death and condemnation? Or is it rather a sin improperly so called, merely an infirmity, or a weakness and disease of nature, not truly subjecting man either to punishment or to the wrath of God?

The Remonstrants, with their Pelagians and Socinians, assert that no such sin exists that can be properly called sin. They claim in their "Apology," Chapter 7, Section 64, "It is contrary to the nature of sin that anything not committed by one's own will should be considered sin or properly imputed as sin." Hence, they state in the "Censure of the Leyden Professors," folio 87, that "no one is condemned because of this sin." And there, with James Arminius and Corvinus, they teach that "it is contrary to the mercy, goodness, and justice of God that tender infants should be condemned to eternal torments solely for that sin, which they have never personally committed, and for which Adam, its first author, obtained forgiveness." For in this way, God would act far more harshly with innocent infants and men than with apostate angels, who do not suffer the penalties of another's sin.

On the contrary, we affirm (whatever irrational reason may object) that all mortals (except Christ alone) sinned in Adam and are, therefore, born in sin and subject to both temporal and eternal death from the womb.

1. Because David says in Psalm 51:5, "I was shaped in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." The Hebrew word for "shaped" means "to be in the pains of childbirth"; the other means "my mother was inflamed with me." Tremellius translates, "my mother conceived me." Chemnitz says that David is not subtly questioning here the reason for voluntary sin. The Septuagint translates it as "ἐν ἀνομίαις." Consider also Job 14:4, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." Job

15:14, "What is man, that he should be clean? And he that is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" Genesis 6:5, "Every imagination and thought of man's heart was only evil continually from his youth." Ephesians 2:3, "We were by nature children of wrath, like the rest." John 3:6, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Romans 5:12, "In Adam, all sinned." Verse 15, "By the offense of one, many died." Verse 18, "Therefore, as by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." Verse 19, "For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners."

2. Because infants die and suffer death, which is the wages of sin. Therefore, they are sinners. Nor is death in them a chastisement (as the Remonstrants claim), since chastisement properly so-called applies only to those who have the use of reason.
3. Infants were formerly circumcised and are now baptized for the remission of sins. Therefore, they are born in sin.
4. The Pelagians formerly taught the same concerning original sin:
 1. That Adam's sin harmed no one but himself and that man is not born worse now than he was originally created.
 2. That Christ died to atone for sins committed by imitation of Adam.
 3. That we are sinners and born such in Adam by imitation, not by nature. The Arminians and Socinians teach precisely the same.

Question: Since original sin is not committed by the personal will, does this mean it is not properly called sin?

The Arminians say that it is not properly called sin for this reason. We, on the contrary, assert:

1. This sin is voluntary by the will of nature, not by the will of the person; by the representative will, not by one's own will.
2. Sin is more essentially an opposition to the Law of God than something voluntary. Nor is voluntariness essential to sin in general, for the powers, propensities, and inclinations of the soul (which precede the voluntary) are stained with sin, even though the nature of voluntariness does not apply to them.
3. Scripture says that we have all sinned in Adam and have been made sinners (Romans 5:12, 19). Yet, our personal and physically individual will was not in Adam.
4. The reason for voluntariness is not formally in the hand that kills a man, yet it is punished for the murder. Moreover, our will, though not physically, is legally and morally present by a special covenant and by the free imputation of God in Adam, so that such sin is imputable according to that covenant.

Question: Can such a covenant be proven whereby Adam's sin is imputed to all his descendants?

The Remonstrants deny it. We prove it.

1. Because Scripture says more than once that we are born in sin, that we sinned in Adam, and that we are made sinners by one man's offense. This did not happen by nature; therefore, it must have occurred by covenant and special law of God.
2. Wherever there is a promise and a penalty inflicted, there is a covenant and a pact. Now, God made a promise to Adam and his

descendants: “The one who does these things shall live by them,” and “In the day that you eat of it, you shall surely die.” Therefore, there was a covenant and pact. If the same penalty is inflicted upon us that was inflicted upon Adam, then the same legal covenant binds us that bound him.

Question: Is concupiscence sin, especially after Baptism and Regeneration?

The Remonstrants say that it existed in man before the Fall, and in itself is not sin. And after regeneration in the regenerate, the Papists and Arminians say it is only sin metonymically, effectively, and improperly.

We, on the contrary, assert that it is, both in itself and after regeneration, properly and univocally called sin.

1. Because Paul, in his deliberate explanation of the nature of concupiscence, calls it by the name of sin fourteen times in Romans chapters 6, 7, and 8. We must not depart from the proper meaning of the words when the nature and inherent passions of a thing are being explained.
2. The definition of sin, which the Apostle assigns in 1 John 3:4, applies to it: “Sin is a transgression of the law.” Romans 7:7: “I would not have known sin except through the Law, for I would not have known coveting if the Law had not said, ‘You shall not covet.’”
3. Concupiscence is something that God hates; for Paul, according to his inner man and renewed part, hated it. (Romans 7)
4. Concupiscence must be mortified and crucified; it must not be obeyed but strongly resisted (Romans 6:13, 14; Colossians 3:5).

5. Concupiscence is not from God, as the Apostle John testifies, and it is acknowledged by the adversaries to be an evil thing. But if it were merely an evil of punishment, it would be from God as a good work of justice. Therefore, necessarily, it is an evil of fault.
6. Concupiscence desires against the Spirit of God in us (Romans 7; Galatians 5).
7. It is an evil circumstance that we are commanded to lay aside (Hebrews 12:1).
8. It makes Paul carnal and enslaved to sin, producing all kinds of covetousness (Romans 7:11). It deceived him and killed him (v. 13). It is sin that appears to be sin (v. 17), sin dwelling in Paul (v. 18). It is not good, and it hinders the performance of the good that the Law of God commands and that the Spirit of God in Paul approves as good. Paul describes it as both a privative and a positive evil: "I find not the power to do good" (v. 20), "sin dwelling in me" (v. 21), "present evil" (v. 23), a "law in my members," rebelling against the law of my mind, bringing Paul into captivity to sin. Finally, it is the evil that makes Paul miserable morally (v. 25), and from whose tyranny he gives thanks to God through Jesus Christ for his deliverance. Its wisdom is enmity against God, and it cannot be subject to the Law of God (Romans 8:7, and 6:6, 7, 11, 14, 16, 18).

Question: Is concupiscence formally prohibited by the Law of God? The Remonstrants deny this. The Papists assert that the commandment ("You shall not covet") obliges us to resist concupiscence but not to the extent of eradicating it entirely, since this is not within our power. They claim it is prohibited only to demonstrate not what is required of us by obligation, but rather what

is to be desired with a devout wish and effort; therefore, it is forbidden in the way of instruction, to admonish us towards the goal to which we should strive. Thus argues Bellarmine in "On the Loss of Grace," Book 5, Chapter 10; Stapleton, Volume 2, Book 3, Chapter 5; Becan, Part 2, Treatise 5, Section 5, Question 3, Chapter 9. We, on the contrary, teach:

1. Because it is an axiom consistent with Scripture, Reason, Councils, and the Fathers, and accepted by all learned men, that whatever God commands, we are obliged to perform. For a command essentially reveals that God wills us to be obligated to perform it.
2. It is false to say we are not obligated to the end of the Law because the end is impossible. Otherwise, we would not be bound to love God above all things and to be perfect, even as our Heavenly Father is perfect, which is nevertheless commanded (1 Peter 1:16; Matthew 5:48).
3. The Law is spiritual and requires wholly spiritual obedience, even that it be observed perfectly to the end, as Bellarmine himself admits. Therefore, it is false to say we are not guilty if we do not fulfill the end of the Law.
4. If not everything forbidden by the Law is an evil we are bound to avoid, then, by parity of reasoning, not everything commanded by the Law is a good that we are bound to perform.
5. A Moral Law that does not obligate to obedience is both a Law and not a Law, which is a contradiction.
6. If it is prohibited merely for the sake of instruction, then God could have commanded in the Decalogue that we know the

nature of Cassiopeia and the Pole Stars, just as He wills us to know concupiscence; in which case, the knowledge of the stars would have obliged us.

7. If concupiscence is forbidden only as a vice of nature, arising from the condition of matter, then the Law would, in its end, prohibit the very nature of living and animal existence in us; which is as absurd as God commanding that man not be an animal or a living being.
8. Augustine, in "On Marriage and Concupiscence," Book 1, Chapter 29, says: "He does much good who does what is written: 'Do not follow after your lusts'; but he does not fulfill it because he does not complete what is written." Therefore, Augustine thinks concupiscence is forbidden by the tenth commandment.

Question: Is concupiscence sin when there is no consent of the will?

The adversaries teach that in this case, it is not sin. We, however, state otherwise. The "first motion" is twofold:

1. One is purely intellectual in the mind, such as speculatively knowing the temptations of the Devil; this is not sin, for it was in Christ.
2. The other is a "first motion" in the appetite, and also a "second-first." Both presuppose some knowledge and a semi-consent or an inchoate and imperfect consent. And this is sin.
3. Because this motion is contrary to the most intense habit of loving God, which the Law requires.

4. It is prohibited by the tenth commandment. For Paul says it is sin, and something evil that leads him captive and enslaves him to sin, to which he did not give consent (Romans 7:15, 16, 19, 20). For concerning these motions, Paul says, "That which I do, I do not."
5. The Law of God requires perfect conformity between the will and all the inclinations of the sensitive and rational appetite that precede the consent of the will, and the will of God revealed in the Law. For inclinations to revenge, fornication, drunkenness, heresies, and vainglory, which the saints experience in themselves with holy grief, are culpable by this very fact, that the Holy Spirit causes us to grieve over such things, even if we never give them our consent.

Question: Is the struggle between the flesh and the Spirit, which exists in the regenerate, entirely natural and, on the part of the resisting flesh, not at all culpable?

The Remonstrants say it is not culpable and is merely a conflict of the lower appetite against reason. We deny this.

1. Because Paul complains of such a struggle in Romans 7, where he states that he is carnal and sold under sin (v. 14), that in his flesh nothing good dwells (v. 18), and that he is hindered and restrained from performing good (vv. 19-20), and that he is brought into captivity to the law of sin (v. 23). Paul would complain wrongly of himself if this struggle were the natural work of the Creator; for, in that case, he would rather be spewing out complaints and blasphemies against the Creator than piously lamenting the state of sin.
2. He would be complaining as falsely about a struggle that is entirely natural and not at all culpable as if someone were to

vent complaints against nature because heavy things tend downward and light things rise upward.

3. Paul would pray in vain to be delivered from this struggle and give thanks to God through Christ for deliverance (Rom. 7:24-25), stating that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1), if indeed this struggle were entirely natural.

Question: Does this struggle always remain in the regenerate as long as they live in this world?

The Remonstrants teach, in their Confession, Chapter 11, Section 11, along with their Socinus in Chapter 7 on Romans, pages 54-55, that some are so perfect as to be entirely free from this struggle, and such people sometimes sin not from any culpable innate concupiscence, but perhaps from some error, ignorance, inadvertence, or some clouding of the mind. We teach the contrary.

1. Because if there were such people in this life, it would be necessary that they should pray, "Forgive us our sins," and should say that they have no sin, which the Apostle John says is a lie (1 John 1:8).
2. Such people would be more perfect than Paul, the chosen vessel, in whom this struggle was perpetual, and more perfect than David, the man after God's own heart, who not only fell into the clouding of the mind into adultery and murder but also from this bitter principle confessed, "In sin did my mother conceive me" (Psalm 51:5).
3. Once the habit of sinning is supposedly cast off, there would be no other sinful principle in these supposedly perfect people than what was in Adam before the fall. For, if you remove

concupiscence and reveal God's will to the regenerate (which revelation is present to the regenerate, 2 Corinthians 3:18; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Ephesians 1:17-18), I ask, what existed in Adam before the fall that does not exist in a man who is thus perfectly regenerated? Therefore, there is no reason for them to pray, "Open the eyes of our mind," or "Increase our faith" (Psalm 119:18; Luke 17:5).

4. Paul, in Galatians 5:17, says that this struggle remains. And in Romans 8:6, "To set the mind on the flesh is death." And Peter says in 1 Peter 2:11 that fleshly lusts war against the soul.
5. This doctrine relies on the hypothesis that this struggle arises not from innate concupiscence but from an acquired habit of sinning, which habit can be cast off by those who are perfectly regenerated, so that they are as perfect and free from all stain of sin as the holy angels, so that they could say, "I have made my heart clean," contrary to Proverbs 20:9. That they do not need a Mediator or the forgiveness of sins, nor an Advocate at the right hand of the Father, and that their life is perfectly conformed to the Law of God in all things, and that they do not care even if the Lord were to enter into judgment with them. All of which are absurdities.

Question: Since all sin is forgiven in Baptism, is concupiscence, therefore, no longer sin after Baptism?

The Papists and Arminians teach that no sin remains after Baptism, because God blots out the sins of the elect like a cloud; He casts them into the depths of the sea; He buries them; He cleanses them from all sin; He does not remember their sins; and He liberates them from all condemnation in Christ.

We teach that the guilt of sin, as far as its legal standing, is

completely removed, so that the obligation to punishment and the compelling power to condemnation are taken away. However, sin remains concerning its real existence and physical inherence. The former part is proven by the places cited by our adversaries. The latter we prove as follows:

1. Because no one in this life is pure from sins, and he who says he has no sin is a liar (1 John 1:8).
2. Because sin truly exists and dwells in the regenerate as long as they live in this life, as Scripture and the experience of all the saints sufficiently attest.

Question: Does the remission of sin in Baptism completely remove all existence of sin in the baptized?

The adversaries say so. We say that the act of remission does not take away the essence of sin but only removes the sin as to its actual ordination to punishment or removes the actual obligation to punishment, which is the second act of sin; yet the essence of sin, that is, the power of binding and potential guilt, remains. Therefore, Paul says in Romans 8:1, "οὐδὲν κατάκριμα," meaning "no condemnation," not "οὐδὲν κατακριτὸν," meaning "nothing condemnable" for those who are in Christ.

Question: Do actual sins originate not from original sin, but from an acquired habit of wrongdoing and from pure free will?

The Arminians, along with their Socinian allies, say so. We deny this.

1. Because David rightly acknowledged that his adultery flowed from the fact that he was born in sin (Psalm 51).
2. Out of the impure heart proceed those things which defile a man (Matthew 15:18). John 3:6: "That which is born of the flesh is

flesh," that is, it partakes of a corrupt origin.

3. Because all the works of the flesh flow from the flesh itself (Galatians 5:19; Romans 3:11-13; 8:10).
4. Because in children, there cannot be an acquired habit of doing evil, nor is there free will created in a state of pure nature and free from sin; for every imagination of man's heart is only evil from youth (Genesis 6:5).
5. Because in every man, there is a propensity to sin (Romans 7:14, 18, 21, 23; Galatians 5:16, 17; Jeremiah 17:9; Job 9:1, 23). But evil acts flow only from evil propensities.
6. Because this doctrine supposes that a man could be free from sin, and that the habit of doing good can be acquired not by the infusion of grace, but by the exercise of good acts, by the power of free will, as the Peripatetics taught concerning the habit of moral virtue; and that men, by the exercise and diligence of their own free will, can make themselves either good or evil, children of God or of the Devil.
7. This is the doctrine of the Socinians, who deny that the first sin of Adam, being only a single act, could have such force as to corrupt the nature of Adam, much less of all his descendants; and therefore, they claim that men are as innocent and whole after Adam's fall as Adam himself was before the fall. Thus, teaches the Racovian Catechism concerning the prophetic office of Jesus Christ, chapter 10, fol. 250; Socinus in Theological Lectures, chapter 4, fol. 23.

Question: Since original sin is the punishment of the first sin, can it, therefore, not be sin? The Remonstrants say so. We deny this.

1. Because the same thing can be both sin and the punishment of sin, as we have already demonstrated from the Scriptures.
2. Because they concede that this sin is a punishment, which is contrary to their principles; for when they teach that there is no sin in infants according to the order of justice, neither can any punishment of sin be inflicted upon them. It is, therefore, not only sin but also such a punishment that is entirely inevitable for the descendants of Adam.
3. Punishment, according to their principles, is involuntary. But in infants, who lack the use of reason, neither voluntary nor involuntary has any place.

Chapter 7:

On the State of Fallen Man

Romans 8:7

"For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. Verse 8: So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God."

This is a significant passage concerning the weakness and impotence of the natural man. For it denies in a natural man both the act and the power, whether in intellect or will, to accomplish that which is pleasing to God.

Question: Do the Arminians, along with their Socinian allies, rightly deny that the knowledge of God is natural to man, such that men, after the Fall, by their very nature, are wholly ignorant; and that it is to grace, not to nature, that we must attribute the fact that men believe God exists? Thus, Episcopius argues in his private disputation on the Knowledge of God, corollaries 2 and 3. Is the knowledge of God, which is possessed by nature, truly natural? We deny this. Arminius calls the remnants of God's image still present in us after the Fall a supernatural grace. So also does Socinus in his theological lectures, chapter 2, folio 3.

We reject these assertions against them.

Assertion 1. Atheism is either purely speculative or practical. Speculative atheism occurs when the mind, purely as mind, inclines to this conclusion: "There is no God." This is direct atheism. Practical atheism, however, is either virtual or consequential, as seen in those

who, by their life or doctrinal consequences, implicitly deny that God exists.

Assertion 2. Speculative atheism includes two kinds of speculative atheists. The first are purely mental, with a habitual, full, and settled persuasion of the mind. Contrary to our adversaries, such purely speculative atheists do not exist.

1. The work of the law is written in the hearts of men (Romans 2:14-15). "The heavens declare the glory of God" (Psalm 19:1). "That they should seek God, if perhaps they might feel their way toward him and find him; though he is not far from each one of us. For in him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:27-28). "For what can be known about God is plain to them" (Romans 1:19).
2. Because natural conscience tells all men that God exists. And what the Socinians say about those living in the New World, in Brazil, and in many parts of India, who (as Ostorodus says in "Christian Religion") have no suspicion of the Deity, is false. For, nevertheless, they worship some deity and have some religion, which is a sign that they acknowledge God, led by nature.
3. Men would be worse than beasts if they naturally believed nothing about God; indeed, they would be worse than the devils, who, as Voetius notes in "Thersus Heautontomerumenos," section 2, chapter 4, page 34, are not even purely speculative atheists (James 2:19). For they believe there is a God and tremble.
4. Why do those who deny that God exists fear judgment at death if they do not naturally know God exists? As seen in Diagoras on his deathbed, who trembled at death and judgment; and

Suetonius says of Caligula, chapter 51: "For he who so despised the gods, at the slightest thunder would shut his eyes and cover his head; but at greater thunder, he would leap from his bed and hide under it." Dionysius, too, who mocked divine judgment, was said to be full of fear.

Assertion 3. Yet there are those who are speculative in this way:

1. Those who would wish and strive that there were no God.
2. Those who, by doubt for a time, deny, in which storm even the pious (I speak from experience) are often shaken.
3. Those who, through malicious suppression, for a time bury in themselves the knowledge and sense of Deity; for this is the power of the will over the intellect, that it veils the acts when the habit lies hidden in the heart.

Yet, in them, there is always the habit by which they are certain that God exists.

Assertion 4. Among practical atheists, some err in doctrine, such as idolaters, who by consequence deny God and transform Him into an idol. Others, in their impious lives, declare that there is no God. And the world abounds with such people. Indeed, atheism is always a matter of the lips, not of the heart.

Question: Is the mind, in understanding supernatural mysteries, blind and darkened to the extent that it requires internal illumination to comprehend them? The Remonstrants argue in their Apology (ch. 2, sect. 34) that to understand the meanings of Scripture, the light of the Holy Spirit is not required. Episcopius, in Disputation 3, Thesis 3, contends that no supernatural light infused with power is needed. In their Confession (ch. 1, sect. 14), they assert that ordinary people, endowed with common sense and judgment, can sufficiently grasp the meaning of the canonical books. Thus also

argue the Socinians: Ostorod in "Institutiones" (book 1, ch. 5), and Smalcus in his refutation of the book on the Incarnation (ch. 9, fol. 19, 55), says that nothing in the whole Christian faith is beyond reason's capacity to comprehend once the revelation of the Gospel has been made known.

We hold that revelation is threefold:

1. One kind of revelation concerns the subject matter itself, found in the Gospel, and since the doctrines of the Gospel could only have been conceived by God, this revelation is solely from God.
2. Another kind is the objective revelation, which is the clear presentation of the doctrines of the Gospel through natural means, and is the literal revelation or external illumination by which one understands the grammatical sense of the Gospel.
3. The third kind of revelation pertains to the intellectual capacity, whereby one not only understands the object and letter of the Gospel in its grammatical sense (which is obvious even to natural men and common folk), but also perceives it with spiritual clarity and a new power superinfused into the intellect. This is the type of revelation in question here. We assert that this infused power in the intellect is necessary.
4. Matthew 16:16-17: "Flesh and blood have not revealed this to Peter, that the son of Mary is indeed the true Messiah, the Christ, the Son of the living God, but the heavenly Father." Matthew 11:25-26: "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure." John 1:5: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not comprehended it." 1 John

2:27: "The anointing of the Spirit teaches you about all things." 1 Corinthians 2:14: "The natural man does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them because they are spiritually discerned." Romans 8:7: "The mind governed by the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so."

5. The removal of the veil placed over the mind's eyes, 2 Corinthians 3:16; the shining of light in the heart, 2 Corinthians 4:6; the opening of the eyes, Psalm 119:18; the granting of salve to anoint the eyes so that we may see, Revelation 3:18; the bestowal of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, so that, with the eyes of our hearts enlightened, we may know the hope of our calling, Ephesians 1:17-18; and the gift of power in the intellect, by which we may comprehend, together with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, Ephesians 3:18-19—these are the special gifts of the Spirit of sanctification for which we pray to God and give thanks in Christ.
6. If the clear proposition of the truth and the mere illumination of the object were sufficient, without any infused power in the intellect, then men would understand the mysteries of the Gospel by the mere preaching of the Word and naked persuasion. And thus, grace would be nothing more than the doctrine of the Law and the Gospel, as Pelagius said.
7. If the clear proposition of the truth were sufficient to understand the mysteries of the kingdom of God, as the Remonstrants state in Articles 3 and 4 of the Synod Scriptures (page 164), man would be no more blind and impotent in understanding them

than a purely natural man is blind and impotent in understanding Aristotle's Metaphysics and disputations. For if a good intellect were present, man would only need a clear proposition of the truth to acquire knowledge. Therefore, the anointing of the Spirit that teaches all things, the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, the opening of the eyes, would be needed as much to understand Aristotle's Metaphysics as to know the Gospel of John.

8. This external persuasion by the clear proposition of the truth, without any superinfused light and supernatural power in the intellect, is the work of a mere preacher or a rhetorician, like Cicero or Demosthenes; and in this case, the operation of the Holy Spirit, which opens and enlightens the heart and inwardly teaches what is heard externally, would not be required.
9. If the Will and Affections could embrace whatever the Intellect judges to be good, as the Remonstrants teach, then no grace, no superinfused supernatural power would be necessary for true faith and conversion to Christ. Thus, grace would be nothing but a title, a name without reality.
10. The only light required for faith would come from the mere letter of the Gospel clearly and distinctly presented.
11. For writing commentaries, understanding the meaning of Scripture, generating true faith, and internally illuminating the mind, there would be no need to implore the Holy Spirit or the infused light from above. Nor would there be any reason why Peter should give thanks to God for the revelation of the Gospel more than Judas. Read and compare what has been discussed on this question and subject above, chapter 1, page 83.

Question: Is there in the Will a power to perform supernatural acts? Or is the Will powerless in performing supernatural acts? The Arminians deny this impotence. We assert it.

1. Because thus Scripture declares: Ezekiel 36:26-27, "I will give you a new heart, and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes." Jeremiah 32:39-40, "I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear Me forever; I will put My fear in their hearts so that they will not depart from Me." Ephesians 2:5, "God made us alive together with Christ, even when we were dead in sins." John 6:44, "οὐδεὶς δύναται ἔλθεῖν," "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him." Romans 8:8, "So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God." Matthew 7:18, "A bad tree cannot produce good fruit."
2. Because the glory of Conversion would not be ascribed entirely to the grace of God if the Will were not so impotent.
3. Because there would be no need to pray for the infusion of new strength into the Will if the Will were not inherently powerless of itself.
4. Because by nature we are dead in sins, children of wrath, and not even capable of thinking anything good of ourselves. Ephesians 2:1-3; 2 Corinthians 3:5.
5. Because without Christ we can do nothing. John 15:5, meaning, unless we are grafted into Him, as branches in the vine, drawing life from Him.

6. Because Christ would have died in vain, and grace for regeneration would have been acquired in vain if the Will were of itself the principle of supernatural acts. Ephesians 2:10, 13.

Question: Is there always, and in every state of this life, where lawgiving, exhortation, promises of rewards, and threats of punishments are present, a freedom in the Will to choose or reject the good indicated by the intellect? The Remonstrants say in the Synod's Scriptures, articles 3 and 4, page 7: "We affirm." We deny.

1. Because if the Will were not impaired, but only the mind obscured, there would be no impotence in spiritual matters, and there would be no need for a new heart and a new spirit to be infused. A clear proposition of the truth would suffice, as they argue.
2. Because if the intellect showed that it was good to come to the Son of God, as it did in Balaam and in many unregenerate men, then the Will could choose to believe and come to the Son of God without the Father's drawing, contrary to Christ's words in John 6:44.
3. Because if only the doctrine of the Law and the Gospel were sufficient grace for conversion, then the Will would always have the freedom to choose or reject the good indicated by the intellect.
4. Nothing else would need to be prayed for in true conversion except for the objective proposition of the truth to the Intellect, which can of itself draw the Will to embrace or reject the good indicated by the intellect.

5. All that the Holy Spirit says in the Scriptures about our impotence to perform supernatural good would be in vain.
6. Because the Remonstrants say in the same place that the Will does not have the freedom or power to choose the good unless the enlightenment of the mind is accompanied by the infusion of supernatural power—if, indeed, they speak sincerely.

Question: Are the Arminians sincere when they say the Will is corrupt? Answer: No.

Because in the Synod's Scriptures, articles 3 and 4, page 107, they say: "Adam did not lose the power to perform the obedience required by the New Covenant, inasmuch as it is formally considered, that is, as it is required by the New Covenant." And in the Hague Collation, page 250: "The freedom to do good or evil remained as an inherent part of nature." And Grevinchovius, page 183, says, "Adam retained the power to believe after the Fall, and the rest of the reprobate in him." In their Apology, chapter 6, folio 76, they declare that indifference to opposites is essential to the Will and remains even in a corrupt state. In the Hague Collation, pages 253 and 254, they assert that the human Will remains intact and is not renewed in regeneration, nor is a new Will for good granted. Thus also says the impure Socinus in "Prælectiones Theologicæ," chapter 5, folios 15, 16. Likewise, among the Roman Catholics, Stapleton in "De Peccato Originali," volume 2, book 2, chapter 9, denies that a new power is infused into the Will in regeneration, but only that the pre-existing power is disposed, excited, and strengthened.

Question: Is there in an unregenerate person any prior disposition, for which God is moved, either by congruity or condignity, to confer the grace of Conversion?

The state of the question is varied. For it is either a question about the first grace simply, which the Jesuits Suarez, Valentia, Molina call a remote disposition; or it is a question about the efficacious grace of Conversion (which is not simply the first grace, but rather the first grace in the formal act of Regeneration). Namely, whether there is in a person any condition, disposition, cause, merit, or reason, whereby, once established, God will infallibly convert the person? Or, secondly, whether there is any natural preparation on the part of man that moves God to give grace, or any supernatural preparation? Or, thirdly, whether there is on the part of man any moral condition, as an office required of him, or a disposing cause, merit, or reason, whereby, if the person fulfills this condition, whether by the strength of nature or by the aid of common grace, God is moved—either by common equity and justice, by congruity and divine decency, by special law in Christ the Mediator, by the merit and power of His merit, or by a liberal pact and promise—to infallibly grant either supernatural aid, by the good use of which the person may be gradually advanced to the grace of Regeneration, or to bring about Conversion itself? The adversaries affirm this. We deny it.

Thus, the question is not whether God simply requires obedience from those not yet converted, but whether He requires such obedience that necessarily results in the subsequent grace of Conversion, whether by the title of merit or the gratuitous promise of God's mercy.

2. Nor is it asked whether there are antecedent preparations in a person being converted; for we do not deny this at all. But whether such preparations necessarily have a necessary connection with the grace of Conversion?

Nor, thirdly, is it asked whether a person who does not use any means of Conversion, that is, neither reading, nor hearing, nor being struck by the terrors of the Law, receives the habit of a new heart as if he were a trunk or an inanimate stump?

But we teach: 1. That God converts people with no regard to merit, worthiness, righteousness, or any cause in the person which would make their conversion certain; but out of His pure grace in our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. We teach that, in the use of external means, the person behaves actively, not passively.
3. We teach that Free Will is not the discriminating and separating cause between the converted and the unconverted, but the efficacious grace of God.

First Question: Is there any law founded on the merits of Christ, by which God confers prevenient grace to someone who does what is in them by their natural ability alone? Valentia, Meratius, and others affirm this. We deny it.

1. Because, Isaiah 65:1, "I was sought by those who did not ask; I was found by those who did not seek Me." Ezekiel 16:8, "I said to you in your blood, 'Live!'" Ezekiel 36:26, "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you." Verse 32, "Not for your sake do I do this," says the Lord God, "be ashamed and confounded for your ways." Ephesians 2:5, "Even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved." Colossians 1:12-14, "Giving thanks to the Father... who has delivered us from the power of darkness." 2 Timothy 1:9, "Not according to our works." Titus 3:5, "Not by

works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us."

2. Because many are called when they are indisposed and rebellious, such as Abraham worshipping idols, the thief on the cross, Saul persecuting the Church of God.
3. Because no such law exists based on Christ's merits. For if it did, Christ would have merited the preaching of the Gospel, the calling, justification, and sanctification for all endowed with Free Will—even for the Indians and Americans—and all these gifts of grace would be conferred in act, provided they did what was in them by their natural capacity alone, which is absurd (ἀτοπία).
4. Thus, God would not have mercy on whom He wills, but rather because people will it. Romans 9:18.
5. It would not be God who begins the good work in us (Philippians 1:6), but Free Will in us that begins it.
6. Free Will would primarily and principally discriminate the one beginning the work of conversion from the one not beginning it. 1 Corinthians 4:7.

Question: Does God give the grace of Conversion to a person because they are better prepared, disposed, and humbled to receive it than another person, even though He does not give it because of dignity or merit in these preparations, but from equity and congruity, or from truthfulness, or by a liberal promise, by which He has bound Himself to grant the grace of Conversion to those who rightly use the gifts of nature or common grace?

The Arminians and Jesuits affirm this. We teach:

1. Ordinarily, the use of external means, such as reading and hearing the Word, precedes Conversion.
2. Therefore, in this respect, God does not convert people in an instant, as water is turned into wine, nor does He convert those who are unaware and think nothing of such things, as Balaam's donkey spoke or as Caiaphas prophesied, nor does He convert those who are unwilling and resistant, as Simon carried the cross of the Savior; but rather He converts those who are prepared, humbled, and brought low by the consciousness of sin and the terrors of the Law.
3. We acknowledge in these internal preparations a physical and material conduciveness in a person, by God's grace, whereby one is prepared for the grace of Conversion; but we deny a moral conduciveness or formal preparation, by which God has obligated Himself by a promise or covenant such that, by justice or by truthfulness or promise, He is bound to give grace because a person is so prepared rather than another who is not prepared. This is contrary to the Jesuits, Arminians, Pelagians, and Socinians.
4. Because the Scriptures previously cited prove this.
5. Because nowhere in the whole of Scripture is there such a promise or covenant as this: "Whoever has prepared themselves rightly by doing this or that shall, in reward of their gratuitous work, receive the efficacious grace of Conversion."
6. Because no one is effectively called from their works, but freely, by grace, by mere mercy. 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 3:5; Ephesians

2:3.

7. Because it is not of the one who wills, nor of the one who runs, but of God who shows mercy. Romans 9:16.
8. Because it is solely the good pleasure of God that is established by Christ as the cause of the Gospel being revealed to the little ones and not revealed to the wise, and not by the wisdom of the former or the humility of the latter. Matthew 11:25.
9. Because "flesh and blood" is not the cause of the revelation of Christ, but only the heavenly Father of Christ. Matthew 16:17.
10. Because the adversaries deny grace that predetermines toward good acts, and they subject habitual grace to the assent and motion of the created will, so that the will flows into a good work by its own nature before divine grace does. Hence, if God is moved to give grace because of prior dispositions, then conversion will begin with the endeavor, influence, and natural movement of Free Will. But on the contrary, God begins the good work in us. Philippians 1:6. Neither man nor angel gives anything to God beforehand. Romans 11:33-34.
11. Therefore, if grace for conversion is given to someone because they are disposed by grace, then that person first gives to God, and God is bound to repay them out of debt. Thus, He does not give grace freely and not solely from His desire to relieve our misery but out of gratitude. On the contrary, Paul in the same passage says, "Who has given to Him first, and it shall be repaid to him?" proving that no one, whether human or angelic, gives to Him first because all things come from Him, whether a man or an angel.

12. James 1:18: "Of His own will He brought us forth." Therefore, He is not bound by any law whereby He gives grace because of prior dispositions.
13. The glory and praise for our conversion will not belong entirely to God if grace is given because Free Will, even aided by grace that does not predetermine the will, prepared the person for grace in such a way that, even with grace, they could have not prepared themselves.
14. Nor would there be any reason to be exceedingly grateful to God as the author of conversion if Free Will, determining itself and not determined by God, either moves or does not move God to give the grace of conversion unless God would fail in His justice and truthfulness.

Question: Does God grant the grace of conversion at least from congruity and decency to all who are prepared and disposed to receive it?

The adversaries affirm this. We deny it.

1. If by "decency" they mean a virtue in God opposed to indecency, in such a way that God would act indecently if He denied grace to the well-disposed, then God would be strictly obligated to give grace, which is absurd. It is impossible for God to act indecently; yet He would do nothing against duty or His decency if He were to deny grace to the well-disposed. But if by "decency" they mean a congruous mode of action in God, dependent solely on His good pleasure, as it is decent for God to create the world and redeem mankind, and yet He would have done nothing against His decency by not creating the world or not redeeming mankind; and if God gives grace to the well-disposed in this

manner, according to His decency, then He gives grace solely from His good pleasure, with no true obligation, which is our thesis.

2. "Not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace," He has called us (2 Timothy 1:9). Therefore, He does not give grace from any debt or merit of congruity.
3. Because He said to His people, who were perishing in their blood, "Live" (Ezekiel 16:8). Therefore, not from the merit of congruity.
4. Every merit is in some way a debt. But debt and grace are mutually exclusive. Matthew 20:14-15.
5. There is no infallible connection between prior dispositions and the grace of conversion. Therefore, grace is not given from the merit of congruity. It would contradict God's goodness and equity to act against the merit of congruity. Proof of the antecedent: This connection is not based on any promise, because no such promise exists in Scripture. Nor is it based on God's Justice or Mercy, because God does not act against Justice, nor against Mercy, nor in any way against His Nature, if He were to deny grace to the well-disposed.
6. Grace would not be completely gratuitous if it depended in any way on our merit.

Question: Does not at least the prayer of the unconverted obtain grace from God, not indeed by the title of obedience, but at least by the title of supplication and humble profession of misery, such as the prayers of beggars who ask alms without being commanded by a superior?

Thus argue Martinez de Ripalda, in *De Ente Supernaturali* (vol. 1, book 1, disp. 19, sect. 1 and 2) and other Jesuits. We deny this.

1. Because there is no prayer except that which is commanded of us under the title of obedience; otherwise, the prayer would be *έθελοθρησκεία* (will-worship). For we are expressly commanded to pray (Matthew 7:7, Psalm 50:15, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 1 Timothy 2:8).
2. The unconverted cannot pray, being devoid of the spirit of adoption, who intercedes for us (Romans 8:18), as Augustine notes in *De Dono Perseverantiae* (book 2, chapter 23). No one can pray without faith (Mark 11:24, James 1:6).
3. Because grace would thus be given to those asking and knocking by virtue of the power to obtain, not by virtue of merit. But the prayer of the unconverted, being devoid of the Holy Spirit and faith, obtains nothing. And even prayer that obtains something is, in some way, meritorious, according to the Roman Catholics; because to obtain by praying is to merit by praying.
4. Prayer is nothing but supplication and humble profession of our misery; it is wrongly distinguished from obedience, since we are obliged by God's command to supplicate and humbly confess our misery (1 John 1:8-9). Therefore, the prayers of the unconverted are wrongly compared with the prayers of beggars, who are nonetheless commanded by the Law of Nature to beg.

Question: Since God does not give grace to a person due to prior dispositions or any debt and obligation, do the adversaries therefore rightly infer, according to our doctrine, that it is neither necessary nor useful, but even harmful, for the unconverted to hear the Word,

to read, to meditate, to acknowledge their misery, and to use external means?

The adversaries affirm this. We deny it.

1. Because the unconverted are obligated to use the means, and they sin by not using them, even if grace is not given because of the use of the means. For this command extends more broadly than the promise. Indeed, God can rightly command what He does not necessarily promise to reward with obedience.
2. Because external preparation is required in those being converted; yet conversion is given not because of this preparation but from mere grace. However, these preparations may incidentally become useless and harmful insofar as Pharisaical men take pride in these preparations and are content with them as if they were the fruits of true conversion.

Question: Can legal contrition be considered a preparation for conversion, just as temporary faith is a preparation and step towards saving faith?

Response: Contrition and this faith are rightly called steps toward the thing itself, but not steps in the thing itself; they are material beginnings, not formal ones. As yellowing is a preparatory stage towards whiteness but not a stage within whiteness itself, for it differs in kind from whiteness. In the same way, blackness can also be a stage toward, and a preparation for, whiteness. Similarly, all moral affections—such as grieving over sins, desiring conversion, trusting in the Creator, rejoicing temporarily in the goodness of the Gospel, and the like—found in the unregenerate differ in kind from the same spiritual affections that follow conversion because these affections differ in their formal object. For example, the

unregenerate grieve over sin, but not with grief that is according to God; they grieve only insofar as sin brings punishment, not insofar as it offends the goodness of a most merciful Father, and so with the rest.

Question: Can the unregenerate not perform a truly good work before they are regenerated?

The adversaries affirm that their works can please God, although they are not meritorious of eternal life; to the extent that Christ will nurture and bring to maturity the smoking flax, as Corvinus says against Molina, chapter 39, section 2 and 16.

We say that the moral works of the unregenerate can be truly good according to the substance of the work and are not merely hypocritical (just as brass is a real metal), yet they are not truly good when considered from the perspective of the Gospel (just as brass is not real gold). They may be truly good *κατ' οἰκονομίαν* ("according to a general principle") but not truly good according to evangelical approval.

Question: Is it correct to infer, as the adversaries do according to our doctrine, that since God does not give grace to a person because of prior dispositions or any debt and obligation, it is therefore unnecessary, indeed harmful and useless, for the unconverted to hear the Word, to read, to meditate, to recognize their misery, and to use external means?

The adversaries affirm this. We deny it.

1. Because the unconverted are obligated to use the means, and they sin by not using them, even if grace is not given because of their use of the means. For God may well command what He

does not necessarily promise to reward, and His command is broader than His promise.

2. Because external preparation is required in those being converted; yet conversion is given not because of this preparation but by sheer grace. However, these preparations can, by accident, be useless or even harmful insofar as Pharisaic men take pride in these preparations and are content with them as if they were the fruits of true conversion.

Question: Can legal contrition be considered a preparation for conversion, just as temporary faith is a preparation and step towards saving faith?

Response: Contrition and this faith can rightly be called steps toward the thing itself, but not steps within the thing itself; they are material beginnings, not formal ones. As yellowing is a preparatory stage towards whiteness but not a stage within whiteness itself, for it differs in kind from whiteness, so blackness can also be a stage towards and a preparation for whiteness. Similarly, all moral affections—such as grieving over sins, desiring conversion, trusting in the Creator, rejoicing temporarily in the goodness of the Gospel, and the like—found in the unregenerate differ in kind from the same spiritual affections that follow conversion, for these affections differ in their formal object. For example, the unregenerate grieve over sin, but not with grief that is according to God; they grieve only insofar as sin brings punishment, not insofar as it offends the goodness of a most merciful Father, and so with the rest.

Question: Are the works of the unregenerate truly good before they are regenerated?

The adversaries affirm that their works can please God, although they are not meritorious of eternal life; to the extent that Christ will nurture and bring to maturity the "smoking flax," as Corvinus says against Molina, chapter 39, section 2 and 16.

We say that the moral works of the unregenerate can indeed be truly good according to the substance of the work and are not merely hypocritical (just as brass is a real metal), yet they are not truly good when considered from the perspective of the Gospel (just as brass is not real gold). They may be truly good *κατ' οἰκονομίαν* ("according to a general principle") but not truly good according to evangelical approval.

Further Questions and Responses:

1. *Proverbs 15:8* states, "The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord." Similarly, *Matthew 12:23* and *Matthew 7:18* declare, "A bad tree cannot bear good fruit." And in *John 15:5*: "Apart from me, you can do nothing," meaning unless you abide in me, as branches in the vine, incorporated by faith, as stated in verse 4.
2. The unregenerate person is dead in sins, unable to comprehend the things of God, considers the wisdom of God as foolishness, and his carnal mind is enmity against God; it does not submit to God's law, nor can it; nor can he think anything good or confess that Jesus is Lord.
3. Without faith, it is impossible to please God (*Hebrews 11:6*). But the unregenerate lacks faith.
4. All good actions must be done for the glory of God (*1 Corinthians 10:31*, *John 15:8*, *Matthew 5:16*). Yet the

unregenerate cannot refer his actions to God's glory because he does not know God as revealed in Christ the Mediator under the concept of the ultimate end; hence his end is either a creature or himself; this intention is idolatry, which places a creature in the place of the ultimate end.

5. The mind and conscience of the unregenerate, not yet washed by the blood of Christ, are polluted. Therefore, the streams of actions that flow from them are polluted.
6. In them is a bitter root of concupiscence, not yet remitted in Christ, nor subdued by the grace of regeneration, which influences all good actions defectively and privatively, just as a dislocated bone affects the motion of a limp.
7. The unregenerate cannot love God with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their strength, as they are habitually turned away from God and inclined towards hatred of God and their neighbor because the flesh, the old man, the body of death, wholly dominates them.
8. As it is written (*Romans 3:10-11*), "There is none righteous, no, not one; there is none that understands, there is none that seeks after God."
9. He whose person is not pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ cannot have works that are pleasing to God (*Genesis 4:5, Hebrews 11:4*).

Question: Are the virtues of the heathens true virtues?

The adversaries affirm that they are true and that they are preparatory dispositions that God would have rewarded with further

grace had it not been due to their own fault. We deny this.

1. Because there can be no true virtues in those who are outside of Christ (*John 15:5*).
2. These virtues were not done sincerely for God but only for vain glory; hence Augustine rightly called them "splendid vices."
3. Because the unregenerate cannot offer works to God that are truly pleasing in every respect, as has been proven.
4. The same is taught by the Fathers, such as Augustine in *Contra Julianum* book 4, chapter 3; Theophylact in his commentary on *John 5*; Arnobius on *Psalms 29*; and Gregory in *Moralia* book 2, chapter 22, who maintain that actions should be judged by adverbs like "well" or "ill," not by nouns.

Related Question: Is a work therefore not tainted with sin simply because it was not done with the intention of sin?

The Remonstrants affirm this. We deny it.

1. Because there are other principles that taint a work besides a bad intention, namely concupiscence, lack of faith, and lack of good intention.
2. Because a greedy person who steals his neighbor's goods with the intention of giving alms would not sin in that act.

Question: Can the unregenerate avoid any sin, or are they constrained by an unavoidable necessity to sin? The Remonstrants argue that sin is not sin if it is inevitable and necessary. We assert the contrary.

1. Because the wisdom of the flesh cannot submit to the law of God (*Romans 8:7*). The natural man cannot believe or come to Christ (*John 6:44*).
2. He cannot pray or thirst for the righteousness of God.
3. The concupiscence cannot fail to defile all moral actions of those whose mind and conscience are polluted (*Titus 1:15*).
4. Because the unregenerate are dead in their sins (*Ephesians 2:1*).

Question: Is sin not sin unless it can be avoided by the sinner? The Remonstrants claim that the lack of original righteousness is not sin but punishment, and they deny it is just for God to demand obedience from those who are punished with judicial inability to obey—just as it would not be just for a tyrant, under the penalty of death, to command someone to read a book and distinguish colors when his eyes have already been gouged out for his crime. We deny this.

1. Because God gave all men, in Adam, the power to obey, and He is not obligated to restore what was lost; yet all remain sinners, transgressors of the law, and unable to keep it, just as a bankrupt debtor who has defaulted remains truly indebted, even if he cannot pay.
2. Because, if original sin were not sin (which is false), it would be because, in the persons of Adam's descendants, it is unavoidable.
3. Failure to render perfect obedience to the law subjects all mortals to death and a curse (*Deuteronomy 27:26; Galatians*

3:10-12). Yet the adversaries do not deny that perfect obedience to the law is impossible for man.

4. Because those who have sinned against the Holy Spirit, who are punished with judicial inability to obey, who are past feeling and have extinguished all sense of conscience (*Ephesians 4:19*), who have a heart hardened against repentance (*Romans 2:5*), and for whom it is impossible to be renewed again (*Hebrews 6:4*), truly sin, and yet cannot do otherwise than sin.

Therefore, we exclude from the nature of sin:

1. A necessity that compels with physical force.
2. A necessity that drives with the force of destiny.
3. A necessity that coerces and compels violently.

But not all necessity in general.

Question: Are the afflictions of the faithful truly punishments, or are they only paternal chastisements? Arminius asserts, in his response to article 9, that they have the nature of punishment.

To answer this question, it should be noted:

1. Punishment, generally taken, is a genus that includes both satisfactory punishment and corrective chastisement as its species.
2. Our theologians, when disputing against Purgatory and rejecting the doctrine of the Papists that punishment or the obligation to punishment remains after the remission of guilt, should be understood to speak of satisfactory punishment proper, which is borne by those who are tormented for some years in Purgatory, not denying, however, that a corrective punishment may remain

after the remission of sin, as seen in the example of David, whose house never ceased to experience the sword, even after God had pardoned him for adultery and murder. But because Arminius means that the afflictions of the faithful have the nature of punishment, even in some way satisfactory, inflicted by God as a severe judge, we maintain the contrary.

3. Because if the chastisements of the saints were simply satisfactory punishments, then the death of Christ would not remove all punishments, both temporal and eternal, and the door to Purgatory would be opened for the saints who suffer little or no punishment in this life; otherwise, God's justice would be in peril.
4. If the faithful could pay a portion of the debt for their sins, they could, by increasing that portion and augmenting it, even pay the full debt, including eternal punishment, despite the *lutron* (ransom) paid by Christ. Thus, the faithful would bear two essentially satisfactory punishments: one in their own person, and another in Christ their sponsor. Therefore, they would die for their sins themselves, which Christ expressly denies (*John 11:25-26*).
5. Although there is a proportion between chastisement and David's sin (*2 Samuel 16:22*), the disgrace inflicted upon David does not have the nature of satisfactory punishment, for if it did, the blood of Christ would not cleanse from all sin (*1 John 1:7*). It was not a matter of strict justice but of paternal mercy, so that this punishment would serve as a useful reminder to David to seriously consider the magnitude of his guilt, and to warn him and others to avoid such voluntary sins in the future.

6. Because the afflictions of the saints also serve to test their sincerity and constancy, as in the case of Job; to confirm God's Word and cause; and to bring glory to God, as with the apostles, confessors, and martyrs, who regard such afflictions as a great honor and therefore rejoice, praise, and glorify God. But if these afflictions were truly punishments, the saints would not praise God for being considered worthy to suffer dishonor for the name of Christ (*Acts 5:41*), for we do not praise God simply for punishment.

Chapter 8.

On the State of Grace

1 TIMOTHY 2:3, 4

"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

This passage is gravely distorted by our adversaries to support the extent and universality of divine grace. Thus, we must examine whether the universality of grace can be rightly concluded from it by valid reasoning.

Question: Do the Arminians justly contend and argue for the dignity of the merit of Christ, for the extent, universality, sufficiency, and excellence of the riches of grace? We deny this.

1. Because the grace they describe, by which all individuals embraced by such grace might never come to faith and perish eternally, is neither ample, worthy, nor sufficient (since grace that actually saves is far more worthy). Such is their grace, as they themselves admit. Therefore, etc.
2. Because it is not saving grace if it cannot even remove the hardness of the heart, even when it works most powerfully, should the human will resist it.
3. Grace is neither ample nor sufficient if it does not obtain dominion over free actions but leaves conversion or non-conversion, eternal salvation, or damnation in a state of equilibrium, entrusted to the indifferent and wavering choice of human liberty. Yet such is their grace.
4. Because the grace that leaves us as liable to fall and to be damned as Adam before the Fall and the devils before their fall is not grace that is ample, sufficient, and worthy as that which was obtained for us through the merit and death of the Son of God.
5. Because not more are saved by their grace than by the grace defended according to the Scriptures by the Reformed Church, even though they use grandiloquent words about the sufficiency and amplitude of God's grace and Christ's merits.
6. Because they propose to dispute whether the most noble action of grace is a "moral persuasion," which is to argue whether the

mere letter of the Law and Gospel alone is the saving grace of Christ. This is plainly Pelagian, as Augustine says concerning the grace of Christ (Chapter 24): "Let the Pelagians read, understand, look, and acknowledge that God works in the hearts of men, not only by external law and teaching sounding externally, but by an internal, hidden, wonderful, and ineffable power."

7. Because the grace spoken of in Scripture as saving is not only sufficient but also effectively produces its intended effect in its second act. (*2 Corinthians 12:9; 10:5; 1 Corinthians 10:13; Ephesians 1:17-20*). It works in us to will and to do (*Philippians 2:13*). It removes the stony heart and gives a new, fleshly heart (*Ezekiel 36:26*). It ensures that all who have heard and learned from the Father come to Christ (*John 6:45*). But their grace leaves and commits it to the creature's arbitrary choice, whether we overcome temptation or not, whether we will and accomplish or not, whether we receive a new heart or not, whether we come to Christ or not.
8. Because, notwithstanding Arminian grace, men can remain finally rebellious against the most powerful grace of God, frustrate the gracious counsel of God, revoke and change the eternal decree of election into a dark decree of reprobation, disappoint God's gracious intention, render the intercession and advocacy of Christ vain and ineffective, make the *πλάνη* (plan) of God in Christ almost of no effect (as to efficacy), and, in the end, make the death of Christ idle and useless.
9. Because their grace leaves all of God's gracious promises, whether made by the Father to His beloved Son or set forth to us by God, either valid or void, effective or ineffective, based on our

free will; upon which, according to them, it depends whether they are fulfilled or not.

10. They argue that we are justified by our works, which free will can either perform or not, primarily by the act of faith as the formal cause of our justification; such is their grace.
11. Their grace fundamentally undermines trust, boasting in God, fear, hope, gratitude, the necessity of prayer, and humble submission to God because free will is established as the distinguishing cause and separator of the converted from the unconverted, the persevering from the apostate, the saved from the damned.
12. Because, if it had so pleased the free will of Adam, it could have hidden forever both men and angels from the *φιλανθρωπία* (love for mankind) of God in Christ, from His saving grace, and from His death and merits.

Question: Do the Arminians rightly contend for the dignity and glory of mercy, *φιλαθρωπία*, and the merits of Christ? They say yes; we deny it.

1. Because, according to them, all actual glory of mercy, *φιλαθρωπία*, and the efficacy of Christ's merits rests solely with Free Will.
2. Because they teach that God embraces all the reprobate and eternally damned with greater love than any mortal possesses (*John 15:13*).
3. Because all those for whom Christ died, whom God in His mercy and *φιλαθρωπία* willed and decreed to save, can still be eternally

damned.

4. Because, though God absolutely wills otherwise and is unwilling, all who sin and perish eternally do so against His will, including those whom He has embraced with saving grace in Christ.
5. Because they teach that there is no gratuitous Election in Christ the Mediator, nor any intention to apply the merits of Christ to the Indians, the Americans, many other nations, the insane, the deaf, the mad, and infants.
6. Because myriads of infants intercepted by fate before reaching mature age are saved without the merits of Christ, since, according to them, original sin is not sin for them; thus, they must die without sin and be adopted among the glorified without any need to sing in heaven that eternal song of Redemption to the glory of the Savior.
7. Because God did not actually reconcile the world but only made it reconcilable; and Christ acquired only a certain placability for us by His death, whereby God can, notwithstanding His Justice, prescribe any condition for obtaining eternal life, whether good works, faith, or abstaining from eating fruit.
8. Because, in the intention of God the Father and the dying Christ, Judas is as dearly loved for eternal life as Peter, Pharaoh as Moses, the reprobate as the elect.
9. Because Christ is the Savior of all men by merit, power, example, and doctrine, provided they wish to be saved (as they speak with the Socinians), but not by the efficacy, certain, and unwavering application of His death to those whom He has graciously loved above others.

10. Because, even with the death of Christ achieving its purpose, all may still perish eternally; and it could be that Christ shed His soul for His spouse, for His subjects and members, and yet be left a widower without a wife, a king without subjects, a head without members, and, despite being a victor and triumpher over death, sin, hell, and the devils, could still be without redeemed captives.
11. Because the *φιλαθροπία* and mercy of God, which cannot save men without overturning freedom and free obedience, is but a lofty and empty title.
12. Because it is not an excellent *φιλαθροπία* and mercy that does not effectively deliver from the greatest evil—which is far worse than the pains of hell—that is, from the hardness of a heart that knows no repentance.
13. Because they deny that the Fathers under the Old Testament expressly believed in a dying Christ; therefore, the death of Christ is not as extensive as they proclaim.
14. Because they assert that venial infirmities, without any application of Christ's merits, are expiated by His death even among the Turks and Americans; nor is there a need for them to be touched by a conscience of their infirmities; nor is there cause for them to grieve and repent; but they acknowledge with us that final impenitence has never been expiated by the death of Christ, since the reprobate suffer its punishment eternally.
15. Because they assert that Christ, by His death, expiated the murders, parricides, adulteries, and all sins of all the heathens who never heard of His death; yet they claim that these same people must suffer the punishments of their sins eternally.

Question: Is Arminianism, and their doctrine concerning the grace of God, a form of Pelagianism or Semi-Pelagianism? The Remonstrants deny this; we affirm it.

1. Pelagius often confuses grace with nature, as Bonaventure teaches (Distinction 2, Sign 38), and held that grace extends as widely as nature itself, as Faustus taught (for here I mix the Semi-Pelagians with the Pelagians): “Everything is of grace, but God offers and bestows it upon all for salvation,” as Augustine says in *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio*, Chapter 4. Likewise, Corvinus states in *Contra Molina*, Chapter 43, §8, that grace and nature extend equally.
2. The Pelagians adorned nature itself with the title of grace, as Augustine notes in his Sermon 11 on the Words of the Apostle: “See, my brethren, how they preach that general grace by which man was created, by which we are human.” Similarly, the Arminians teach in *Scriptura Synodica*, Article 1, page 63, and in their *Apologia*, Chapter 11, and Corvinus in *Contra Tilenum*, Chapter 6, pages 234-235, that the law of nature, good education, moral character, and the remnants of the image of God in man are grace.
3. Pelagius placed grace in the law and in doctrine, revealing and showing what ought to be done, as Augustine says in *De Gratia Christi*, Chapter 24, and *Contra Pelagium et Cœlestium*, Book 1, Chapter 3. And the Arminians sing the same song in *Scriptura Synodica*, Article 4, page 173: God converts men not by an irresistible action but by gentle persuasion, as Arminius writes in *Antiperkins*, page 253. In their *Apologia*, Chapter 17, page 166, they teach that the removal of the stony heart and the giving of a new heart is achieved by external instruction, just as

a teacher instructs a student, who, as Corvinus with Socinus says, tells the student, "I will make another man of you." Certainly, a teacher neither infuses the Holy Spirit nor adds new powers to the will of the student.

4. Pelagius taught that all men could believe if the truth is revealed. Thus Prosper says: "Upon hearing the doctrine of the Gospel, a man, with the power of free will, can pursue it." Likewise, the Remonstrants say in their *Apologia*, Chapters 34-35.
5. Pelagius, I admit, added to the illumination of the mind the awakening of the stunned will. As Augustine says in *De Gratia contra Pelagium*, Chapter 10, yet that awakening was merely made by persuasion, which is also what the Arminians teach.
6. Augustine teaches in *De Gratia Christi*, Chapter 5, that the Pelagians taught that God only helps so that we might be able to will and act; and in the same book, Chapter 47, that only possibility, not will and action, is divinely assisted. And this is what the Arminians teach. 1. Because they teach that with the action of the most powerful grace, resistance is always possible; therefore, according to them, God gives grace so that we may be able to believe, love, etc., not so that we may necessarily believe and love. 2. They teach that God gives a new heart only by gentle persuasion, to which a man can always resist; that is, He leaves it to our power to have a new heart.
7. Augustine, against Pelagius and Coelestius, Chapter 18: "We have (says Pelagius) the possibility of both sides implanted by God." And Prosper in his letter to Rufinus: "By grace (according to the Orthodox), nothing is left to free will, but it is utterly destroyed." It is a common doctrine of the Arminians that, in every state, even that of corruption, the will essentially retains

indifference and the power to obey or not obey; and if this is not maintained, grace will be only a divine omnipotent force, fatally necessitating the will and utterly destroying its freedom.

8. Pelagius taught that man could merit grace through the works of nature. Prosper, against the Collator, Chapter 9: "The principles of good wills arise from us by nature." Likewise, Faustus (as Augustine says, Book 2, Chapter 8): "If you wish to be well, see that the gift of salvation is not granted unless the desire of the will is first questioned." And in the case of the Centurion, "Because the will preceded grace, grace therefore preceded regeneration." Similarly, the Remonstrants in *Scriptura Synodica*, Articles 2 and 3, pages 327-328, and Corvinus in *Contra Molina*, Chapters 39, teach that by the good use of common gifts, even the Law of Nature, men can merit the grace of conversion.
9. The Pelagians (as Augustine teaches everywhere in *De Gratia Christi* and in *De Perfectione Justitia*; and Jerome in his letter to Ctesiphon) said that the commands of God are easy and possible to observe. Likewise, Arminius says in his response to Articles 30 and 31, pages 164-165: "I do not oppose the opinion of Augustine, which states that man can be without sin in this life." Also in his "Considerations on the Articles": "He who says that the regenerate, by the grace of Christ, can perfectly keep the Law in this life, is not a Pelagian, nor does he do injury to the grace of God, nor does he establish justification by works." They maintain the same doctrine in their apologetic writings everywhere.
10. Pelagius taught that grace is necessary to make the work easier, not to do the work simply. The Arminians teach that with

permission given, that is, grace presented, man can believe or abstain from the act of unbelief; therefore, the abstention from the act of unbelief in Peter does not necessarily require greater grace than in Judas the traitor, who did not believe.

11. The Pelagians and Semi-Pelagians taught that a man is converted and helped because he wills to be converted, not because divine grace makes the conversion effective; therefore, they subjected divine grace to our will. Thus Cyril of Alexandria in the Acts of the Council of Ephesus, Chapter 5, says, "They boast that God grants salvation and grace to everyone as He Himself wills, but according to the human condition." And again, "Depending on the merit of the will, the Holy Spirit is either invited or repelled." The Arminians similarly teach that after all the requirements for conversion are met, a man can either receive or reject grace, and can either convert or not convert. Prosper, in his letter to Augustine, says: "Thus the Pelagians preferred human will to divine, so that a person is helped because he wills, not because he is helped he wills." Likewise, the Remonstrants say that because we will to be converted, therefore God wills to convert us, not the other way around. Cassian used to say, "The mercy of God is at hand, only when some occasion of a good will is presented to it by us." Cassian, Collation 13, Chapter 7. Peter the Deacon, *De Incarnatione et Gratia*, last chapter: "Faustus, opposing the Apostle, subjects grace to the desire of human effort." Thus, the Arminians say that our will begins the order of causality before grace flows in. Grevinchovius, page 209; Corvinus *Contra Molina*. Hence, their statements: "Out of two equally graced by prevenient habitual grace, one believes through grace because he wills; the other does not believe because he does not will." And again, "Therefore, someone is not converted because he

does not will to be converted, even though sufficient grace is at hand, if indeed he wished to be converted.”

Question: Is there a sufficient grace by which all could be saved, if they indeed were willing?

First, this question does not concern the absolute necessity of grace. For if we consider God's justice, He could have chosen to grant no grace to anyone through Christ. (*Armin. Antiperk.*, p. 734).

2. The question is not merely about grace given to those who are in the visible Church, but about grace bestowed on all human beings, both within and outside the Church.

3. Nor does it concern only those who never obey God's calling, but also those who are hardened and severely punished with judicial inability to obey. Do they have sufficient aid of grace to rise and convert themselves?

4. The question is not about grace that is immediately sufficient for conversion. Corvinus denies that such grace is given to all (*Contra Tilenum*, Chap. 11, p. 425).

5. Nor is grace here taken to mean the light of the Gospel (*Corvinus ibid.*, Chap. 3, p. 119).

6. Nor is it about whether grace is given to those who make good use of the light of nature.

But rather, the question is: Does God, now, after establishing the new covenant with man, give all and every individual, whether inside or outside the visible Church, sufficient grace in general, by which they could advance step by step to conversion, so that even those hardened judicially might be able to rise again? And does He do this ordinarily, for the sake of Christ the Mediator, moved by covenant justice, intending the salvation of all and each one? Or does God

deny such grace according to His own good pleasure? The Jesuits and Arminians, along with their Socinian allies, affirm this.

However, we maintain that God gives special grace in Christ the Mediator only to certain individuals who have been graciously elected to glory from eternity, by His mere grace and absolute good pleasure; while others are left with only some external means and common aids, which, when they misuse them, render them ἀναπολόγητοι (without excuse).

1. Because, as Isaiah 9:2 states, "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shined," which is interpreted in Matthew 4:15-16 as referring to those who were without God's grace and the light of the Gospel before the coming of Christ. Likewise, Isaiah 44:6: "I will give you as a light to the Gentiles," is explained in Acts 13:47 concerning the preaching of the Gospel, not as it was given to the obstinate Jews in the same chapter, but concerning the preaching accompanied by the grace of internal revelation. Therefore, they did not have the highest measure of sufficient grace; for to sit in the shadow of death and to have sufficient grace are opposed, like light and darkness.
2. Those to whom God denies the Gospel do not have the grace to believe in the Gospel. Yet, God denies the Gospel to most nations. The major premise is proven by Romans 10:14: "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" The minor premise is proven from Psalm 147:19-20: "He declares His word to Jacob, His statutes and judgments to Israel. He has not dealt

thus with any nation.” Matthew 10:5: “Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans.” Acts 16:6-7: “They were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia; when they had come to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit did not permit them.”

3. Those who are themselves darkness, whose wisdom is enmity against God, and who cannot be subject to the law of God; who cannot receive and understand the things of the Spirit of God; who are dead in sins; who are outside of Christ, without whom they can do nothing; who cannot even think anything good of themselves—these do not have sufficient grace by which they can advance step by step to a saving conversion. But such are all mortals by their nature.

Objection: This argument concludes that humans, by nature, cannot believe in Christ. However, it is wrongly inferred from this that humans, by universal grace—which God has denied to no mortal—cannot believe in Christ.

Response: If such a distinction is to be maintained, it must be simply denied that there is anyone in reality who cannot believe in Christ. For if all mortals can believe through sufficient grace, which is granted to all from birth (as they claim), then no one is simply unable to believe. For whoever is capable through grace as universally given as nature itself is, in simple terms, able. And, according to this distinction, Adam before the Fall could not receive and understand the things of the Spirit of God, nor could he believe in the Gospel, according to their doctrine; yet he could do so by supernatural grace. Therefore, man is said to be as "dead in sins" concerning the performance of supernatural works after the Fall as Adam was "dead in sins" before the Fall, which is absurd.

4. If God does not send prophets to foreign nations who would hear and obey, as in Ezekiel 3:6; if He denies miracles to the Tyrians who would repent, and sends prophets and grants miracles to many who never obey, then God does not intend the salvation of all, nor does He give the grace to believe. But the former is true. Therefore, so is the latter.
5. If God gives some people the Word, signs, trials, and external means, and yet does not give them a heart to understand, eyes to see, or ears to hear, then He denies sufficient grace to many. But the former is true. *Deuteronomy 29:3-4*. Therefore, the latter follows.
6. If such grace were available to all people, and God intended the obedience and salvation of all, He would not withhold that movement which He knew to be effective and sufficient to fulfill His will, nor would He give what He knew to be utterly fruitless and ineffective. But that the latter happens to most people, Scripture and experience testify. The major premise is certain; because those whom God pursues with merciful and gracious intention to save, He converts, as seen in *Ephesians 2:4*: "God, rich in mercy, with immense love in Christ embraces us. Therefore (v. 5) He makes us alive with Christ." Likewise, *2 Timothy 1:9*: "God has appointed us grace in Christ Jesus before the world began; therefore, He saves us," that is, He calls us effectively. Also, *Titus 3:4-5*: "God, in His kindness and great love, saves us by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit." Similarly, *Romans 8:32*: "God gave His Son for us; therefore, with Him, He will give us all things," including effective calling.

7. Because the hardened cannot believe (*John 12:39*), and it is impossible for those who sin against the Holy Spirit to be renewed again (*Hebrews 6:4-5*), any more than a new sacrifice could be offered for them or Christ could be crucified again for them (*Hebrews 10:26*). Therefore, they do not have sufficient grace.
8. If the Apostle forbids praying for the one who sins unto death (*1 John 5:16*), then such a person does not have sufficient grace.
9. If Christ says in *Matthew 13:11*: "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given," then the people lack sufficient grace to understand those mysteries.
10. If God reveals the mysteries of the Gospel to infants and hides them from the wise, and if no one knows the Son except the Father, nor does anyone know the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him, then such grace of revelation is not given to all. But the former is true. *Matthew 11:25, 27*. Therefore, the latter follows.
11. If God permitted the nations to walk in their own ways and overlooked the times of ignorance, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, following the rise of the light of the Gospel (*Acts 17:30*), then they did not previously have sufficient grace to believe.
12. If no one can come to Christ unless drawn by the Father (*John 6:44*), and it is certain that not all are drawn, then not all can come.

Question: Should the distinction between *gratia sufficiens* (sufficient grace) and *gratia efficax* (effective grace) be accepted? The Arminians affirm it. We, however, state that the external means are sufficient: 1. for ἀναπολόγους ποιεῖν (to render without excuse), 2. for external discipline, and 3. for fulfilling God's justice. However, there is no grace sufficient for conversion that is not also effective.

1. Because every sufficient cause produces its effect. But the "sufficient grace" of the Arminians does not produce the effect, namely, conversion.
2. Every sufficient cause is capable of producing an effect. Yet their grace is not capable of producing the effect because it cannot conquer the corrupt power of resisting the calling of God and cannot move the will irresistibly to obedience; for if it did so, it would overturn liberty, as they teach. Therefore, it is not sufficient.
3. Such a grace is not to be accepted if it implies that the Devil is stronger than God. But if it is posited that there is such a universal grace that cannot be effective unless there is a power in the will to resist, as they say, then the evil one who is in the world would be stronger than God, who dwells in the children of God. But the Apostle teaches the contrary to be true in 1 John 2:14 and 1 John 4:4, stating that from the effective victory of the saints over sin, it is shown that God is stronger than the Devil.
4. If there is any grace in the truly regenerate which can always possibly be ineffective, as they teach, then God would allow His own to be tempted beyond what they can bear, contrary to 1 Corinthians 10:13.

Question: Do the Remonstrants in their Apology, Chapter 17, p. 159, rightly teach that God always joins to the Word some power and operation of grace, or at least is always ready to join it? We deny this.

1. Because if God is only ready to give grace and does not give it at every moment, then the one who hears the Gospel is not supplied with sufficient grace at every moment. If they say that God is ready to give grace and will actually give it if man does not fail in cooperating with God who is ready to give, then before the conferring of grace, man does not yet have that sufficient grace, and thus does not sin by failing to receive the grace God is ready to give; because, according to their teaching, no one sins who lacks grace and the power to obey.
2. Because it is Pelagianism to teach that grace is given according to the merits and efforts of free will.
3. Because it is said of many within the visible Church who hear the Gospel that they are "dead in sins," "blind," "powerless," etc. — all of which would be false if the preached Word were always accompanied by the grace and power to obey.
4. Because the Word is preached judicially to those who are hardened and to those sinning against the Holy Spirit, as well as to many who, due to incorrigible malice, treat the Word of the Gospel with contempt and disregard. Arminius in *Antiperistasis* and Corvinus in *Against Molina* teach that for those hearing the Word, grace to obey is denied as a just punishment for the despising of the Gospel.

Question: Has the power to believe been given to all mortals? The Arminians, in their Synodical writings (art. 4, p. 61), affirm this. We deny it.

1. Because men are dead in their sins and unable to come to Christ unless they are drawn by the Father, as stated in John 6:44.
2. Because either the power to believe is conferred through the Word, or it is infused apart from the ministry of the Word, or it is innate within us by nature. Not the first: for since the Word operates resistibly (as they teach) and many resist the Word when it is preached, the power to believe cannot be conferred upon all through the preached Word. Not the second: for this is ἄλογον (illogical) and ἀγράφον (unscriptural). Not the third: for in that case, our carnal wisdom would not resist the Gospel more than it resists the conclusions of Aristotle's Metaphysics; since, according to them, the power to believe the Gospel and the power to believe Aristotle's philosophy would be equally inherent in us by nature.

Question: Does the grace of God effectively determine the will? The Arminians and Jesuits deny it. We affirm it.

1. Because we ask God for such determination in our prayers. As it is written: "Incline my heart to Your statutes" (Psalm 119:36); "Unite my heart to fear Your name" (Psalm 86:11); "Lead me, O Lord" (Psalm 5:8); "Make me understand the way of Your precepts" (Psalm 119:27).
2. Because God promises grace that predetermines the will. As in Isaiah 44:3: "I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring"; and Ezekiel 36:26: "I will give you a new heart." Also, Deuteronomy 30:6: "The Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God." Likewise, Jeremiah 24:7 and 31:33.

3. Because we give thanks to God for turning and inclining our will toward the good, as seen in Matthew 11:25.
4. Because grace alone separates the believer from the unbeliever, as stated in 1 Corinthians 4:7.
5. Because God will not receive glory for supernatural acts if the created will determines itself to these acts in such a way that it could also refrain from determining itself to them.
6. Because no one could hope and trust that God, for His truthfulness and faithfulness, will turn their will unerringly toward final obedience.
7. Because God's sovereignty over free acts and His glory in His promises of giving a new heart and final perseverance will not be upheld unless He causes the free will to embrace the good unerringly, as evidenced by Jeremiah 32:34, Ezekiel 36:26, 1 Corinthians 1:8, Isaiah 54:10, and 59:20-21. These He cannot fulfill in reality and actual effect unless He makes the free will unerringly embrace the good.

Chapter 9.

On Universal Redemption

John 10:11:

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for

the sheep."

Our position is that the λύτρον, or the price of redemption, was paid only for the sheep—that is, for those predestined and chosen as children of God to eternal life, who are actually saved. Consequently, Christ did not lay down His life with the intention that all and every person might either become potentially savable or actually saved. Hence arises the famous controversy, whereby:

Question: Did Christ die for all and every person?

In formulating the question, the Arminians vary and are inconsistent with themselves.

1. Arminius, in *Antiperk* (p. 673), states: "The immediate effect of Christ's death is not the actual removal of sins from these or those individuals, nor the actual remission of sins, nor justification, nor the actual redemption of these or those, which do not occur without faith and the Spirit of Christ in anyone; rather, it is the reconciliation of God, the obtaining of forgiveness, justification, and redemption with God, whereby it was made possible that God might now remit sins to sinners and grant the spirit of grace, for His justice has been satisfied; towards which effects, He was inclined beforehand out of mercy."

Thus, by the death of Christ, satisfaction has been made to the justice of God for the sins of all mankind. Therefore (if I am not mistaken), the wrath of God against sinners is removed: for God cannot justly be angry with those for whose sins His justice has been fully satisfied. However, the Remonstrants in *Scriptura Synodica* (art. 2, p. 343) assert the contrary: "Although God shows Himself to be propitious to all in Christ, such that He is willing to lay aside His wrath against

them if they believe the Gospel; yet He does not actually do so, except towards those who have already believed."

From this, it follows:

1. That God is angry with those who have been reconciled to Him in Christ.
2. That God is angry with many who are not obligated to believe the Gospel, as it was never revealed to them.
3. That God is angry with those for whose sins satisfaction has been made to His justice.
4. That the contingent and free act of believing removes God's wrath and changes Him from an angry state to a reconciled one.
5. That Christ's death alone does not make God propitious; rather, a free act of human will does so.
6. "By the death of Christ, reconciliation and forgiveness have been obtained for all," they assert, "absolutely, whether they believe or not; but actual reconciliation and forgiveness are not applied to anyone except under the condition of faith." (*Collatio Hagana.*)

But this so-called "obtained forgiveness" is merely potential forgiveness, which coexists with the continued guilt and wrath of God upon those for whom it has been obtained.

Thus, by the death of Christ, God the Father has become only "placable," not "placated"; it has become possible to satisfy His justice, but it has not actually been satisfied. Christ suffered death, curse, and reproach merely to acquire the possibility of establishing a

new covenant—whether of works or of grace, or any other covenant—such that if humans fulfill it, they will be saved. It cannot be said that Christ bore the penalties due to Judas and Pharaoh.

Hence:

1. Christ died for those for whose sins He did not bear the penalties.
2. The death of Christ is not expiatory for sins but is only a reconciliation of some form of justice or a removal of penalty.
3. Nothing is required for the actual remission of all sins except the mere free act of believing.
4. They say (in *Scriptura Synodica* art. 2, p. 283) that "the effect of this impetration is not merely the potential to save, but also the full will to save."

However, this "full will" is merely a "placability," whereby God is able to lay aside His wrath based on the condition of faith; but He does not actually lay it aside towards anyone except those who are actually believing.

4. They claim that through the death of Christ, all are taken into God's favor to such an extent that no one would be punished with eternal torments solely on account of Adam's sin. (*Scriptura Synodica* art. 2, p. 285). They want to establish that the purpose, fruits, and benefits of Christ's death remain:
5. Even if all were damned, and although the death of Christ were applied to no mortal.
6. Even if God did not intend to apply Christ's death to any mortal. Thus, Grevinchovius against Ames (p. 46-47).

Therefore, it seems to me that by Christ's death, it is rather the justice of God that has been redeemed—by which He could save sinners—than that sinners themselves have been redeemed; and that Christ died for God, not primarily for sinners. This is also taught by the Jesuit Bellarmine (*De Gratia Dei et Libero Arbitrio* l. 2, c. 5) and Gregory of Valencia (*De Divisione Gratiae* tom. 2, disp. 8, q. 3, puncto 4). Thus, Christ is said to have suffered for all and died for all, i.e., by His merits, He obtained from the eternal Father all the means necessary for humans, on God's part, to return to His favor and attain salvation.

They claim that Christ died for all and every human being; yet, He did not die for the obstinate world, nor for unbelievers and the impenitent, as such. For they say (*Scriptura Synodica* art. 2, p. 286-287): "Grace (of forgiveness) was obtained for sinners considered in the common state of the fall and sin, except for the single sin of impenitence; and indeed, by law, its benefits pertain only to those who would believe in the Redeemer; but by no means to those who would refuse to believe. Grace was not obtained for unbelievers and rebels, as such."

1. Christ died for all men, but not for the unrepentant as such. Yet, unrepentant people are men. Therefore, He did not die for all men simply and absolutely.
2. If grace for reconciliation is not obtained for rebels as such, then it is not obtained absolutely for all, but conditionally, provided they cease to be rebels. Therefore, Christ did not die absolutely for all, but conditionally, if they cease to be rebels; and hence, He died for the non-rebellious only, that is, for believers alone.
3. Final unbelief and impenitence are not atoned for by the death of Christ; these remain simply and absolutely unforgivable sins, for which Christ did not bear the due penalties of justice.

4. There was no intention in Christ to die for rebels as such, nor to obtain by His death the grace of reconciliation and remission for them. Yet Christ, through His preachers, offers reconciliation and forgiveness to rebels as such (Isaiah 6:9, 65:2; Matthew 13:13-15, 23:37-38; John 9:39). That is, Christ does not, by any deceitful pretense (God forbid such blasphemies), offer reconciliation and forgiveness to rebels on the condition they believe, with the intent (as He declares in His Word) that they might be saved; however, such forgiveness is no more obtained for them by the death of Christ than it is for the devils.
5. Since Christ's death precedes both faith and unbelief in order, it is wrongly inferred that Christ did not die for the faithful or the unfaithful as such. For Christ did die for the unfaithful as such, because "while we were still sinners and enemies, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:6). Therefore, He expiated upon the cross whatever in us was hostile and impious, including our infidelity toward God. And He died also for believers, for friends, for brothers, for His sheep as such, that is, to make us such by the merit and efficacy of His death.
6. It is a vain and foolish question to ask whether Christ died only for the elect, the believers, and the brethren concerning the application and benefit of His death. For this is to ask whether Christ died with the intention that only the elect and believers, by the strength of their free will aided by grace, would apply it. To say that Christ died for men does not include the act of believing in Christ who died, formally, but only consequently and effectively; for otherwise, people could be reproached that Christ did not die for them. Moreover, it would mean that in the Gospel there would be a promise like this: "Believe so that you may thereby make it so that Christ died for you." Likewise, a

threat such as: "If you do not believe, you make it so that Christ did not shed His blood for you."

7. It is absurd to inquire whether Christ died for all and each mortal, including Pharaoh and Saul, and others condemned to eternal torment in hell, concerning the reconciliation obtained by His death, which they will never partake in any more than the devils.
8. The question is not about the intrinsic sufficiency of the death of Christ, that is, whether Christ died sufficiently for all and each individual. For David Pareus retracted that formula of speech; Beza noted that it is a mere *συκολογία* (sophistry). For Christ dying for men means that Christ laid down His life for men with that intention and purpose that He might grant them, being actually reconciled to God, righteousness, remission of sins, and eternal life. Yet the death of Christ is in itself sufficient before any decree or purpose of God; and it may be said that the death of Christ is sufficient for the salvation of all mortals, but not that Christ died with the purpose that all might be sufficiently saved.
9. Whether the life and death of Christ, having been achieved, should be offered to all within the visible church under the condition of faith is not questioned; for this is what we teach. The offering of Christ is twofold: one by approval and simple delight. As in Matthew 23:37, "How often would I have gathered you," etc.; and Proverbs 1:24, "I called, and you refused," etc.

This is proven by the following reasons: 1. An external call to the reprobate cannot be made without some offering by which God is pleased by a simple delight in those who are invited to believe, as proven by the invitation to the banquet in Matthew 22:2. 2. They do not sin against promises for which no offering was made. 3. They do

not trample upon the blood of Christ for whom no offering was made, as the verse says, "We have healed Babylon."

The other is an intentional and decretive offering, which comes in the name of a gift; and this is an offering together with the bestowal.

10. Finally, it is not in question whether there is in God a volition and a general intention to save all and each one. We deny such volition. Our adversaries teach that by the death of Christ, God's natural volition to save all was changed into a complete purpose to save all and each one, provided they believe in Christ. But no affection or will can be changed in God, nor is this complete purpose to save all, provided they believe, anything other than a decree to save all believers. For a conditional decree establishes nothing in reality unless the condition is met. And it is remarkable that there was not even in God a conditional intention to save all and each one, provided they believed in Christ who died, unless Christ had died for all and each one; for since a conditional will establishes nothing unless the condition is met, how could there be such a conditional will in God unless Christ had died? For indeed, upon the death of Christ, there is in God a conditional will to save and justify all mortals, provided they perfectly fulfill the Law.

Thus the question is: Did Christ, according to the eternal counsel and decree of the Father and Himself, pour out His blood on the cross for all mortals with the intent that all might believe in Him and be saved? Or did He expend this sacrifice and payment to God the Father on behalf of the elect alone? The Remonstrants assert that it was paid on behalf of all mortals. We deny this.

1. For those for whom Christ died, He bore their persons on the wood of the cross; but He bore only the persons of the elect, not

of the reprobate, on the wood of the cross. Therefore, He died for the elect alone. The major premise is based on Scripture: to die for another is to die in their place, person, and stead so that the one for whom another dies may live. Thus, David wished to die in the place of Absalom; likewise, Moses desired to be blotted out of the book of life for the people of God; and Paul wished to be made anathema from Christ for the Jews, so that the Jews might obtain eternal life. Moreover, to say that Christ died for sinners is to say that He bore in Himself the temporal and eternal penalties due to sinners. The minor premise is evident because Christ died for His sheep (John 10:11), for us (Romans 5:8), for the unjust (1 Peter 3:18), for His friends (John 15:13), and for His Church (Ephesians 5:25).

2. Christ died only for those for whom He rose from the dead and intercedes at the right hand of God the Father in heaven. But Christ rose and intercedes at the right hand of God the Father only for the elect, as our adversaries also concede. Therefore, He died for the elect alone. The major premise is evident, firstly, because Christ did not die merely for sinners, but by dying He conquered death and was victorious through His resurrection. This death will never have dominion over those for whom He died (1 Corinthians 15:54-55). Secondly, because Paul joins these two: "He was delivered up for our sins and was raised for our justification" (Romans 4:25). Therefore, it follows that for whose sins Christ died, He was raised for their justification.
3. The resurrection and intercession of Christ are special fruits of His death, that we might become partakers of His resurrection and newness of life and seek those things that are above, at the right hand of God the Father (Romans 6:4; Colossians 3:1-2; Ephesians 2:5-6). Neither would Christ have been a perfect

priest for us unless He had not only offered His body on the cross for us but also entered into the Holy of Holies by the power of His blood (Hebrews 9:23-25). Moreover, for those for whom Christ offered Himself as a Priest to God the Father, He intercedes as a Priest and prays. But He prays only for the elect, not for the world (John 17:9). Therefore, He died only for the elect. The reason for the major is that these two acts were performed by the typical priest for the people (Leviticus 16), and our true High Priest has fulfilled them both completely, as the Apostle testifies in Hebrews 5:1-3; 8:3-4; 9:7.

4. Those for whom Christ died, He embraced with supreme love and with a greater charity than any mortal possesses (John 15:13; 1 John 3:16; John 3:16; Ephesians 3:14-20; 1 John 4:10; Romans 5:10). But Christ does not embrace all and each mortal with such love.
5. Those for whom Christ died have been reconciled to God (Romans 5:10-11), they have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins (Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 1:13), they are redeemed from their futile way of life (1 Peter 1:18-19). The chastisement of their peace was upon Christ (Isaiah 53:5), and He was manifested to take away their sins through the offering of Himself (Hebrews 9:26). They are delivered from the wrath to come (Romans 5:9) and are made the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:21). They are redeemed from the curse of the law (Galatians 3:13-14). But none of these things can be said of all mortals, most of whom are under the law, under the curse, under the wrath of God, in their sins, not delivered from death, children of wrath, lost, etc.

6. For those for whom Christ died, He merited, by His death, the grace of regeneration and effectual calling. This is because He is the Savior both by merit and efficacy. In the new covenant, a new heart and a new Spirit are promised to the redeemed (Jeremiah 31:33-34; Acts 5:31; Romans 6:4; Hebrews 2:14-15). Grace for regeneration is given in Christ, that is, because of Christ, as the meritorious cause (Ephesians 2:4-5; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5-6). But Christ did not merit the grace of regeneration by His death for all mortals and reprobates, as our adversaries admit.
7. According to our adversaries, it could be consistent with the end, fruit, and benefit of Christ's death that if none of the mortals had believed, none would have been saved. Therefore, Christ died for none except insofar as they believe; and remission and eternal life cannot be obtained by all unless they believe or are going to believe. Consequently, Christ obtained nothing for those who never believe.
8. For those for whom Christ died, the Devil, death, and sin have been defeated (Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14; 1 Corinthians 15:56-58). Yet, the Devil, sin, and death triumph in the reprobate, who are slaves of sin and in whom death and the Devil reign (Romans 6:16; Ephesians 2:2; 2 Timothy 2:26; 1 John 3:10).
9. For those for whom Christ died, God intends sanctification and deliverance from this present evil world (Galatians 1:14), redemption from vain conduct (1 Peter 1:18). He died for them with the purpose that, being dead to sin, they might live unto righteousness (1 Peter 2:24); that He might redeem them from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of

good works (Titus 2:14). That He might present the Church to Himself glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish before Him (Ephesians 5:25-27). But God does not intend such for most mortals.

10. If Christ had died for all and each one, then the Gospel concerning salvation for all and each one would be revealed, because the intention to save all through Christ's death cannot stand alongside the denial of the Gospel to most nations.
11. Those for whom Christ died are given to Christ by the Father; they are not their own, but were bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). But not all are given to Christ by the Father, for not all can be said to have been given (John 6:37-38). Not all are heirs (Romans 8:14; John 1:12). Not all are Christ's (John 8:44).
12. For those for whom Christ died, He paid the due penalties for their sins on the cross and satisfied divine justice. But He did not satisfy for the sins of all and each one, not for the final impenitence and unbelief of those rejecting Christ, nor for the sins of many who have never heard anything of Christ. 1. Because He did not die for unbelievers as such, as our adversaries admit. 2. Because the reprobate bear the penalties for their sins in hell eternally. Yet the justice of God does not demand double satisfaction for the same sins.
13. The blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself blameless to God the Father, cleanses the conscience of those for whom it is offered from dead works to serve the living God (Hebrews 9:14). But not all consciences are cleansed by God, as is evident from experience.

14. If Christ died with the intention that all might be saved, then: 1. The eternal election of all to eternal life stands. 2. All are the covenant people of God. 3. All are reconciled to God. 4. All can be saved if they will; and conversion will not be by grace but by free will.

15. As Prosper said in his letter to Augustine, this view is Pelagian, asserting that our Lord Jesus Christ died for the whole human race, and that no one is excluded from the redemption of His blood, even if he lives this entire life utterly alienated from His mind; for the sacrament of mercy pertains to all men. The Council of Valencia against the Pelagians (chapter 4) also states that the blood of Christ was poured out even for those wicked ones who died in their wickedness from the beginning of the world until the passion of the Lord and were punished with eternal damnation. Augustine, too, in his third book against Julian (chapter 3), says, "They are redeemed but not delivered." These paradoxes are the heresies of the Pelagians.

Ephesians 1:7

“In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.”

From this, we understand from Paul that the redemption obtained by the death of Christ is precisely the same as the forgiveness of sins in His blood. From this arise the following questions:

Question: Did Christ obtain by His death reconciliation for all and each one, but does not confer it upon all and each one in actuality? The Remonstrants affirm this; we deny it.

1. For those for whom He obtained reconciliation, He does not impute sin to them (2 Corinthians 5:19; Colossians 1:10-11);

therefore, He reconciles them in actuality. But He does not reconcile all and each one in actuality. Therefore, He did not obtain reconciliation for all and each one.

2. For remission obtained without application is only a potential remission and not an actual remission. But what Christ obtained by His blood is not merely a potential remission; rather, the Church was acquired by His blood (Acts 20:28). The Church is redeemed from all iniquity (Galatians 1:3; Titus 2:14).
3. If Christ obtained reconciliation for all by the extent of His merit and sufficiency alone, they say nothing more than this: after the death of Christ, there remains in Christ a sufficient *λύτρον* (ransom) useful for redeeming all mortals. But this is not against us. If, however, He obtained reconciliation for all concerning efficiency, then either conditionally, if all should believe — and thus reconciliation is not obtained unless all first believe; and since all do not believe, reconciliation is therefore not obtained for all, because a conditional obtaining, if the condition is never met, establishes nothing. But if reconciliation is obtained for all concerning efficiency absolutely, whether they believe or not, then by a second act and real efficiency, all must be reconciled in actuality, even if they never believe — which our adversaries would not say. Therefore, reconciliation is obtained only for believers.

Question: Can those for whom Christ died perish eternally? The Remonstrants affirm; we deny.

1. Because Paul argues, Romans 8:34, "Christ died; therefore, who shall condemn those for whom He died?" But it is vain to argue, as they do, that Paul does not argue here from the death of Christ simply, but from His death and resurrection. However, if

the apostasy of the saints is possible, Paul's reasoning is not valid, "Christ died for us and rose again; therefore, none of us shall be condemned," because all may fall away from faith and thus be condemned.

2. Because the death of Christ would be nullified and made void, and Christ would lay down His soul and yet not see His seed, as the Father promised Him (Isaiah 53:10), if all for whom He laid down His soul could perish.
3. It is the Semi-Pelagianism of the Massilians to say that Christ died for those who, throughout their entire lives, pass through with a mind utterly estranged from Christ.

Question: Is a potential reconciliation, and not an actual restoration to the grace of God, the effect of Christ's death? That is, was the effect of Christ's death merely to place us in such a state that God, notwithstanding His vindicative justice, might have the will to lay aside His wrath against us and open the door of salvation to all, so that all might be saved if they would believe in the Son of God? Yet, in such a way that it could be possible that the saving fruits of Christ's death, or saving faith or true sanctification, might reach no one at all? Indeed, even with Christ's death for all and each one, it might have been possible that all would perish eternally? The Remonstrants affirm this (Script. Synod. art. 2, p. 281, 282; Armin. Antiperk. p. 673; Grevinch. contra Ames. p. 8). We teach the contrary.

1. Because the effect of Christ's death, as intended effectively by God, is that we might actually be made friends and reconciled to God from being His enemies. "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" (Romans 5:10).

2. Because the effect of Christ's death, as effectively intended by God, is not merely this placability of God, but the actual application of Christ's death: "Who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father" (Galatians 1:4). "Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works" (Titus 2:14). "Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and blameless" (Ephesians 5:25-27). "The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 18:11), namely, to save lost sinners in the same manner as He saved Zacchaeus and other publicans, by applying His death to them (Luke 19:10-11). "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief" (1 Timothy 1:15). But Paul was saved in actuality and efficacy; therefore, God intended such effective salvation for Paul and other sinners through the death of Christ. "Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your vain conduct received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish" (1 Peter 1:18-19). Therefore, regeneration and redemption from the vanity of life are what Christ merited by His blood. "He Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes you were healed" (1 Peter 2:24). "He has reconciled us in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, unblameable, and unreprouvable in His sight" (Colossians 1:22). "He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for

Him who died for them and rose again" (2 Corinthians 5:15). "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Therefore, our sanctification and actual redemption from the bondage of sin and all iniquity, our justification and actual salvation, are the ends intended by God in the death of Christ and the fruits procured by His merit. Hence, God's placability, and our potential reconciliation and ability to be saved, which could coexist with the eternal destruction of all those for whom Christ died, are not the fruits and ends intended by God in the death of Christ.

3. This placability and potential reconciliation, whereby God could save men if He so willed, implies a defrauding of the merit and fruit of Christ's death. For if Christ laid down His soul for His own, God the Father would not fulfill His promises, nor give to His Son the promised seed (Isaiah 53:10), nor the children (Isaiah 8:18; Hebrews 2:13), nor the nations for His inheritance and the ends of the earth for His possession (Psalm 2:8), nor would all nations serve Him (Psalm 72:11). Christ would be defrauded of His reward. But it is absurd for the Father not to fulfill the promises to the Son when He has faithfully fulfilled all the conditions of the covenant.
4. We do not see any good intended in the death of Christ for the elect if God intended nothing more immediately than mere placability, whereby He could save all. This would be a good to God, not to men; and thus God would render Himself reconcilable by the death of Christ, but not make us reconciled.
5. Christ would have shed His blood for men with an uncertain and doubtful end if, after His death, it could happen that none would

believe, none would be redeemed in actuality from their vain conduct, none would be saved; or that all might believe and be saved.

6. After the ransom (*λύτρον*) had been paid and accepted by the Father, it might still have occurred that none of the captives would be released from the chains of sin and death.
7. God the Father would have utterly failed to declare His mercy, wisdom, power, justice, and truth through the death of Christ, if, with the far superior means employed — namely, the death of His Son — no end had been achieved.
8. Christ would not have triumphed by His death and resurrection over death, sin, and the devil if, after His death, wretched sinners, enslaved to sin, death, the devil, and hell, could have remained so forever.
9. Christ, as King and Head, would have been without subjects and members; as Bridegroom, without a Bride; as Redeemer, without the redeemed.
10. If God, by the death of Christ, did not actually reconcile us but only acquired the power to reconcile us, notwithstanding justice, and to make any covenant, whether legal or evangelical, then Christ, made a curse for us under the Law and its curse, would not have freed us, contrary to Paul's assertion in Galatians 3:10-13.
11. If salvation were uncertain after the death of Christ, then the new covenant would not excel the covenant of works, contrary to Hebrews 8:6. For the promises of actual salvation in both

covenants would depend on uncertain and contingent human choice.

12. Salvation, under the condition of faith in the crucified Christ, would not have been promised in the New Covenant if, after Christ's death, it were entirely at God's discretion whether to make such a covenant or never to make it; indeed, instead of the New Covenant, God could have instituted a prohibition like that of not eating the forbidden fruit. Thus, the New Covenant would not have been sanctioned and confirmed by the blood of the Son of God.
13. If the only effect of Christ's death were that God laid aside His wrath against all mortals, then no one would be born under wrath by nature, and there would be no need for faith and regeneration if we were already in God's grace.

John 3:19

“This is the condemnation: that light has come into the world, but men loved darkness rather than light,” etc.

By these words, Christ establishes that the sin for which all who are born in the visible Church and hear the Word of the Gospel are condemned is unbelief and the rejection of the Savior. From this, it follows:

Question: Do the Remonstrants rightly count these three among the fruits and effects of Christ's death?

1. That God, because of Adam's sin alone, does not will that anyone should perish eternally.
2. That He does not reject anyone on account of actual sins committed before the call of the Gospel, but has mercy upon all,

inviting them to repentance.

3. That God does not exclude anyone from communion in the heavenly life or inflict eternal punishment on account of sins which they call "sins of infirmity."

We deny that these are fruits and effects of Christ's death.

Regarding the first claim, whatever the Remonstrants assert to the contrary (Script. Synod. art. 2, p. 283), we deny that this is a fruit of Christ's death.

1. Because, notwithstanding this death, we are all by nature "children of wrath" (Ephesians 2:3).
2. Because Scripture says nothing about the remission of original sin alone without the remission of all sins, since "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7).
3. Because otherwise, all Barbarians and Indians would possess, in the blood of Christ shed for them, a half-remission and half-reconciliation without any faith in Christ or knowledge of the Savior, which is a notion foreign to the Scriptures.
4. Because God retains His absolute freedom in election and reprobation concerning infants not yet born (Romans 9:11). Therefore, because of Adam's first sin, the lack of the divine image, and a natural propensity to evil, some who die in infancy are adjudged to hell.

Regarding the second question, whatever the Remonstrants assert to the contrary (ibid. p. 285), we deny that it is the effect of Christ's death that God rejects no one on account of actual sins committed before the call to faith and repentance, but has mercy upon all if they permit themselves to be brought to repentance and faith and actually believe.

1. Because if the discourse is about the calling of all nations equally in common, children, before they reach a mature age and the use of reason, cannot sin, since those sins are already expiated by the death of Christ and are, as it were, not sins. But if the discourse is about the Gospel calling of adults, then God cannot reject the Indians and Americans for homicides, parricides, witchcraft, blasphemies, and worship of the devil, nor can they be condemned for any crimes (the contrary of which the Remonstrants teach everywhere). For those sins precede the Gospel calling, since they are never called evangelically.
2. Because if God has mercy on all who permit themselves to be brought to faith (as this opinion states), then that action, by which they permit themselves to be drawn to faith, either begins from pure free will, and thus salvation and conversion are not from grace but from nature; or it begins from God's grace determining the will, which they will not say. Or, if it begins from grace not determining the will but from such a grace whose influence depends on the influence of free will, then still salvation and faith begin from a purely natural act; and they are saying nothing else than that God has mercy on all, if He has mercy on all, and draws all to faith, if He draws all; because for a man to permit himself to be brought to faith is for him to perform a free act of responding to God who calls.
3. Because for certain sins to be expiated by the death of Christ and not all sins is for men to be half-redeemed by the blood of Christ. But Sacred Scripture says nothing of a half-redeemer; for everywhere it teaches a full and perfect redemption of all who are redeemed in Christ.

Regarding the third question: Is it the effect of Christ's death that God does not exclude anyone, while they live, from communion in the heavenly life or deprive them of the fruit of grace obtained, or inflict eternal punishment for infirmities that are more or less common to all, unless they reject grace and the Redeemer by a new and resistible rebellion? The Remonstrants affirm this (ibid. art. 2. p. 285). We deny it.

1. Because, since the wages of every sin, even the smallest, is death, by the death of Christ no sins have been made venial, or such that God does not punish with eternal death unless the sinner truly grieves for them and repents.
2. Because, if all the sins of infirmity were venial, that is, such as do not at all deserve eternal death, then any regenerate person could perfectly fulfill the Law; for such sins must necessarily be neither offensive to God nor contrary to His divine Law.
3. According to this opinion, the Indians and Americans must be saved, for they do not reject grace and the Redeemer by a new and resistible rebellion, since they are not obligated to believe in the Redeemer, having never heard anything of Christ and therefore suffering from invincible ignorance of Christ. Paul, in Romans 10:14, "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" frees all those who have never heard of Christ from the guilt of culpable unbelief and, consequently, the rejection of Christ.
4. Because if someone is regenerated, even though he does not reject the Redeemer by a new and resistible stubbornness, yet he will not enter the Kingdom of God. John 3:3.

5. By this doctrine, there are, in reality, no sins at all except for unbelief and rebellion stemming from final impenitence and stubbornness against Christ the Redeemer. Therefore, neither parricide, adultery, etc., of those who, due to lack of instruction and dullness of intellect, are completely ignorant of Christ, are considered sins that exclude men from heaven. But this is sheer Libertinism.
6. Because this is to turn the grace of Christ into licentiousness if it is the effect of Christ's death that men might freely commit all manner of wickedness without fear of hell and exclusion from the kingdom of heaven, provided only that they avoid rebellion against Christ and unbelief.

Three related sub-questions arise from this.

First, we ask: If God does not exclude anyone from heaven except those who oppose Christ with new and resistible rebellion, do the Remonstrants rightly conclude (ibid.) that the Gospel could be preached to all people in all places at all moments? We deny this.

1. Because there is neither a physical nor a moral power in men to be able to preach the Gospel in the remotest parts of the world, where Christ has not even been heard of by rumor.
2. Because this conclusion assumes in vain that the preaching or non-preaching of the Gospel depends on the merits or demerits of men.
3. Because some nations, as even our adversaries admit, have made themselves unworthy of the Gospel and are thus deprived of its proclamation by the order of justice. Can the Gospel be

preached in all places and at all moments, contrary to the justice of God?

4. If the Gospel can be preached to all people in all places at all times because no one is excluded from heaven except those who oppose Christ with new and resistible rebellion, then all nations, before hearing the Gospel, must be in a state in which they cannot oppose Christ with new obstinacy, which is absurd. Or, they are worthy of the Gospel, which is also absurd; or they are not worthy, and thus, those who are neither excluded from heaven nor deserve eternal punishment and appear untainted by any sin, as our adversaries would have it, are nonetheless unworthy of the Gospel, which is unjust.
5. If the Gospel can be preached everywhere and at all times, then it could have been preached in Bithynia at the very moment when the Holy Spirit forbade the apostles to preach there, which is absurd.

Question 2: If God excludes no one from His grace and heaven except those who are rebellious against Christ, does this mean that all and each one are equally obligated, by the same right and in the same manner, to believe in Jesus Christ as proclaimed in the Gospel? The Remonstrants affirm this (art. 2, Script. Synod. p. 285).

We assert that all are equally obligated by the same authority, that is, by the same Evangelical command and the same conscience, under the authority of God commanding, to believe in Christ; for all are equally bound to obey God. But we deny that all, the elect and the reprobate alike, are obligated to believe in Christ the Savior by the same formal right, or by the same right of title and ownership. For by this latter right, only the elect are bound to believe.

1. Because, according to the intention of God the Father and Christ who died, Christ is not the Savior of the reprobate, but only of the elect. For the intention to die for someone and the intention to save are of the same scope in God. Yet neither the Arminian nor the Jesuit dares to say that Christ is the Savior of the reprobate by the absolute intention of God. The Jesuit, based on the absolute decree of denying them the congruous call, denies that Christ is their Savior.
2. Forgiveness of sins, the righteousness of Christ, regeneration, and faith have not been obtained for the reprobate by the merit of Christ. But all these things have been obtained for the elect by the merit of Christ's death. Therefore, there is not the same obligating right for the elect and the reprobate to believe.

Question 3: If God excludes only the despisers of the Redeemer and those who spurn divine grace from heaven and inflicts eternal punishment on them, does this mean that all and each one who do not believe, simply because they do not want to believe in their Redeemer, who through grace they could believe in, are guilty of eternal punishment and deprived of the fruit of reconciliation obtained by His merit? The Remonstrants affirm this in explicit words (*ibid.*). We deny it.

1. Because the Indians and Americans, and those who have never heard of Christ or His Gospel, perish without the Law (Romans 2:12) and much more without the Gospel; they are not bound to believe, as it is written, "How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?" (Romans 10:14) and again, "If I had not come and spoken to them, they would have no sin" (John 15:22), meaning they would not be guilty of the sin of unbelief.

2. Because it is unjust that men should not be condemned for a sin truly and inherently residing in their nature and yet be condemned solely because they refuse to believe in Christ, of whom they have heard nothing; for faith, due to the lack and absence of a revealed object, is simply impossible. Therefore, our theologians rightly assert that no one is condemned for negative unbelief, but only for positive unbelief.

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.”

From this passage, it is evident that all those for whom Christ died are referred to as enemies and adversaries; thus, they are unbelievers and rebels. From this, it follows:

Question: Do the Remonstrants correctly assert, in Script. Synod. art. 2, p. 286, that Christ did not die for unbelievers and rebels as such, but that by the death of Christ, grace was obtained for sinners considered in their common state of fall and sin, and other sins except only impenitence, and that this grace would return solely to those who would believe in the Redeemer, but not at all to those who would refuse to believe in Him? We deny this.

1. Because according to the Arminians, Christ died for all men and each individual. Yet finally impenitent people are men.
2. Because if grace was not obtained to conquer unbelief and rebellion against Christ, then this rebellion (according to the Arminians) is not a sin, for it is not in the power of man to avoid a sin for which there is no grace provided to avoid, not even in the fullness of grace in Christ, and the remission of which is

physically impossible. But there is no grace obtained in Christ by which men can avoid final unbelief, for Christ did not shed His blood to expiate that sin. Therefore, they are not justly condemned for that sin.

3. If grace for reconciliation was not obtained for rebels as such, then all true believers abstain from final rebellion (which alone is the cause of damnation) by their own natural strength without any aid of grace. Therefore, they believe to the end (which is to abstain from final rebellion and unbelief) and save themselves by pure natural strength, because there is no grace, even in Christ, provided to men for avoiding final unbelief, as they teach.
4. They erroneously equate unbelievers with rebels. For by unbelievers, they mean those who are finally obstinate against Christ, but many are temporarily rebellious against Christ, such as Saul and the thief who repented on the cross, who were not finally impenitent. Thus, it must follow that Christ died for some rebels as such, and for some who were temporarily unbelievers as such.
5. They teach, without any Scripture or reason, that Christ on the cross satisfied divine justice for some sins of those who perish but not for all.
6. A futile argument is offered by the interlocutors at the Hague (p. 171) for this distinction, namely, that the death of Christ precedes in order both faith and unbelief; therefore, it is absurd that Christ died for believers or unbelievers. For the death of Christ does not precede our enmity against God, our injustice, or our impiety, as Scripture says, Christ died for the unjust, the ungodly, and for us while we were still His enemies. And if our

natural impiety did not primarily include unbelief and hatred against Christ, it would not be so that we only come to Him if drawn by the Father (John 6:44); nor would anyone by nature be an enemy of Christ! But if original sin is not a sin, as the Arminians maintain, then Christ did not expiate any sins on the cross for those who obey the Gospel. For if original sin is not a sin, and the sins that precede the evangelical call do not exclude men from heaven unless there is new rebellion against Christ, and those who obey the Gospel do not oppose new rebellion, then He did not expiate any sins for those reprobates who, hearing the Gospel, oppose new rebellion and resist it finally. For in them, original sin is not a sin, and rebellion cannot be a sin, since there is no grace obtained in Christ for avoiding rebellion; for, as they teach, Christ neither obtained grace for such people nor died for them.

7. Hence it follows that men before reaching adulthood, at the time when they begin to be capable of rebellion against Christ, are not sinners nor children of wrath but are innocent men in their pure natural state.
8. Christ has removed all the sins of the elect (1 John 1:7). Therefore, He has also removed their unbelief and the guilt of rejecting the evangelical call, as long as God, by His own grace given to the elect, overcomes their hardness. Therefore, Christ died for unbelievers as such, and because they were unbelievers, He died to remove their unbelief by His blood. Furthermore, if we consider the intention and counsel of God, Christ died for believers only, as such; that is, for His sheep, friends, brothers, the sons of God, and the Church — meaning, with the intent that He would acquire for those who would believe, and for no

others, the remission of sins, salvation, faith, and regeneration by His merits.

2 Corinthians 5:19

“God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself.”

From this context, it follows that in the mind of God from eternity, all the sins of the elect were taken away. Hence, the question arises: Has the disposition of mercy, by which God wills all to be saved, been changed by the grace of reconciliation obtained through the death of Christ into a complete purpose of the will to give eternal life to believers, which would otherwise have been hindered by justice offended through sin? The Remonstrants affirm this (*ibid.*, p. 284). We deny it.

1. Because there is no such thing as half-mercy or a half-will to have mercy in God, which could be increased and changed into a complete will; for the will of God is not capable of increase or alteration.
2. Because the merit of Christ and His death, being a temporal matter, can no more be the cause of the divine will than it could be the cause of the divine essence itself.
3. Because the change from divine wrath and hatred to love and benevolence is not a change in God internally (*ad intra*), but only a change in the effects of God, who is angry and has hatred toward sinners, externally (*ad extra*).

1 Peter 2:24

“Who Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree.”

For Christ to bear our sins on the tree is for Christ to bear the penalties due to our sins, which we ourselves would have eternally endured in our own persons. Hence arises the famous question:

Did Christ on the cross, in His death and passion, sustain the place, stead, and person of those for whom He died, so that He bore the penalties due to them, and did God regard them as if they were dead because Christ died for them in their place? The Remonstrants would have it that Christ died for our benefit in such a way that His death would result in our good unless we ourselves prevent it; however, they deny that Christ died in our place and stead. The Arminians teach, indeed, in words that Christ died for us, "Christ died for our sins, bearing in His death the death that was due to our sins" (Coll. Hag. p. 185). But Arminius, in another way, states in "Antiperk." (p. 673): "I would say, not with respect to the act of offering, but with respect to the passion, Christ sustained our person. For He was made a curse for us and became a sacrifice for sin." Hence, they claim that since all men universally are sinners and subject to the curse, and Christ assumed a human nature common to all, it is likely that He sustained the person of all men. But this distinction is foolish.

For the act of offering His body on the cross and the very endurance of death are one and the same action, in reality. Therefore, when he says that Christ offered His body to God the Father, not in place and stead of all mortals, but endured death in the place and stead of all mortals, he truly says that Christ, by dying on the cross, sustained the person of all mortals, and by dying did not sustain the place and stead of all mortals.

But Christ can be said to have sustained our person in various ways:

1. As if the elect had substituted Christ in their place and stead, as a city sends a commissioner to a convention who bears the place

and person of the entire city in the convention. We admit that, in this sense, Christ did not sustain our person. For it was the Lord (not men) who laid our iniquities upon Him (Isaiah 53:6).

2. Christ is said to have sustained our person as if He satisfied justice and, by suffering for us, earned that right and title to eternal life, which we ourselves would have earned on the supposition that we had suffered for our sins, which He suffered for. This is the sense our adversaries ascribe to us, as do all opponents of imputed righteousness, and they infer that we are equally just as Christ is. But we teach that Christ, by the dignity of His person who suffered, merited far more by His death than we could ever merit, even on the impossible supposition that we had suffered all that He did in such a short time. Hence, Bellarmine argues (Lib. 2. de Justificatione, cap. 2, arg. 5), “If the righteousness of Christ were truly imputed to us so that we were considered just through Him as if it were our own intrinsic and formal righteousness, then we ought to be considered equally as just as Christ Himself; and we ought to be called the redeemers and saviors of the world.” Yet the Jesuit himself answers this argument in the same place (arg. 4): “For if they only wished (he says of our theologians) that the merits of Christ be imputed to us because they have been given to us, and we can offer them to God the Father for our sins, since Christ took upon Himself the burden of satisfying for us and reconciling us to God the Father, their opinion would be correct. And certainly, this is what it means for Christ to have died in our place and stead, and it is as if we ourselves had died.”
3. Christ is said to have borne our person as if, by dying, He had performed everything for us and in our place that is required for our actual salvation, as if the condition of faith were not

necessarily required from us for our actual justification and glorification. And this sense, too, has been falsely attributed to us by Arminius, though we do not teach this.

4. Yet Christ died in our place and stead in this sense: that He bore the penalties due to us eternally for our sins; and by satisfying God's justice for us through His death, He acted in our cause in such a way that God regards it as if we had died, requiring nothing else to satisfy His justice and to accomplish our actual redemption from the guilt of sin; however, for the application of that redemption, He requires faith made effective through love.

Proofs:

1. Because to die for someone is to die in place of the one who is dead, so that the one who died might live, just as a surety or sponsor pays the price for a debtor, which is legally the same to the creditor as if the debtor himself had paid the price. In this sense, David desired to die in place of Absalom, and Paul wished to become a curse for the Jews, that they might live in the place of Absalom and the Jews. Therefore, Christ did not die merely for the benefit of the elect, so that they could still die eternally, as the Arminians teach.
2. Because the Scripture says the same. "Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8), for sinners, the just for the unjust (1 Peter 3:18), for His friends (John 15:13), for His sheep (John 10:11), for the Church (Ephesians 5:25), for many (Matthew 20:28), that is, in place and stead of sinners, the unjust, His sheep, etc.
3. If Christ suffered in His body what we ought to have suffered, then He died in our place. But the former is true. "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse

for us” (Galatians 3:13). It is expressly said that we were subject to the curse of the Law, as it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.” If He was “wounded for our transgressions” and “the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes, we are healed,” as the prophet says (Isaiah 53:5). And if “He Himself bore our sins in His own body on the tree,” as it is in 1 Peter 2:24. And if He, who knew no sin, was made sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21). And if “for the transgression of My people, He was stricken” (Isaiah 53:8), then rightly did He die in our place. The reason is that He either suffered as a mere example of obedience, which the impious Socinians assert contrary to Scripture, or He was struck in our place as a surety according to the order of justice, which is the institution; or lastly, He shed His blood with no specific purpose, that the resulting good from His death would return to us, just as the falling obedience of the first Adam might result in our good, which is absurd. For then the second covenant is not more excellent than the first, and the second Adam is not stronger than the first in saving.

4. He who thus died and gave Himself as a λύτρον (*ransom*), ἀντίλυτρον (*redemption price*), which is given for captives, where the λύτρον stands in the place of the captive; and the price, as it is given for things bought, where the price stands in the place of the thing purchased—He died in our place and stead. But Christ died for us in this way (Matthew 20:28; 1 Timothy 2:6; 1 Peter 3:18, 19; 1 Corinthians 6:20). And that argument of Arminius in “Antiperk.” (p. 673) is vain: “It is not of the essence of a mediator to bear the person of any party... neither does He bear the person of either side.” It is true, indeed, that bearing the person of disputants or dissenters is not of the essence of a mediator in general; but our argument is not

from a mediator in general, but from such a mediator in particular who is a surety and pledged and performed the satisfaction of passive obedience to the offended justice. Therefore, it is entirely of the essence of such a mediator, who shed His blood and gave His life for the other side, to bear the person and place of that side.

A related question is this: Does Christ generally intercede for all, but specifically for believers only? The Remonstrants affirm this (Script. Synod. art. 2, p. 319; Corvinus contra Molin. cap. 28, §. 24). They claim that in John 17:9, "I do not pray for the world," Christ does not exclude others from His prayers, but in this particular prayer, He prays only for the apostles. Elsewhere, they say, Christ prays for those who crucified Him, "Father, forgive them," indicating that Christ prays and intercedes for all with a general and antecedent affection, but with a consequent will, for believers only. We teach the contrary.

1. Because they prove nowhere in Scripture that Christ prays for all. In Isaiah 53:12, it is written, "He makes intercession for the transgressors." An indefinite proposition in a contingent matter is equivalent to a particular one: for He does not pray for all sinners, since He does not pray for those who sin against the Holy Spirit, nor for those who are finally unbelieving and obstinate, as such. For those for whom He did not die as a Mediator, for them He does not intercede as an Advocate, so that His death would profit them unto eternal salvation. But our adversaries deny that Christ died for those who are finally unbelieving, as such.
2. Christ is always heard whenever He prays to the Father. "I knew that You always hear Me" (John 11:42). But the prayers of Christ

are not heard for all and every individual, since not all believe to the end and are saved. It would be blasphemous to say that the prayers of Christ are not heard.

1. Because in that case, they would depend on the piety and merits of the people for whom He prays, not on His own merits, if Christ's prayers are heard for all and every individual, provided that all and every individual should believe and persevere.
2. Because Christ intercedes by praying that the faith of those for whom He prays may not fail, as in Luke 22:31.
3. It was the duty of the typical priest not only to offer sacrifices for the people but also to enter once a year with blood into the Holy of Holies. The Holy Spirit applies both of these to Christ (Hebrews 5:1-3, 8:3-4, 9:7, 11, and 10:19-20). Christ not only offered Himself as a sacrifice to God the Father but also, by the merit of His own blood, entered into the Holy of Holies, that is, into heaven. But the Arminians deny that Christ in heaven intercedes or enters into that heavenly Holy of Holies with His blood for all and every individual, but only for believers.
4. According to the Arminians, Christ cannot intercede for any. Therefore, He does not intercede for all. Proof of the premise: because according to them, Christ did not merit faith, regeneration, or perseverance in faith by His death. Therefore, He cannot pray for our faith and perseverance. The reasoning follows: because the prayer of Christ the High Priest depends on the value and merit of the perfect sacrifice offered by Him to God.

5. They do not dare to assert that Christ now prays at the right hand of the Father for all the reprobate, not even generally. For if He were to intercede generally, He would also have to have been raised, ascended to heaven, and now intercede at the right hand of God the Father for them. But they do not teach this, for they say He rose only for believers.

1 Corinthians 1:4

“I give thanks to my God always for you, for the grace of God that was given to you in Christ Jesus.”

From this, it is clear that Christ is He for whose sake, as the meritorious cause, all grace is given to us. Therefore:

Question: Do the Remonstrants rightly teach, in "Apol. cap. 8. fol. 95," that Christ has not merited faith and regeneration for any mortal by His death? We deny this.

1. Because, as it says in Ephesians 1:3, "God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ"; therefore, He has blessed us with faith and regeneration as well.
2. Because we are the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus for good works (Ephesians 2:10), which He has prepared for us. Therefore, we are also created for faith, which they call a good work; and Christ calls it "the work of God" (John 6:29).
3. Because Paul gives thanks to God for this very reason in 1 Corinthians 1:4-5: "I give thanks to my God always for you, for the grace of God that was given to you in Christ Jesus, that in everything you were enriched in Him." Therefore, they were made rich in Him by faith.

4. Because all the promises of God are "Yes" and "Amen" in Christ (2 Corinthians 1:20), for He has merited all the promised things, among which are primarily regeneration, the circumcision of the heart (Deuteronomy 30:6), a new heart and a new spirit, and thus the generation of faith, all of which are promised to us in the New Covenant (Ezekiel 36:26, Ezekiel 11:19, Jeremiah 31:33, Zechariah 12:10). Indeed, it is absurd that the things promised in the New Covenant are not obtained for us by the merit of the blood of the New Covenant and the death of the Surety of the New Covenant, as Christ is called in Hebrews 7:22.
5. Because the spirit of regeneration is poured out upon us through Christ Jesus our Savior, by the kindness and love of God (Titus 3:4-6). Since faith and regeneration are gifts of God, it is absurd that these should be given to us except for the merits of Christ; otherwise, God would give these gifts to us just as the Creator of the world gives food to the ravens. What could be more contrary to Scripture than this?

The Arminians, therefore, deny that Christ has merited faith and regeneration for us for three reasons:

1. To avoid being compelled to say that, by the necessity and virtue of Christ's merits, faith and regeneration are given.
2. Because it would be absurd to say that Christ has obtained faith and regeneration for all, by His merits, just as He has died for all, since only very few believe and are regenerated.
3. Because, for them, faith is not a gift of grace obtained by the merit of Christ, just as regeneration is not, if they were to speak sincerely, but is instead a work of free will.
4. Because they think it absurd that what is required of us as a duty, a condition to be freely performed under the title of free

obedience, should be obtained by the merits of Christ. For then it would necessarily have to be given to us, whereas we, however, perform it freely, not necessarily.

John 15:13

"Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends."

Question: Did Christ embrace those for whom He died with the greatest love? Or could a greater love than that with which He pursues those who actually believe and are saved be given? The Remonstrants, especially at the Conference of The Hague (p. 184) and Corvinus in "Contra Molin." (cap. 28, §. 17), teach that Christ does not signify here a supreme love in an absolute sense, but only in a certain respect. They argue, "A greater love is not only to merit but also to actually bestow salvation." We deny this.

1. A distinction should not be made where the Law of God makes no distinction. Christ expressly states that no one has a greater love than this.
2. Because such is this love that if God delivers His Son for us, which is the greatest, He cannot fail to grant all other things, which are lesser, and thus also the grace of believing, persevering, and eternal salvation (Romans 8:32).
3. Because this love of Christ is so long, wide, deep, and high that it surpasses all knowledge (Ephesians 3:18-19).
4. The love of Christ, who lays down His life for His friends, cannot even be called love (according to the Arminians), for this love is perfectly consistent with the hatred and peremptory, irrevocable decree of reprobation and the eternal ruin of all whom He

embraces with such love; indeed, it is consistent with such a denial of the means that God foresees would effectively deliver them from His eternal wrath and destruction.

5. In Romans 5:10, Paul argues thus: "For if, while 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." From this, it follows that reconciliation through the death of the Son of God is an act of greater love than the glorification of those who are reconciled. But if there were a reconciliation through the death of Christ that precedes and is common to all, both elect and reprobate (as our adversaries claim), then it would not be necessary that any mortal be saved.

6. There is no basis for saying that God could not have shown greater love in that type of antecedent love toward enemies; but He did show greater love toward friends, in whom the Father makes His dwelling, as Corvinus argues (*ibid.* §. 19).

1. Because Christ speaks of the love toward His friends in John 15:13.

2. Because there is one love in God with which He has embraced His own from eternity. Here He speaks of the love of God concerning His disposition, as it is manifested to us, especially in this, that Christ died for us.

Question: Do the Remonstrants, in "Apol. cap. 8. fol. 98," correctly define reconciliation as an active efficiency of the will to save in place of the will to condemn? We deny this.

1. Because there is no efficient cause of the will of God in creatures.

2. Because the will to condemn is not mutable, shifting into a will to save.
3. Because reconciliation is an external and temporal act in God, by which He declares Himself to be graciously disposed and favorable toward those who believe in the Son of God. It presupposes the death of Christ and the faith of man in Christ, and it differs in reason, not in reality, from justification. Reconciliation, on our part, is an act of obedience commanded to us. “We implore you on Christ's behalf: be reconciled to God” (2 Corinthians 5:20). Therefore, it is not essentially such a will.
4. That there should be in God a will to save the reprobate, substituted by Christ's death in place of a will to condemn, is false.
 1. Because there is no peace for the reprobate.
 2. It could not be that there was a will in God to condemn the reprobate before a Redeemer was foreseen, as they themselves teach. Yet to condemn those who do not believe in their infancy would be an injustice, or to condemn them because of original sin would be to punish those who are not sinners (according to them). Or to condemn them for sins committed between infancy and a sufficient presentation of the Gospel would be absurd (*adynaton*). For those who sin before the grace given through the preaching of the Gospel suffer from invincible ignorance, since they are not yet capable of a sufficiently presented Gospel.

Romans 8:34

“Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised.”

In this passage lies a solid argument for the Christian consolation of all those for whom Christ has died. Hence:

Question: Is the solid foundation of Christian consolation, hope, and assurance found in this: that Christ died for all and each individual? Or, conversely, is it a foundation for despair and perpetual doubt that He died only for the absolutely elect and believers, since Scripture does not make it known to anyone that they are elect or believe? The Remonstrants affirm this. We deny it.

1. Because true Christian hope and consolation belong specifically to the elect and believers and are stored up for them in heaven (Colossians 1:5; 1 Peter 1:3; Romans 8:24). The assurance of salvation, both objective and subjective (adherent, as they call it), belongs solely to believers (Romans 8:38-39; 2 Corinthians 5:1; Colossians 2:2; 2 Timothy 1:12; Romans 5:1; Romans 8:16). Therefore, we profess that our doctrine does not sew pillows under every arm of the wicked and unbelieving.
2. Those poor souls are given a miserable hope and a fleeting consolation by those who teach that, assuming Christ has died for me and every mortal, Judas and Pharaoh included, and shed His blood and laid down His life for all, nevertheless, my own volatile liberty might, in a pivotal moment, do the one thing needed to make myself and all mortals partakers of salvation, and yet it is still possible that I and all mortals should perish eternally together. Indeed, this consequence is as valid as saying, "Christ died for sinners; therefore, the devil will be saved," or, "Christ died for all and each individual; therefore, Judas the betrayer, be of good cheer, you shall be saved; there is enough consolation for you."

3. The Arminians teach nothing about the motion of human hearts according to the foreknowledge of God, as the Jesuits do; nothing about an efficacious and irresistible inclination of the heart to the obedience of Christ, as the Dominicans do. But according to their doctrine, free will rules over God's providence and all grace, even the most powerful, governing to will or not to will, to believe or not to believe, to persevere or not to persevere in grace. Hence arises a pendulous, doubtful, wavering, uncertain hope, shaken by the fear of final ruin and apostasy every hour; and from this comes a vain and slippery consolation. How miserable are these comforters!
4. Ample foundation for hope, assurance, and consolation is laid in this syllogism:
 - Whoever believes in Christ will be saved.
 - But I believe in Christ.
 - Therefore, I will be saved.

The major premise is from Scripture. The minor premise can be proven from Scripture (Romans 6:16) and from those infallible signs by which anyone can be certain that they believe, which can be discerned with divine certainty, partly from the Sacred Scriptures, partly from the testimony of the Holy Spirit, and partly from the sense of Christian experience.

5. The foundation of Arminian consolation and assurance is universal election and a universal intention to save all and to die for all, which has nothing solid in itself. For those who do not believe, unless they presume and nourish an empty hope, have reason to despair of eternal salvation and to suspect that they are not among those whom God has destined for glory by a complete, irrevocable, and peremptory decree of election. But

indeed, we do not command anyone to seek the foundation of their hope and consolation in the hidden intentions and secret decrees of God but in the revealed will of God, considered in conjunction with the conscience of every man.

Question: Are the reprobate, by the death of Christ, made reconcilable to God? The Arminians affirm this simply. We make distinctions and teach, in the sense that Prosper speaks, in response to the Chapter of the Gauls, cap. 9: “Christ is the Savior of the whole world, because He assumed true human nature and because of the common ruin in the first man.” Hence, although Christ did not die for the reprobate, they are made reconcilable by the death of Christ in this sense:

1. Because Christ assumed a nature that is common, although not as it is common to all, but as it is the nature of Abraham, the father of believers (Hebrews 2:16). Hence, the devils are by no means made savable by Christ, for He did not unite angelic nature to Himself in His person.
2. Because Christ expiated the common sin of Adam on the tree of the cross, though not as it is common, but as it is found in the elect and those who believe.
3. Because the grace of the preaching of the Gospel is obtained by the death of Christ for the reprobate born in the visible Church; and the offer of Christ is made to them with approval and simple delight. Therefore, they are called to the feast (Matthew 22; Luke 14:16) and called to Christ (Matthew 11:16; Matthew 23:37-38; 1 Corinthians 1:18, 23; Acts 14:46; Proverbs 1:24-25; Isaiah 6:10-11; Isaiah 65:2-3). But these things cannot be said of the devils.

But the reprobate are not, by the death of Christ, made reconcilable to God.

1. As if a conditional and decretive offer of Christ were made to them, by which God offers Christ to them in such a manner that He has determined to apply His merits to them effectively; as believers have been made reconcilable by the death of Christ.
2. They are not made reconcilable as if Christ bore their persons on the cross and endured the punishments due to them.
3. Nor are they made reconcilable as if Christ, by His death, merited for them reconciliation, forgiveness, and eternal salvation.
4. Nor as if, in the promises proclaimed, God intended the things promised in the Gospel for them, either absolutely or conditionally.

Question: Are all and every one, including the reprobate, required to believe that Christ died for them? The Remonstrants affirm this. Corvinus, in "Contra Molin. cap. 29, §. 16," also affirms this. We deny it.

1. Because no one is required to believe what is false. But it is false that God chose all and every one to glory or that Christ died for all and every one, as has been proved elsewhere. Therefore...
2. Because to believe that Christ died for all and every one is not the proper and adequate object of saving faith. The object of faith is an *ens incomplexum*, namely, Christ, the sufficient Savior, made the author of salvation to all who obey and believe.

3. Because Christ's dying for sinners implies the counsel of God and thus the decree of election to glory. But the counsel, intention, and decree of my election are not the proper objects of my faith but are revealed to me by the experiential sense and internal testimony of the Holy Spirit.
4. Not even all the elect are immediately required to believe that Christ died for them without a certain order. Therefore, much less are the reprobate required to believe this.

Proof of the antecedent:

1. Because the elect are required first to be burdened with the weight of their sins and to be conscious of their misery, and to trustfully and wholeheartedly rely on Christ as a sufficient Savior who saves all who believe, rather than being required to believe that Christ died for them. For only those who are burdened and labor are immediately required to come, that is, to believe (Matthew 11:28; Isaiah 55:1).
2. Otherwise, they would be required to nourish vain presumption if they, being secure and unaware of their misery, were required to believe that Christ died for them.

Question: Has Corvinus rightly said, following Arminius in "Antiperk.," in "Contra Molineum cap. 29, §. 17," that it is not just to require the reprobate to believe in Christ as having died for them, since He did not die for them, and it is unjust to condemn men because they do not embrace by faith the grace that does not pertain to them or was not obtained on their behalf? We deny this.

1. Because the equity of the obligation to believe, by which the reprobate are required to believe in Christ, rests on the authority

and dominion of God as Lawgiver, not on any right of ownership by which Christ, from eternal election, was destined to be their Savior. For otherwise, Arminius could say that the reprobate are not obliged to believe in eternal life and the forgiveness of sins because God, in the decree of election, did not will eternal life to pertain to the reprobate.

2. It cannot be said that Christ does not pertain to the reprobate in any way. For He pertains:

1. By the right of the Gospel offer.
2. By the right of the sufficiency of Christ's death.
3. By the right of the common nature assumed.
4. By the right of the common first transgression expiated by Christ.
5. By the right of the New Covenant, which is proclaimed by the grace of Christ to the reprobate.
6. By the right of the command of God, which orders the reprobate to receive Christ by faith, Christ pertains to them.

3. Arminius should have opposed this mystery of the Gospel with a valid argument (a mystery that it would be far more fitting for us worms of dust to adore and admire rather than scrutinize, much less to reject). The reprobate are required to believe in Christ and to trustfully rest upon Him as the sufficient Savior of all believers. Yet, Christ, according to the intention and decree of God, is not their Savior, nor is He destined for them as the author of salvation and Mediator.

Question: Can anyone trustfully rest in Christ as a sufficient Savior unless they first know, with certainty of God's intention, that Christ

has been given to them as a Savior? The Remonstrants affirm this. We deny it.

1. Because a person who is about to believe in Christ cannot have assurance of reconciliation with God through Christ being granted to them until they believe; for such assurance is generated by the very act of believing.
2. Because no one can be certain of God's special and gratuitous love in the decree of election until there is something in themselves that specifically distinguishes the elect from the non-elect; for one is always uncertain in this case whether God regards them with the hatred of reprobation or the gratuitous love of election. But faith is the first thing that specifically distinguishes the elect from the non-elect.
3. Before anyone believes, even if Christ has died for them in the sense in which the Arminians claim He died for all, they have as much reason to fear eternal destruction as they have to hope for eternal salvation. For to one who does not yet believe and trustfully rest in Christ, there is nothing certain about the effective or ineffective intention of God to save them or not save them; for it is solely through the act of trustful believing that assurance of God's effective intention to save is generated.

Chapter 10.

On the Covenant of Grace

Hebrews 8:8-10

“For he finds fault with them when he says: ‘Behold, the days are coming, declares the Lord, when I will establish a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. For they did not continue in my covenant, and so I showed no concern for them, declares the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws into their minds and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.’”

From these verses, we have:

1. The foundation of the New Covenant, namely, that it rests on the good pleasure of God, as He indicates when He finds fault with those with whom He established this covenant because of their sins.
2. Here we also have the promises of the covenant, which are entirely spiritual, namely, that He will give a new heart and inscribe His laws in their minds.
3. The contracting parties in this covenant are Jehovah and the family of Israel and Judah; not, however, all and every mortal.
4. Thus is also affirmed the perpetuity and stability of the New Covenant, namely, that it is eternal and very different from the former covenant, which they violated.

Question 1: Is it the case that God entered into the covenant of grace with man solely out of His free good pleasure, or was it out of

any necessity? The Remonstrants, in words, indeed teach that this covenant was made freely, but in reality, they deny it.

1. They teach that all men are released and freed from the obedience required by the covenant of the Law. Thus Corvinus, in "Contra Molin. cap. 8, §. 7." Therefore, it must either be that fallen man is without law and subject to no law, or it was necessary for God to make this covenant of grace with all. And this is the first necessity.
2. They teach that no one can sin unless sufficient grace to obey and avoid sin is present. Therefore, God was either obligated to provide sufficient grace according to the terms of this covenant, or if He had never made such a covenant, men would have lived in perjury, murder, hatred of God and neighbor, and yet would have been innocent and free from sin. And this is the second necessity.
3. They teach that God cannot justly condemn men for Adam's sin, and what theologians call Original Sin, which in their judgment is not sin. "Apol. cap. 7, fol. 68; Corvinus, Contra Molin. cap. 9, §. 5." In "Script. Synod. art. 4, pag. 145," they still teach that all Adam's descendants are born children of wrath by nature, guilty of condemnation and death, both temporal and eternal ("Confess. cap. 7, th. 3; Arminius, disp. pub. 7, th. 16"). But it would be altogether unjust for men to be liable to condemnation for no sin at all. Therefore, since He could not actually inflict eternal death, He was necessitated to make a covenant of grace and to send His Son in the flesh, lest He be compelled most unjustly to execute the law of works given to Adam in all his descendants. And this is the third necessity.

But we teach that all men are subject to eternal death and that God made this covenant purely out of His grace, without any such necessity compelling Him. As it is said in Ezekiel 16:8: "When I passed by you and saw you, behold, it was the time for love. And I swore to you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord God, and you became mine." And again in Ezekiel 36:32: "It is not for your sake that I will act, declares the Lord God..."

From this, the answer to another question may be easily discerned: namely, whether the antecedent love of God, by which He was inclined toward the salvation of all by a natural affection, was the foundation from which He made a covenant with all mortals. The Remonstrants affirm this. We deny it.

1. Because there is in God an antecedent disposition of justice, inclined toward the destruction of sinners, as Grevinchovius admits on page 20. Therefore, there is equally a foundation in God for not making this covenant with man as there is for making it. For the love that is directed toward creatures (antecedently) can only have its place insofar as the prior love (for justice) permits it. Arminius, in "Declaratio Articuli 19," page 12, argues: If they say that, through the death of Christ, sufficient satisfaction was made to divine justice so that He could save all and each from antecedent love, and thus make this Covenant of Grace with all and each, then God, having provided satisfaction for all and each, could not will their destruction. I respond that such actual satisfaction is not granted unless all and each actually persevere in faith, according to the doctrine of the adversaries; and thus God would still be inclined toward the destruction of all and each unless they believe. Furthermore, the death of Christ is part of the new covenant, by which Christ, in His testament, bequeathed remission and peace to His friends.

Therefore, the Covenant of Grace is not by nature posterior to the death of Christ; indeed, because God made the Covenant of Grace with the elect, He therefore gave Christ to death for them.

2. Because such antecedent love is mere fiction, as has been proven elsewhere.

Question: Did the fathers under the Old Testament have no other promises than those that were bodily and only for this life? Or did they, by faith, look to Christ and promises of eternal life? The Remonstrants assert that the faith of the ancient people did not look toward spiritual things. Thus Arminius responds to article 31, *Episcopius* in "*Disputatio 5 de foedere Vet.*" thesis 5. We, on the other hand, believe that the Jews were saved by the same Messiah and justified by the same faith as we are and that they looked to the spiritual promises of the forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

1. Because in Genesis 3:14, the blessed Seed is proclaimed to Adam. And in Genesis 22:18, "In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed." Isaiah 7:14, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel," which is cited by Matthew in chapter 1, verse 23. Isaiah 9:6, "For unto us (the Jews) a child is born, unto us a son is given." Acts 2:39, "For the promise is to you and to your children and to all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call." Acts 3:24, "Indeed, all the prophets from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days." Acts 10:43, "To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name." Acts 15:11, "But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." 1 Corinthians 10:3-4, "I would not have you ignorant that all our

fathers ate the same spiritual food, and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ.”

2. Because they not only believed in and knew the Savior materially (as the Arminians and Socinians would have it, who say that they believed in Christ who had never heard of Christ), but also formally, and under the concept of a Mediator. John 8:56, “Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day; he saw it and was glad.” And Isaiah chapter 53 prophetically attaches the very Gospel history of Christ's Passion, no less than the Evangelists.
3. Because there are clear promises of grace and eternal life to be conferred upon them, and promises that are purely spiritual. Genesis 17:7, “I will be your God and the God of your seed.” Deuteronomy 30:6, “The Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your seed, to love the Lord your God with all your heart.” Isaiah 49:10, “They shall not hunger or thirst; neither scorching wind nor sun shall strike them” (which is explained concerning the joys of eternal life in Revelation 7:15-17). Verse 15, “Can a woman forget her nursing child, that she should have no compassion on the son of her womb? Even these may forget, yet I will not forget you,” verse 16, “Behold, I have engraved you on the palms of my hands.” Isaiah 45:17-14, Isaiah 59:21, Jeremiah 31:31-35, Jeremiah 32:40, Ezekiel 36:26, concerning the covenant of grace, about the eternal marriage in Hosea 2:19 between Christ and the Church, which the entire Song of Solomon makes clear.
4. Because the faith and hope of believers under the Old Testament rested in God with a sure expectation of eternal salvation. Thus,

the patriarch Jacob, dying in Genesis 49:18, "I wait for your salvation, O Lord." Psalm 73:25, "Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth that I desire besides you." Verse 26, "My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever." And verse 24, "You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory." Thus also Job in Job 19:25-27, Isaiah 14:8, Jeremiah 17:7-8, Psalm 17:15, Psalm 16:10-11, Psalm 52:1-2, Psalm 26:1-2, Psalm 39:6-8, and in countless other places.

Question: Has the Covenant of Grace been made with all and every mortal, even with those who have never heard of Christ? The Remonstrants affirm this. We deny it. For we teach that the doctrine concerning the Covenant of Grace is proposed to all within the Visible Church, but with respect to God's eternal purpose and election, the Covenant of Grace has been made with the elect only. This is evident.

1. From the very practice of God, who established this Covenant with Noah and his descendants, with Abraham and his descendants only, and with the Jewish people and not with others. This is testified in Deuteronomy 7:7 and Psalm 147:19-20. For this reason, the Apostles were forbidden to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles (Matthew 10:5-6) and were prevented from evangelizing Bithynia. This would not have been the case if the Gospel Covenant had been made with all.
2. This is also clear from the words of the Covenant itself. Jeremiah 31:31, "Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah."

3. The promises of the Covenant are not universal; therefore, neither is the Covenant itself. The proof is in the antecedent. Because God promises to remove the stony heart and give a new heart and a new spirit only to some, and that without regard to their obedience or disobedience, but solely for His own name's sake. Ezekiel 36:22, 26, 32. Thus, not all are children of the promise, but only those counted in the seed, according to election. Romans 9:8.
4. Because some are described as being "without Christ," alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise; and God makes this Covenant specifically and singularly with some, not with all. Genesis 17:7, Ezekiel 16:8, "Indeed, I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, declares the Lord, and you became mine." Zechariah 13:9, 2 Corinthians 6:16, Hebrews 10:11.
5. Because those with whom this new Covenant of Grace is made will never depart from God. Jeremiah 32:40-41. God will never reject them, despite all that they have done, and they will remain in the Covenant as immovably as God's natural covenant with the sun and moon, with day and night, Jeremiah 31:35-37. They will no more be cast out of this Covenant than the world will again be drowned by the waters of Noah (which God swore would never happen), Isaiah 54:9-10. Nor will His covenant mercy be taken from them any more than God could profane His Covenant, change the pronouncement of His lips, or go back on what He has sworn to do by His holiness, and thus lie. Psalm 89:34-36. Therefore, they will never perish. Yet, among mortals, there are many who depart from God, whom He rejects and abandons, who fall away from the externally proposed Covenant

and perish eternally. Therefore, this Covenant has not been made with all mortals.

6. Because there would be no distinction between the Covenant of Grace, which is eternal and inviolable, if this Covenant were made with most people who break it, and the Covenant of Works made with Adam, or this Covenant as it is legally proposed. But this distinction must necessarily remain, as the Prophet says in Jeremiah 31:31-33.
7. It would be contrary to the wisdom of God that He should enter into a Covenant with those nations and present Christ as the surety of the Covenant, dead for them, who nevertheless have never heard, nor even known the sound or syllable of grace and the gracious Covenant, and that God should not only prevent its promulgation by His providence but expressly prohibit it. Acts 16:7, Matthew 10:4-5. And that God should consider them violators of the Covenant of Grace and despisers of the death, blood, and grace of Christ, who have never heard even a syllable of grace and the gracious Covenant of God.
8. It would be necessary that all infants who died before reaching the age of reason would be saved eternally, whether born of believers or those outside the Church, born of pagans or atheists, because this Covenant of Grace, which they claim is made with them, has never been broken by them. They deny that they are guilty of violating the Covenant of Works or of any sin; therefore, they do not need reconciliation in Christ: Consequently, all must be saved without exception. But Scripture teaches that God maintains His freedom in Election and Reprobation, even before the infants have done anything good or bad. Romans 9:11.

Question: Is the grace that determines the will towards good and supernatural acts a thing promised by God in the New Covenant? The Remonstrants deny this. We affirm it.

It must be understood that there are two types of pre-determining grace. One type is that which predetermines the will concerning specification, namely, towards good and supernatural actions in their particular kind. This pre-determination flows from the infused habit of supernatural grace, such as believing, hoping, and repenting. The other type is the grace that predetermines concerning the exercise, when the will is predetermined to a particular act or another. Hence, our position is established by the following assertions:

Assertion 1. Pre-determining grace with respect to specification is promised in general to all those truly in the covenant; namely, a circumcised heart, a new spirit, a new heart. Deuteronomy 30:6; Ezekiel 36:26-27.

Assertion 2. Pre-determining grace with respect to specification in all determined acts is not promised to those in the covenant. For if it were so, those in the covenant could not sin, which is contrary to Scripture and experience.

Assertion 3. Pre-determining grace with respect to specification in certain acts is promised to all in the covenant; namely, the grace by which it is done and the deed itself accomplished, so that the truly regenerated cannot fall into sin against the Holy Spirit or final apostasy, nor can they commit some great sin with the whole force and impetus of the will, because the seed of God abides in them. 1 John 3:9. They have the anointing of God remaining in them. 1 John 2:29. The fear of the Lord is promised to them, so that they will not depart from Him forever. Jeremiah 32:40.

Assertion 4. We contend against the Socinians, Arminians, and Papists that in this New Covenant such grace is promised by which, from the habit of supernatural grace, they are unable not, in most acts, to love God, to believe in Christ, to subdue the flesh and its affections, to repent, and to persevere in a state of grace.

1. Because in this covenant, grace is promised, by which we will never depart from God. Jeremiah 32:43. The Spirit will never depart from those in the covenant, nor from their seed, nor from their seed's seed forever. Isaiah 59:20-21.
2. Because the circumcision of the heart is promised to love God with all the heart and soul. Deuteronomy 30:6. The inscription of the law in the heart. Jeremiah 31:33. The Spirit of God, by which He causes us to walk in His commandments. Ezekiel 36:27.
3. Because unless such pre-determining grace were promised, our state in Christ would be no more stable than in the first Adam; and here, as well as there, we would be prone to fall from God's favor and state of grace. Neither would Christ, the surety of the New Covenant (Hebrews 7:22), be more powerful than the free will of Adam, by which he lost himself and all his descendants.
4. Because the Covenant of Grace would not be an eternal covenant on both sides, contrary to the clear testimonies of Scripture. Jeremiah 31:35-37; Jeremiah 32:40-41; Isaiah 54:10; Isaiah 59:21.
5. Because the perseverance of the saints would neither be promised by God nor certain and secure; which we will later demonstrate from Scripture to be false.

6. Because unless such grace were promised to us, man would have no grounds for praying for a steadfast bending of his will to faith and obedience, nor any reason to rely on God for such bending, nor any reason to give thanks for such an influence of grace, contrary to Scripture. Psalm 119:27, 29, 33-37, 43, 66; Psalm 86:11; Song of Solomon 1:2, 7; Matthew 6:10; Ephesians 1:16-17; Ephesians 3:14-16; Colossians 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Thessalonians 1:3.

Question: Is the Covenant of Grace eternal, or does our continuance in this Covenant depend on the inclination of free will, such that we can either remain in it or fall from it at our discretion? The Remonstrants deny that this Covenant is eternal. We, however, assert that this Covenant is unchangeable and eternal.

1. The eternity of the Covenant is affirmed on both sides by explicit words. On God's side, Jeremiah 32:40 states, "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from doing them good." The eternity of the same Covenant on our part is also affirmed there, based on the infallible promise of God: "And I will put the fear of Me in their hearts, that they shall not depart from Me."
2. Because final perseverance in grace is promised to those in the Covenant. See Jeremiah 32:40-41, Jeremiah 31:33-35, Isaiah 59:21, Hosea 2:18, Psalm 1:5, 1 John 4:14, Matthew 16:18, John 6:37 and 10:28-29, and John 14:16.
3. Because this Covenant is just as certain, constant, and inviolable as God's natural Covenant concerning the perpetuation of day and night, and the revolutions of the sun and moon. Jeremiah 31:35-37. It is as certain as the oath of God, which makes His word most sure. Hebrews 6:18. And as certain as the promise

that the world will not be overwhelmed by the waters of Noah. Isaiah 54:10. Therefore, this Covenant is founded upon God's immutability and truth, who cannot lie. Psalm 89:34-37.

4. Because it relies on that holy and never-violated Covenant made between the Father and His Son, declaring Him to be the "seed that shall prolong His days." Isaiah 53:10. Declaring the "children" He will have, Isaiah 8:18 and Hebrews 2:13. Promising Him dominion "from sea to sea." Psalm 72:8, Psalm 2:8-9. And a willing people, Psalm 110:3, provided He lays down His life for His own. This Covenant between the Father and the Son can in no way be rendered void.
5. The death and shedding of Christ's blood, by which the Testament of the Covenant was confirmed, would be in vain; and there would be room for another Covenant, another Mediator who would confirm that other Covenant with different blood, if this Covenant could be made void.
6. Because pre-determining grace, forgiveness of lapses, and repentance are promised within this Covenant.
7. The distinction that the Holy Spirit establishes between the Covenant made by Jehovah with the house of Israel on the day He brought them out of Egypt and this New Covenant would be lost. The former was rendered void and violated, but this one is eternal and inviolable. Jeremiah 31:31-33.

Romans 9:8: "But the children of the promise are counted as the seed."

Question: Are the promises of the New Covenant universal, extending equally to all according to the primary intention of God

and His antecedent will? The Remonstrants affirm this.

Question: Are the promises, according to the decree and intention of God, applicable to any except the elect, even if the offer of the things promised under condition is made to all and each within the visible Church? We deny this.

1. Because the promises cannot, according to God's intention, pertain to those who neither hear nor can hear such promises, indeed to those who cannot do so because of the prohibitive and obstructing providence of God. For there is a maxim in law: *Promises that are not made known do not obligate one to fulfill the conditions of those promises, just as a law not made known, but hidden in the mind of the legislator, does not obligate.* Who could imagine God speaking in this manner: "I promise to the pagans and Americans the remission of sins, the righteousness of Christ, and eternal life acquired by Christ's death; and I have decreed all these things for you from eternity, provided you believe; meanwhile, I have decreed never to reveal such a promise to you, indeed, to prevent it from being revealed to you by my obstructing providence."
2. The promises concerning the inscription of the law on the heart, as in Jeremiah 31:33 and Hebrews 8:10, and concerning the giving of a new heart, as in Ezekiel 36:26, and a circumcised heart, as in Deuteronomy 30:6, do not belong to the reprobate according to God's intention and decree. For if they were given to the reprobate absolutely, then God would regenerate a new heart and a new spirit in all reprobates, which contradicts both experience and Scripture. Or, if they are given conditionally, that God would grant the reprobate a new and circumcised heart, there is no such statement in Scripture (i.e., "If a person fulfills

this or that duty, God will give them a new heart and a new Spirit"). Furthermore, it is not by works that we have done that God calls us, but He quickens the dead in sins. Moreover, the obligation to have a new heart applies equally to all, according to the Arminians; therefore, the adversaries of God do not correctly infer God's decree from the obligation imposed on men, namely, that "God wills with a will that obligates that all and every person should believe and obey God and be saved; therefore, He has decreed that all and every person should believe and obey." And thus, if these promises do not concern all and each according to God's counsel, neither do the remaining ones.

3. God in His promises either wills the salvation and remission of all and every one, if they believe, so that the condition suspends the will and decree of remission and salvation; or the condition does not suspend God's decree but only the actual remission and bestowal of eternal life. The first cannot be said, because it is unworthy of the infinite perfection of the divine will that its fixed and eternal decrees should be suspended by the unstable inclination and temporary act of created free will. But if the condition only suspends the actual remission and temporary bestowal of eternal life, then the promises, according to God's counsel concerning the granting of remission and eternal life, pertain only to those fulfilling the condition, that is, to believers alone.

1. Because the decree to glorify is as restricted as glorification itself, as Arminius confesses in his "Declaration." For just as God glorifies no one but a believer, so He has decreed to glorify no one but a believer; and just as He condemns no one but one who is finally impenitent, so He has decreed to

condemn no one but such.

2. Because, as jurists rightly teach, a conditional will and promise based on the hypothesis of such a condition establishes nothing unless the condition is first established. Likewise, a conditional donation is not a donation unless the condition is first fulfilled. Similarly, a conditional promise does not obligate the promisor unless the condition is met. Because Judas the betrayer, and the reprobates, never believe, there was never a will for the salvation of Judas and the reprobates in God.
3. Because according to the essence of the Gospel, God does not intend to give remission and salvation to the reprobates in any way or manner, but only in a determined way, as a reward, under the condition of faith, as the Arminians teach everywhere. For He does not intend salvation for the reprobates absolutely and without any condition. Therefore, if the condition of faith is never fulfilled (as certainly in the reprobates, according to the adversaries, in most; and according to us, in none), such a condition is merely non-existent and nothing, because they never believe. Therefore, it is false that God intends remission and eternal life as a conditional reward in the promises to Judas the betrayer and to those who never believe.

The adversaries argue that God's intention in promising salvation to the reprobate is suspended until all the reprobate actually and finally believe. But this is to imagine that there is an intention in God, suspended from eternity, and to conceive of God as intending salvation for them in an incomplete, suspended, doubtful, and indeterminate manner, until all actually believe, which God

foreknows will never happen. Therefore, it is certain that God has not equally intended, by His primary will, to promise remission and eternal life to all and every individual.

4. The evangelical promises do not extend more broadly from God's intention than God Himself extends them in the Gospel. But God Himself extends them in the Gospel only to believers: "He who believes will be saved," just as also the threats say, "He who does not believe will be condemned." For salvation and faith extend equally broadly. No one is saved except a believer, and no believer is not saved. Therefore, the intention of the saving God is directed only towards believers.

If they say that God intends to save more, provided more would believe, than are actually saved, and that this is by an antecedent will and intention, because with such an antecedent intention, He intends to save all and every individual, provided all and every one believes, I respond as above: a conditional intention amounts to nothing, establishes nothing unless the condition is first established. But that condition is never established. For never do all believe. Therefore, there is never such an antecedent intention in God. 2. Nowhere in Scripture does God say He wants to save any other than believers. Otherwise, this would be the promise of the Gospel: "God wills, intends, and promises, before the condition of faith is met, to save all and every mortal," which is false.

5. If the promises of the Gospel, according to God's intention, pertain to all and every mortal, and thus God would desire to save all and every one, by an antecedent intention, then, by the same reasoning, the threats of the Gospel would pertain to all and every mortal. And so God would intend, by an antecedent intention, for all and every mortal to perish eternally, and He

would destine all and every one antecedently to eternal destruction. The reason is that God's will in the threats is equally conditional as in the promises of the Gospel, and God is equally inclined towards justice as towards mercy.

6. There are countless places, both in the Old and New Testament, where remission, righteousness, and salvation are promised to the believer and to the one who repents. But no passage is found where God says, "I decree and will that all and every one shall have remission and eternal salvation, provided they believe." Likewise, "I decree and will that all and every one shall perish eternally, provided they do not believe." However, our view is found in the Scriptures, whereas theirs is not. Matthew 11:28: "Come to me all (not simply all, but) all who labor and are heavy laden." John 3:16: "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever (not simply everyone, but) whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life." Likewise John 5:24, John 7:37, Isaiah 55:1, John 11:26, Romans 3:22, Galatians 3:22, Acts 10:43, Acts 2:38,39. Therefore, the adversaries deceive themselves by taking the simple term "all" and applying it without distinction. For as Prosper rightly notes in *De Vocatione Gentium*, book 1, chapter 3, "the fullness of God's people is in its totality." And Scripture expressly limits the evangelical promises to all who believe, who thirst, who are burdened with the conscience of sin.
7. We must not accept a doctrine that extends Christian consolation equally to all humans, including murderers, sodomites, pagans, Turks, etc., on the basis of this syllogism: "The promises of God pertain to all who are human, whether they are pagans, Turks, parricides, etc. But I am a human, a

Turk, a parricide, etc. Therefore, the promises of God pertain to me."

8. The promises of the New Covenant truly belong, according to God's intention, only to those who are truly in the covenant and restored to grace, and for whom Christ has acquired the spiritual benefits promised in the New Covenant by the merit of His death and blood. But not all and every mortal are within the covenant, nor are they restored and reconciled to God through Christ. The reason for the major premise is that if the promises of the covenant, according to God's intention, belonged to devils, they would also pertain to the devils if they were in the covenant and restored to grace and reconciled to God through Christ. The minor premise is clear, for it is monstrous to say that Pharaoh, Herod, etc., were restored to God's grace, and that Sodomites were purchased by the blood of the Lamb.

Matthew 10:5

"Do not go on the road of the Gentiles, and do not enter any city of the Samaritans."

The Question: Is the Gospel, or the word of this covenant, preached to nations and men according to their merits or demerits, or is it rather by the mere grace and good pleasure of God? The Remonstrants, Article 2, page 326, say that the Gospel is preached by grace; but they claim that when it is not preached to certain nations, it is due to their own wickedness and depravity; since God, according to His own nature and antecedent will to save all, is ready to grant His Gospel to all nations and men.

We, however, affirm that it depends solely on God's good pleasure, apart from any merits or demerits of men, that the Gospel

is preached to these nations and not to others.

1. Because God does whatever He is bound to do. And yet God, as in Psalm 147:19, "declares His word to Jacob"; He has not done this for every nation. In Acts 14:16, "God in past generations allowed all nations to go their own ways." In Acts 16:6-7, "After traveling through Phrygia and the region of Galatia, they were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia. When they came to Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them."
2. Because nowhere in all of Scripture does such a pact exist that states, "Those who have done this or that and rightly used the gifts of nature will receive as a reward the benefit of the Gospel." Nor is there such a threat: "Those who are more wicked than others and use the gifts of nature less rightly will be denied the proclamation of the Gospel."
3. Because in Romans 9, "God has mercy on whom He wills, and He hardens whom He wills."
4. The entire reason why the word of the covenant was announced to the Jewish people and not to other nations is found in God's good pleasure. Deuteronomy 7:7 and 9:5: "Not because of their righteousness."
5. Because God denied the Gospel and the aids of miracles to the Tyrians and Sidonians, who would have been more flexible and teachable regarding the Gospel and the miracles of Christ, while He offered those same aids to the Jews, who were much more obstinate. Matthew 11:21-22. And He sent the prophet Ezekiel to the rebellious and obstinate house of Israel, while He denied the prophetic word to the nations of an unknown tongue, who would

have been much more compliant with God's prophets. Ezekiel 3:6-7.

6. Because the Gospel is a pure gift of God. Matthew 11:25-26. And God is free to do what He wills with what is His. Matthew 20:15.
7. Because if the matter depended on free will, with all the requisites for action standing equally available for earning or forfeiting the proclamation of the Gospel, then thanks would be due to free will, not to God and His grace, for the gift of the Gospel.
8. Because God, as even the adversaries do not deny, sometimes grants the Gospel to those who are worse and more wicked, and denies it to better people; and thus, He gives the Gospel to whom He wills and withholds it from whom He wills, from His absolute freedom.
9. Otherwise, the calling would be of works, not of grace, contrary to 2 Timothy 1:9, Titus 3:3, Ephesians 2:3-4.
10. Because it would follow from the contrary opinion that God wills the Gospel to be preached to all and every mortal. But since this is absurd, the Arminians shift the cause of the Gospel not being given to the free will of the preachers, who refuse to spread the Gospel among barbarous nations. But, 1. Since God no longer calls preachers in extraordinary ways, and since He does not now bestow on them the extraordinary gift of languages, as He did in the time of the Apostles, without which preaching the Gospel among barbarians and unknown peoples is exceedingly difficult; and since He allows princes, states, and trading societies who trade among those peoples for the sake of profit to fail in the duty of communicating the Gospel to those peoples;

and since there is sufficient income from divine estates where they exist, or the wealth already acquired could suffice to establish new ones, this is an argument that God does not will the Gospel to be preached to them. For if He does not will the means without which it cannot be done, then He does not will the end either. And yet God wills that princes, states, and societies of Christians should be obligated to communicate the Gospel to them; which obligation will not excuse them from their duty. 2. This is to speak against God's justice; indeed, it is contrary to the justice of God that an innocent nation should bear the penalties of the negligence and disobedience of the preachers, who are not even related to them by any bond of blood.

11. Because prayers made in faith cannot be offered to God for granting the Gospel to the Jews and other nations, if the cause of the Gospel being given or not given is Free Will, which is not even determinable by God to merit the Gospel.

Question: Was the Covenant of Works, made with Adam, so strict that God could not execute its rigor upon Adam's posterity?

The Remonstrants, in their doctrine regarding the punishment of Original Sin—which they claim does not exist—imply such a conclusion. See Corvinus against Molina, Chapter 9, Section 5, and Apology, Chapter 7, page 84. We deny this implication.

1. Because God would be unjust and cruel if, due to the first sin of Adam, He threatened both him and all his descendants with death, both temporal and eternal. It would also contradict God's mercy, clemency, and goodness if, for that one sin alone, which infants did not commit personally but was only committed by another, they were made to suffer eternal torments in hell. Just

as it is against God's truthfulness and faithfulness to promise such goods as He cannot actually bestow while maintaining His justice and goodness, so it would contradict His justice and wise goodness to threaten a punishment upon a creature that He could not actually inflict unless He wished to be deemed cruel and rigorous by inflicting a punishment incompatible with His justice, goodness, clemency, and mercy. But God is not unjust or cruel. Therefore, He could, according to the threat of the Covenant of Works, justly punish Adam and all his descendants, including infants, with temporal and eternal death; and this would not conflict with His mercy, clemency, or goodness.

2. Because God, out of His mere grace and absolute good pleasure, sent His Son into the world (John 3:16; Titus 3:4). He could have chosen not to send Him, and yet He would not have been unjust, even if Adam and all his descendants had suffered temporal and eternal death.
3. Because all of God's law is just and holy. Therefore, the penalties threatened by the same law, when carried out, are also just. For a law cannot be just if its threat is unjust.
4. Because the Remonstrants imagine such an administration of the Covenant by God that, necessarily, the whole human race would have perished eternally. They argue this would contradict God's will to save all and every mortal. However, there is no such will in God, and the eternal destruction of one man is just as contrary to such a will of God as the eternal destruction of all men.
5. From this doctrine, they conclude that Original Sin is not properly sin nor deserving of eternal death, which we have previously demonstrated to be false according to the Scriptures.

Question: Is anyone now subject to the law as law, and to the Covenant made with Adam as such, since this covenant has been broken and involves everyone in its penalty, so it can no longer oblige them to obedience?

The Remonstrants affirm this. See Corvinus against Molina, Chapter 8, Section 7. We deny it.

1. Because, if the law as law no longer condemned murderers, perjurers, who know nothing of the written law, they would not be said to perish without the law, as in Romans 2:12. For if the law as law did not obligate them to active obedience, then it would not justly obligate them to punishment for not rendering active obedience.
2. Because some are under the law, and others under grace and united to Christ. Romans 7.
3. Because no mortal would be subject to the curse of the law, Deuteronomy 27:26, due to sins committed after the fall. For no one sins by doing against a law that does not require active obedience.
4. Christ, therefore, would have suffered death only for the broken first covenant made with Adam, and would not have become a curse for our actual transgressions of the law, which is contrary to what Paul teaches. Galatians 3:10, 11, 13, 14.

Chapter 11:

On the Mode of Conversion

EPHESIANS 1:18, 19

That you may know what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places.

From this it is evident that the power of efficacious grace is no less than the omnipotence of God Himself; therefore, we believe in Christ through that strong, powerful, and irresistible action by which Christ was raised from the dead. Thus, concerning the manner of conversion, the question arises:

Does grace work conversion irresistibly, or not?

To establish the state of the question, these preliminary points must be noted:

1. **Resistance** is the reaction of an agent upon a patient, as Zabarella says in "On Reaction," chapter 5. Or rather, resistance is the impediment or repulsion of an action, or the non-acceptance of an action by which a form is acquired, where a form strives to preserve itself and simultaneously seeks, by suffering and reacting, to impede or delay the action of a contrary agent. Thus, I do not assent to Zabarella's denial that resistance is either a reaction or a re-suffering; for every

resisting thing, as such, reacts and re-suffers, otherwise it yields and does not resist. Resistance is either between physical agents, as when fire resists water; or hyperphysical, as when one angel opposes another; or between moral agents, as when a person resists sound counsel. Therefore, there are three types of resistance: Physical, Hyperphysical, and Moral. Furthermore, the forces of agents and patients are either equal, resulting in resistance that is partial and incomplete; or unequal, resulting in resistance that is victorious and complete.

2. We confess that, with respect to **grace that persuades and invites**, which some call *prevenient, exciting, or externally calling grace*, it is by no means irresistible, but is most often resisted by us. *Jeremiah 7:13*: "I spoke, but you did not listen." *Psalms 81:14*: "Oh that my people had obeyed me!" With regard to **internal and operative grace**, there is within all the elect a propensity to resist, although this is not complete due to the overpowering strength of grace. For everything contrary to its opposite is naturally inclined to resist; but the habit of corruption and internal grace are opposites, and this resistance is, as it were, physical.
3. The adversaries concede that **illumination occurs irresistibly**. *Synod of Dort, Article 4, page 16*: "Whether we will or not, we cannot help but know."
4. Similarly, they teach that **affections are drawn**, and the **powers of believing** are given irresistibly. See Corvinus against Tilenus, chapter 12, page 467.
5. We affirm that the **habit of sanctifying grace and the new heart** are infused irresistibly. The Arminians deny such

infusion, asserting instead that conversion is an act of our Free Will.

6. In the will, three things must be distinguished:

1. **The power to believe:** This is conferred irresistibly, as they say.
2. **The perception of the impulses and persuasions of the Holy Spirit:** Concerning this, Corvinus against Bogerman writes (pages 270, 271): "The will cannot help but feel the impulses, persuasion, and allurements of the enlightened mind." And against Molina (chapter 33, section 31), he states: "We indeed admit that man is passive in the first moment of conversion, but in terms of perception, not in terms of assent."
3. **Assent or dissent:** Regarding this third matter, they state, in their Confession, chapter 17, thesis 7, and Corvinus against Bogerman, part 1, page 363, against Tilenus, chapter 5, page 223, and Episcopius, dissertation 15, thesis 11: "God," they say, "never so endows man with new powers of grace that it does not always remain in the will of man to use them or not use them; indeed, even when all the requirements for acting are present, the will can assent to or dissent from the call of God."

On the Manner of Conversion

Here we are not asking, **1. Whether grace is resistible with respect to external means?** For these can indeed be resisted. **2. Nor whether grace preceding conversion is resistible?** This we also concede. **3. Nor whether men can resist more common grace?** For temporary believers do resist such grace, as is evident in *Luke 8:13* and *1 Timothy 1:19*. **4. Nor is it a question of**

habitual grace, which is proper to the elect, for even this grace is resistible; otherwise, truly regenerate elect could not sin. **5. Nor whether the mind is irresistibly enlightened, and whether the will and affections irresistibly feel the persuasions and invitations of the enlightened mind?** The adversaries grant this to us; although we do not see how they can deny that the free will can divert the intellect from considering the reasons presented to it, thus hindering the act of illumination. **6. Nor is the question whether God imposes force on the free will**, which we also deny. **7. Nor whether the corruption of the will is naturally inclined to resist the action of divine grace?** Rather, the question is:

Does God so influence the will with new grace—namely, the special grace of Regeneration, which flows from God's eternal Election—that the will is capable of completely and finally rejecting this grace, and of finally opposing its most powerful action, so as to entirely resist God's calling, refusing to open the door to Him who knocks? This is what the Arminians affirm. Or, does the grace of God, which is proper to the elect, when put into action, so overcome the sinful rebellion and hardness of the heart that it cannot completely and finally resist God's calling, so that it must, by a hypothetical necessity, obey God?

We teach that the will cannot resist the internal grace of God.

To illustrate this controversial question, it may also be noted:

In the year 415, Pelagius, Julian, Faustus, and many others arose, who labeled irresistible grace as fatalism. Today, there are four main opinions. The first is that of the Dominicans, who acknowledge the invincible power of grace, but teach that a man is not converted simply because he does not will to be converted. This is the teaching

of Alvarez, Gumel, Ripoll, the Doctors of Salamanca and Alcalá, and Bañez. The second is that of the Jesuits, who assert a congruent calling, which is founded on:

1. Persuasion;
2. The adaptation of persuasion to such a disposition that perhaps the efficacy of conversion is resolved in an afternoon's drinking party;
3. The middle knowledge (*scientia media*) as their support, which is a concoction of imaginative and capricious brains.

The third opinion is that of the Pelagians, Arminians, Socinians, and Pseudo-Lutherans, who propose that grace is resistible.

But here are five things found in the will:

1. The illumination of the mind;
2. The quickening of the affections;
3. The conferring of the power to believe;
4. The sense and perception of the persuasions and movements of the intellect; and all these, they say, are done by God irresistibly.
5. Assent and dissent, concerning which the question remains. The Arminians formerly fled with their Arminius to Jesuitic congruity (*Coll. Hag.*, p. 311), but now they have abandoned it.

Yet this controversy did not first arise with Pelagius; it is much older. It was stirred up even in the time of the Apostles by the carnal Romans. *Romans 9:19* asks, "If God has mercy on whom He wills, and hardens whom He wills, then why does He still find fault? For who has resisted His will?" Paul does not respond as the Arminians do, saying there is one will of God that is resistible, another that is irresistible; one that is decretive, another that is not; one that is

effective, another that is ineffective. Rather, he says, "Indeed, O man, who are you to answer back to God?" etc.

We establish our position against the Arminians with the following arguments:

- 1. Because God works faith in us with the same power and might by which He raised Christ from the dead** (*Eph. 1:18-19, Col. 2:12*). It is by this divine power that He brings about the fulfillment of every good purpose of His will (*2 Thess. 1:11*). This same power, according to which He grants us all things pertaining to life and godliness, works within us (*2 Pet. 1:3*).
- 2. Because no one can resist the drawing of the Father** (*John 6:44*), and all who have heard and learned from the Father come to Christ (*John 6:45*). Therefore, they necessarily come; for the proposition "πάντες" ("all") is of necessary truth, and thus they cannot but come.
- 3. Because God not only gives us the ability to believe, but also works in us both to will and to act** (*Phil. 2:13*). And it is granted to us not only to believe but also to suffer for His sake (*Phil. 1:29*). He makes us walk in His statutes (*Ezek. 36:27*). Therefore, God's grace operates so effectively that it removes both resistance and resistibility. He says, "I will remove the heart of stone" (*Ezek. 36:26*). A heart of stone is the habitual principle of resisting God's calling.
- 4. Because the new heart and new spirit, which cause us to walk in God's commandments, are in direct opposition to the final and complete power to resist God's calling and to thwart His gracious intention of**

calling. Thus, if people were to have a new heart, they would never fail to be converted; they would not be both converted and not converted at the same time.

5. Because God promises to remove our ability to resist:

"The Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul" (*Deut. 30:6*). Therefore, He removes the hardness and the foreskin of the heart (*Ezek. 36:26*). He says, "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you." If the Jews (like the Arminians today) were to object, saying, "It is possible that while remaining stony, we resist You, O Lord, who are giving us a new heart," the answer would be: "I will remove the heart of stone." He further declares, "I will put My law in their minds and write it on their hearts" (*Jer. 31:33*). If they were to say, "It is possible that we remain ignorant and resist You," He anticipates this: "No longer will they teach their neighbor or say to one another, 'Know the Lord,' because they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest" (*Jer. 31:34*). Similar promises are found in *Jer. 24:7*, *Isa. 44:3*, *Ezek. 11:19-20*, *Zech. 12:10*, and *John 14:16*.

6. Because God the Father has promised a willing people

to His Son: "Your people shall be volunteers in the day of Your power" (*Ps. 110:3*), and "He shall see His seed" (*Isa. 53:10*). "Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession" (*Ps. 2:8*). "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the River to the ends of the earth" (*Ps. 72:8*). Therefore, He promises to His Son that many will be converted to Him, and God is faithful in His promises. They cannot, therefore, resist God's converting call.

7. **Because if a man, dead in sin, contributes nothing to his regeneration, by which he could merit or procure it, and if his conversion is a resurrection from the dead and a new creation, then he cannot resist God's calling or oppose His regenerating work.** But this is true, as shown in *John 3:3, 5:25* and *Eph. 2:5*.
8. **Because the action of God regenerating would not be stronger than a speaker's persuasion or an orator's gentle allure if it could be overcome by man.** Nor would God be stronger here than a preacher, or even than Satan, Cicero, or Demosthenes.
9. **If this grace is resistible by man, then it would be common to the unregenerate, for it would be given to them but ultimately rejected by them.** Yet, this grace is proper to the children of God. As stated in *Rom. 8:14*: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God." And in *1 Cor. 1:23*, "Christ is the power of God," but only to those who are inwardly called. "The Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive" (*John 14:17*), is received only by the children of God.
10. **Because God employs His omnipotence in the action of internal grace, such that nothing is impossible for Him** (*Matt. 19:26*). Through this omnipotence, He converts many from trust in riches to faith and repentance. He uses a power greater than that exercised by the devil and sin (*1 John 4:4, 2:14; John 12:31; John 14:30*). Thus, the conversion of many arises from God's will and power (*Rom. 11:23, Rom. 1:16, Jude 24, 1 Pet. 1:5, John 10:29, 2 Cor. 9:8, Rom. 15:13, 16:25*).

11. **Because if a man could resist internal grace proper to the elect, then God's decrees of election could be rescinded, His counsels changed, and His intentions thwarted, contrary to the Scriptures** (*Ps. 33:10, Isa. 14:26-27, 46:10-11*).
12. **If this grace were resistible, then God would not truly grant repentance and faith, contrary to the Scriptures** (*Acts 5:31, 2 Tim. 2:25*), but would merely offer them. Yet, offered faith, when not received, is not a gift from God; rather, accepted faith would be our own gift.
13. **If this grace were resistible, then the act of conversion would depend on human free will, and the efficacy of Christ's merits, as well as the salvation of the elect intended by God, would rest not on God's grace, but on our free will.** However, Scripture portrays conversion as a work of grace (*Deut. 30:6, Jer. 31:33, Ezek. 36:26-27, Zech. 12:10, John 6:44-45*).
14. **If grace were resistible, then God would call many inwardly whom He has neither predestined, justified, nor glorified, which is contrary to what is said in Romans 8:29-30.**
15. **We pray in vain for God to bring about conversion if, after all the actions of divine grace have been put forth, it could still happen that we resist and do not convert.** For in such a case, we would be asking God to do what He cannot do without overturning freedom. And thus, conversion would be no conversion at all, and obedience would be no

obedience.

16. **We give thanks and glory for conversion to God in vain if the will could impede it.** For God would not be the infallible and effective cause of conversion.

17. **Man would then separate and distinguish himself from the unconverted solely by his own free will.** The converted person could say, “I did something by my own free will, without Christ; I possess something good that I did not receive from God's grace, namely, that I did not resist God's grace,” whereas another, endowed with the same habitual grace, did resist. Yet the Scriptures ascribe the glory of our conversion to God as the cause who separates and distinguishes. *Romans 18, Ephesians 2:4-5, Colossians 1:12-13, 1 Thessalonians 1:2-3, 1 Timothy 1:15-17, Revelation 1:5-6, 1 Peter 1:3-4.*

18. **For then it would depend on free will, not on God, that any are saved, that there is a Church in the world, that Christ as Bridegroom has a bride, that the Head has members, that the King has subjects, and that the glory of pardoning mercy is declared.** Because all mortals could resist God's calling by their free will.

19. **For then Augustine would have falsely attributed to God, according to the Scriptures, dominion over human wills.** He would wrongly state in *De Correptione et Gratia, Chapter 14*, and *De Gratia, Chapter 14*, that “God possesses the most omnipotent power to incline the hearts of men wherever He pleases,” and concerning the wills themselves, “He does whatever He wills.” There is no doubt that human wills

cannot resist so as to prevent God from accomplishing what He wills.

The Remonstrants, in their *Scriptura Synodica*, Article 4, page 58, frame the question of resistibility in this way: "Whether a man, when God seriously wills that he should believe and be converted, could choose not to believe and not to be converted?" Or thus: "Whether, when God intends the conversion of a person, He employs such efficacy in grace that, if this efficacy were present, a man could not fail to be converted and believe, and, if this efficacy were absent, a man could not convert or believe?" We disapprove of this framing of the question.

1. Because they do not mention a single syllable about internal grace.
2. Because they ask whether a man could avoid conversion when God applies such efficacy — that is, such effectiveness that conversion necessarily follows. This is like asking whether, once conversion is established, it could be possible for conversion not to be established.
3. Because for the Arminians, there is a distinction between an intention to convert that is peremptory and one that is ineffectual; one that is absolute and another that is conditional. Thus, they frame the question confusingly.
4. Because when God (according to them) intends the conversion of Barbarians and Indians, and even the damned, with a mere inclination, as Corvinus states against Molina, Chapter 31:5, 17, they ask whether God, concerning the Indians who have never heard of Christ, and the damned, employs such efficacy of grace that, if present, their conversion necessarily follows? This is an absurd question.

Martinez de Ripalda, in *De Ente Supernaturali*, Vol. 1, Book 2, Disputation 30, Section 6, No. 28, writes: "If one wishes to speak of the will (against the recent Thomists) acting immediately as the object because it is the very thing that is immediately rendered as knowing or desiring through a supernatural act; Calvin, after all, knows that it is by the will that a man is made to will." Indeed, Kemnitius openly admits that the will is that which properly "wills" (adverbially), and the mind that which properly understands. However, a saving act of doing and willing is not properly of the will and mind, but of divine grace: because it does not arise from the proper power of the human will and mind, but solely from the external power of divine grace, adequately and immediately. Thus, they charge us with claiming that the will is purely passive.

But in stating the question, we affirm that grace and the Father, who teaches, have a relationship to a twofold cause.

1. Grace is a cause that truly draws, teaches inwardly, and predetermines, being the sole and adequate cause. Meanwhile, free will is an act that is drawn and taught. In this context, there is no cooperation between Grace and free will; otherwise, our will would be a co-cause, actively calling, preceding, and drawing alongside God's grace. Yet, it is the Father alone who draws, and the Father alone who adequately makes us hear (John 6:44, 45), not our will with the Father; indeed, we are passive here. The Father alone teaches Peter adequately; "flesh and blood" does not teach itself as a co-cause (Matthew 16:17). For then half of Simon's blessedness would have to be attributed to flesh and blood as much as to the Father.
2. We would then be calling ourselves as powerfully as God calls, and our own rich mercy would intervene as a collateral internal cause of our

calling. 3. It would depend on free will whether we are called or not.

2. Free will, thus drawn and taught, is a living co-cause but is subordinated to prevenient grace. God alone knocks first, not merely by morally stirring us with an exhortation or admonition, but with a real influence. But it is not we who alone open and respond; rather, He who calls and precedes also follows up with the same operative grace, enabling the will to open and respond.

Martinez de Ripalda, in *De Ente Supernaturali*, Volume 1, Disputation 30, Part 29, asserts that the Fathers of the Church affirm that there is a natural or innate faculty in man for performing supernatural works. Augustine, in *De Dono Perseverantiae*, Chapter --- shows that some people, by their very nature, possess a divine gift of intelligence by which they are moved to faith if they hear words or see signs congruent with their minds. Note the term "naturally"; also, note "congruent with their minds," which suggests that the action of believing is innate and in some sense natural to human nature and disposition, not because there is an adequate, innate, and natural faculty. Thus, there is at least a natural and innate, though incomplete, faculty. Augustine also says in *De Praedestinatione Sanctorum*, Chapter 5: "To be able to have faith is natural; to actually have faith is grace."

There is a possibility not only passively but also an active force; because we have the ability to perform the act of faith as efficient agents.

Reply: We do not deny a certain remote power due to grace; but we do deny that this power, being dull and dormant, is brought into action merely by a congruent and moral persuasive motion (namely, the letter of the Law and Gospel), without the infusion of real power

and habit. 2. This possibility is both passive and active. It is passive because it needs supernatural power to become more proximate and active. It is not a capacity such as that which is attributed to stones, wood, or irrational creatures, as Augustine says; rather, it is a rational, vital capacity that formally breaks forth into action. Nor is it an intermediate force, as Augustine discusses in *De Spiritu et Littera*, Chapter 33, where he doubts and debates. Let us first say and see whether it satisfies this question, that free will, attributed naturally by the Creator, is that intermediate force which can either be directed towards faith or inclined towards unbelief. Therefore, this is a natural and remote power for believing.

Martinez replies (*ibid.*, 25): A purely remote power does not possess any other virtue for effect than that by which an immediate and proximate power operates, for by that alone and not by itself, it immediately reaches the effect. A purely remote power, without a proximate one, is not only weak and ineffective but is utterly nothing. But Hugo Victorinus explains natural activity (of believing) by the example of sight, simultaneously with light eliciting vision, which is not a seeing power merely by a purely remote capacity.

Response: Scripture, in John 6:44, Romans 8:7, and 1 Corinthians 2:14, denies any natural power of coming to Christ, i.e., believing unless a new ability is infused. Therefore, natural power is passive in this regard. 2. If the power to believe is denied, it is thus a remote power. 3. The assertion that a purely remote power is utterly nothing is denied. Sarah cannot come (John 6:44), but she is still a subject capable of being drawn by grace. 4. But it cannot be said that a remote power does not immediately reach the effect, even if it only reaches it through grace alone: For heated iron warms with a remote power and also immediately reaches the effect; not merely through the intervening fire, for it heats immediately through the density of

the material by which the forces and degrees of fiery heat are more strongly united.

5. Hugo Victorinus's comment is unfortunate, as in his *Quaestiones Elucidatae in Epistolam ad Romanos*, p. 238, he expressly says that the soul has a natural power for meriting. Here certainly, the eye is a visual faculty unharmed and whole, placed in darkness; light does not add any new real power of seeing but presupposes that sight is whole, sound, and unharmed, and that even in darkness, it has a proximate power of seeing. The Jesuits also concede that a new habit is infused to elicit acts more easily and gently; for they argue that natural power is weak but not diminished in being. 2. As for cooperation, they teach it is indifferent and general. 3. It is merely a moral persuasion that adds no strength to Free Will.

Martinez, in the same section, n. 8: 26, says: "The Fathers often allude to an immediate and partial natural virtue concerning supernatural acts... Something works in fulfilling the commandments, as human will does, just as grace also does; and indeed, immediately, as does grace: otherwise, the whole would be acted upon immediately by grace alone." Augustine, in *De Correctione et Gratia*, chap. 2: "They are acted upon so that they may act." Number 38: "Thus, just as the immediate and natural activity of the eyes makes a person capable of seeing light, even in the absence of light, so too does the natural capacity of the will make a person capable of preserving righteousness, even in the absence of grace. Although there is this difference, that light is due to the eyes to complete their immediate activity, grace is not due to a person to complete the power to preserve righteousness... Neither the will alone nor grace alone is the adequate cause of salvation."

Response: 1. Grace alone acts immediately as an efficient cause of willing, determining, inwardly teaching, and effectively doing. The will alone also acts immediately as a vital cause, formally and freely willing. Thus, neither alone performs the whole action.

2. If the natural capacity renders a person capable of maintaining righteousness even in the absence of grace, then a person, not drawn by the Father, i.e., in the absence of grace, can come to Christ, i.e., believe. What more would Pelagius say? Nor does light add any real power to the eyes.

Martinez (section 9, number 40) states: "If 'to assist' signifies an action immediately in God, it will also signify an action in man. A purely remote cause does not assist." He responds, "It does something, but not the whole." Thomas (1. p. 9:23, art. 8, to the final argument, and 2) says, "Someone is assisted by another in two ways: 1) Insofar as he receives strength from him, and thus to be assisted is to be weak; and so, 'Who assists the Spirit of the Lord?'—i.e., no one. 2) Someone is said to be assisted by another through whom he carries out his operation; just as a master assists through a servant. And in this way, God is assisted by us, insofar as we carry out His ordination." 1 Corinthians 3:9: "For we are God's fellow workers."

Response: Thomas speaks of God insofar as He uses means; namely, of natural assistance, not the assistance of grace, which is the subject of the present question. For we do not assist God or His grace in believing, nor do we provide the assistance of grace. Thus, we love God in our homeland, and we enjoy God. But would we say that in such vital actions we assist God? Certainly not.

Martinez (section 10, number 44) writes: "Ownership in a good work does not belong to man by reason of passion, as one might say a particular color belongs properly to a man, but by reason of action;

namely, by the title of dominion of freedom." John 15: "And that your fruit may remain." Revelation 2: "I know your works." Augustine, *Ad Simplicianum*, Book 1, Question 2: "That we should will, He willed it to be both His and ours; His in calling, ours in following." The ownership of grace, or of the supernatural divine assistance in a saving act, shared with man, testifies to the immediate action and virtue of God's assistance, distinct from the virtue of the will.

2. "If the will does not influence the act by itself immediately, but only through grace with the immediate action of grace alone, then in the title of a certain action, another ownership or propriety cannot pertain to the will in the work of piety than that which pertains to grace. And so, the will itself, as distinct from grace, by no right of ownership can divide a supernatural act with divine grace; but just as the whole action, and the whole virtue, belongs solely to grace, and to the will only by denomination (merely) from grace, so the whole ownership and propriety will belong solely to grace, and to the will only through the propriety and ownership of grace."

Response: Thus, the Jesuits strive to divide the glory of conversion between God and miserable man, begrudging God and His grace the sole glory. But a half-action is one thing; a half-glory is another. Again, the action of vital believing by Free Will, created by God, is one thing; and the action of conversion through effective grace's calling is quite another. This argument does not conclude that the ownership of the action of knocking by internal grace, and the action of opening by the same internal grace, belongs both to Grace and is also divided with the creature. This does not prove that part of the glory of conversion belongs to God's Grace and part to the creature's Free Will; instead, all glory should be entirely ascribed to God alone.

2. The ownership of an action is either physical or moral. In the case of the former, the Jesuit must necessarily concede that the physical ownership of the action, such as plowing, speaking, walking, even hoping, is shared between God and man. But they do not prove that the moral glory of such actions should likewise be divided. Indeed, we do not deny that Free Will immediately influences actively in the act of believing; but it is moved, bent, and determined by internal grace, which causes willing and working. Yet from this, it does not follow that the moral ownership of the action of believing is thus divided between God and creatures.
3. Nor do we deny that the act of believing is ours, and that some moral ownership must be ascribed even to Free Will, since Christ commends the faith of the Canaanite woman, the Centurion, Abraham, and others, and rewards it.

Martinez (section 11, number 47) states: "Grace is not the total cause, but a partial cause of a supernatural act." 1 Corinthians 15:10: "Not I, but the grace of God with me." Bernard calls us comrades; Jerome calls us fellows, in the supernatural work with God.

Response. And Calvin calls us co-laborers with God. But because in God lies the principal causality in effectually calling, making us willing and believing, although we are the ones who will and believe, therefore, God's grace is rightly said to be the adequate and complete cause that governs, determines, and brings about the will. Here, Free Will does not share in any fellowship, although in another sense it may have a shared participation, as a moved cause effectively determined and with partial, subordinate influence and a lesser activity, which our side does not deny in the least. Nor does the habit alone do everything: indeed, the habit is not enlightened, like the

intellect; it is not stirred up, like the will; nor does the supernatural habit perceive a supernatural object; nor does the habit formally choose, reject, desire, aspire, or suspend an action; nor is the supernatural habit the vital principle, but Free Will alone is such a principle, by which a living being moves itself from within. Nor is the supernatural habit, as such, free, but only aids Free Will.

The question is raised whether the entire gracious operation of God, which the Holy Spirit employs in the conversion of man, is merely moral, so that God acts here by merely inviting, persuading with reasons, and alluring through both threats and promises and commands; or whether, rather, God acts by a real and physical efficiency of grace, by infusing the habit of grace, and by physically and really predetermining the will. The Arminians complain that we wrong them by teaching that they hold the whole matter of conversion to be accomplished by a persuasive and moral action. Thus, Corvinus, *contra Molin.* ch. 45, §§ 2, 3, and ch. 45, § 7; Grevinchovius, p. 301. But that this is indeed their view is evident:

1. From their Confession, ch. 10, 11, § 4, where they require only two things to engender faith: 1) likely arguments, and 2) docility. And in the Hague Conference, p. 122, they say it can be disputed whether persuasion is not the most noble and fitting action of God that He can use in the conversion of man. They teach that men are made willing, from being unwilling, by mere allurements. Arminius himself, in his *Antiperistasis*, pp. 751, 770, §, concerning the Father's drawing, acknowledges no other action than persuasion. Moreover, they admit no action administered through the Word except a persuasive one; for, as they say, it is in the nature of the Word to act only persuasively. We uphold the contrary.

2. If God acted here only persuasively, there would be no greater action by God converting than by a preacher, orator like Cicero or Demosthenes, or even the devil himself; thus pastors could be said to create a new heart in us, quicken the dead, regenerate the carnal, merely through the letter of the Law and the Gospel, which is what Pelagius taught, as Augustine says in *De Gratia, contra Pelagium et Celestium*, ch. 3.
3. Because God infuses the Spirit of supplication (Zech. 12:10), gives a new heart and removes the heart of stone (Ezek. 36:26), and quickens us (Eph. 2:4, 5). Therefore, it is not merely by moral action; for life is never infused by moral action alone.
4. Because persuasion does not add or infuse any internal strength into the faculties of the soul and corrupted Free Will; for no speeches, however golden, restore sight to the blind, power to walk to the lame, or wealth to the poor.
5. Because to suppose that God regenerates only by morally persuading implies that neither the Intellect, the Will, nor the Affections are corrupted by nature in any other way than by mere obscuration of the mind and lack of literal revelation; and that we are not otherwise impotent to perform supernatural acts (Faith and Repentance) than a man is naturally impotent to learn mathematical or metaphysical disciplines.
6. Because it would be as easy for us to convert as it is for a drunkard to embrace Cicero's advice against drunkenness.
7. Because he who embraces moral counsel is rather the principal and effective cause of the duty advised when he performs it than the one who advises it; therefore, a different glory for conversion would not be due to God than that of inventing the Gospel, and

the glory of Faith and embracing the Gospel would be due solely to Free Will.

8. Because there is no dominion of the one persuading over the will; and therefore, if God is merely a persuader here, God would not be the Lord of conversion and salvation, nor would it be in His power that some are converted, and not more, or others.
9. Because it is in vain to pray for grace from a mere persuader if it is only in my power to obey or not to obey the persuasion.

Question: Do the Arminians, following Bellarmine in *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio* (Book 1, Chapter 13), sufficiently ascribe to God, since they attribute external persuasion, arising solely from the letter, to men and the devil, but to God they ascribe internal persuasion, which always infuses light and breathes the beginning of good will? Similarly, Suarez distinguishes in *De Auxiliis Divinae Gratiae* (Book 3, Chapter 15, Section 17). We deny that this sufficiently ascribes to God.

1. Because if this infusion of light is objective and arises solely from the letter of persuasion, it is merely external persuasion, as they call it. But if this infusion is the actual granting of a new power to Free Will, then it is not persuasion, but a physical action and more than persuasion; for no persuasion infuses new strengths into us.
2. Pelagius acknowledged internal persuasion in this way. Augustine, in *Contra Pelagium et Celestium* (Book 1, Chapter 7), says, "He helps us by His teaching and revelation when He opens the eyes of our heart—when He enlightens us with the ineffable gift of heavenly grace—when He awakens our stunned will through the revelation of wisdom, to desire God." But in the

same way, gold entices the mind of the thief inwardly, but only objectively.

Question: Does God call all those He calls externally, also internally, so that they have the power to obey if they are willing? The Remonstrants affirm; we deny.

1. Because He called the Jews externally through the word, signs, and wonders, and yet He did not give them a heart to understand, ears to hear, or eyes to see, even to this day. (Deuteronomy 29:3-4). That is, He did not call them with an internal calling.
2. Because God called the Jews externally through the preaching of Christ and His notable miracles (John 12:37), but not internally. Verse 39 says, "They could not believe because God had blinded their eyes."
3. Because 1 Corinthians 2:14 states that the natural man is called externally; otherwise, the Gospel would not seem foolishness to him. But he is not called internally, for he cannot understand the things of the Spirit of God.
4. Because all who have heard from the Father are called internally and come to Christ. But many who hear God calling them externally through preachers are not called internally and do not come to Christ. Therefore, etc.
5. Because some hear the mysteries of Christ, yet they are not revealed to them, for God does not reveal them internally. "No one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son reveals Him." (Matthew 11:25-27). Therefore, some are called externally but not internally.

6. Because Christ, preached to the Jews, is a stumbling block, and to the Greeks, foolishness. Therefore, they are called externally. But to those who are called (i.e., internally), both Jews and Greeks, Christ is the power and wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:23-24).
7. Because those who are more stubborn than stones at the preached Word and whose faces are made harder than flint (Jeremiah 5:8), who are so incapable of the Word as infants just weaned from milk (Isaiah 28:9), who are blinded (2 Corinthians 4:4), hardened (Matthew 13:15), and mock the externally calling Word (Acts 17:32; 26:24; 2 Peter 3:1-2), whose hearts are covered by a veil because they are devoid of the Spirit of the Lord, who lifts the veil (2 Corinthians 3:14-16), are externally called but not internally.

Question: Is sufficient grace ordinarily given to all who hear the Gospel? The Remonstrants affirm. We set forth our position in the following assertions.

Assertion 1: Literal knowledge and understanding of the Word, without the operation of the Holy Spirit, is given to unbelievers and the reprobate. (Matthew 11:25-26; Matthew 23:23).

Assertion 2: The Holy Spirit, through the Word, convicts the reprobate of sin. (John 5:45; 7:28).

Assertion 3: The Word is an instrument subordinate to the Spirit, active and effective by its own δύναμις (power).

1. Because the Word is living and powerful (2 Corinthians 10:4; Hebrews 4:12).

2. Because the oration of Cicero is effective and powerful; therefore, the Gospel, being the sword, arm, and power of God, is much more effective.

Assertion 4: The effective and living quality that accompanies the Word is not an inherent habitual quality of the Word itself, because many remain blind and insensible to the Word.

Assertion 5: The power that accompanies the Word is twofold. One is inherent in the Word, which does not operate without the Spirit. The other adheres to the Word and is the δὐναμις (power) of the Holy Spirit, which either convicts or converts. Therefore, the Word is powerful, but through God (2 Corinthians 10:4). It is the sword of God, but in the mouth of Christ (Revelation 19:15), a bow from which arrows are shot (Revelation 6:2).

Assertion 7: The power of the Holy Spirit is directed towards the mind, will, and affections, enlivening these faculties of the soul. However, the Word itself does not enliven, nor is it imbued or informed by any habitual grace. Therefore, the Holy Spirit elevates the Word to a nobler action than mere persuasion. Thus, the Word is a preparatory instrument for conversion with respect to the act of persuasion; but it is consummatory with respect to the physical and supernatural act, for the accomplishment of which the Holy Spirit concurs. The Word has a purely objective and moral influence, impressing the grammatical and literal sense on the intellect of the called person (the Arminians admit they recognize no other influence, either of the Word or of the Holy Spirit, *Apologia*, chapter 1, folio 11). However, the Word is an instrument elevated by the Holy Spirit with respect to internal and supernatural revelation, because the Spirit impresses the grammatical sense upon the intellect with plainly heavenly, divine, and supernatural evidence. Therefore, our

theologians make a twofold revelation of the Word: one literal, objective, moral, and external, which is not lacking to the reprobate; another spiritual, supernatural, real, and internal. The Word in both revelations is an instrument subordinate to the Holy Spirit: in the former, preparatory; in the latter, consummatory.

Assertion 7: We say that sufficient grace does not ordinarily accompany the preached Word.

1. Because the external call is often without the internal call, as has been proven.
2. Because the adversaries admit, Arminius in *Antiperk*, page 665, and Corvinus in *Contra Molin*, chapter 36, section 4, that when the Word is preached to the notably obstinate, the δύναμις (power) of the Spirit ceases, and thus the Word is a mere letter. Hence, they confess:
 1. That God has two contradictory wills concerning these obstinate people: because He invites them through the preached Word to repentance, yet at the same time does not will them to repent, as He denies them sufficient grace.
 2. That the commands given to the obstinate are futile, no different than if God commanded stones to speak and dust to reason, which they often accuse us of, but in vain.
3. Because saving grace is a precious gem, granted only to a few elect. (Matthew 13:11; 16:17; Psalm 25:9-10), and not to all who hear the Gospel.
4. Because the promise of a new heart is not made to all, but only to the children of the promise.

Question: Is there no grace at all, not even common grace, that accompanies the Word of the Gospel? **Answer:** In its primary act,

convicting grace accompanies the Word of the Gospel towards the impenitent.

1. Because just as the law is a letter that kills, so also the Gospel is the ministry of the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:6).
2. The Gospel is the Word of salvation (Titus 2:11), the word of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:19).
3. Because if no grace accompanied the Gospel, the hearers of the Gospel would not be more inexcusable than the hearers of the Law. But they are more inexcusable (John 15:22; John 3:17; Matthew 11:21-22; 10:15; Hebrews 2:3; 6:4-5; 10:29).

However, in its secondary act, due to the abuse of the Gospel, the Gospel becomes to the obstinate, just like the Law, a dead letter, a sealed book (Isaiah 29:11), Christ a stone of stumbling, and the Gospel an odor of death unto death (2 Corinthians 2:16).

Question: Does the essence of conversion consist solely in the free act of assenting to the Word and believing, or rather in the infusion of a new heart? The Arminians locate its essence solely in the free act of believing. We, however, assert that conversion essentially and in its first act is not found in the free act of believing, although the active conversion and the second act of conversion to God, which is commanded to us as a duty, essentially involve such an act; rather, it is found in the infusion of new life.

1. Because conversion, in its first act, is the work of God alone, who gives a new heart, regenerates, vivifies, and infuses the sanctifying Spirit. Here we are clearly altogether passive, like clay in the hands of the potter.
2. Because new creation is essentially the infusion of new divine life. But a free act is not such an infusion.

3. Because, according to the Arminians, a new heart can be infused into a person, that is, the mind can be enlightened, and the affections endowed with new power, while the will remains unconverted and unrenewed, lacking the one free act of assenting to God who calls. Thus, a person would have a new heart and a new spirit infused, yet not be a new creature; which is absurd.
4. Because the regenerate would differ from the unregenerate, and the reborn from the spiritually dead, solely by the free act of the will. A person truly regenerate would not differ from a sleeping person after one act and the free assent to God calling, for in sleep that free act ceases.
5. Because this opinion makes regeneration a habit acquired by many acts of free will, like the habits of Logic, Grammar, and the Arts and Sciences. And thus, the grace of regeneration would be a mere name.
6. Because if this one act of assenting to God and believing is lost, we do not see how a person would not fall completely from the grace of regeneration.

Question: Is any supernatural habit infused by God in conversion, or is every gracious habit in the regenerate man acquired by repeated acts of faith? The Arminians deny the infusion of such a habit. We assert it.

1. Because Scripture asserts it thus: "I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you" (Ezekiel 36:26). "I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring" (Isaiah 44:3). "I will pour out on the house of David a spirit of grace and

supplication" (Zechariah 12:10). "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts" (Jeremiah 31:33). And it is evident that such a Spirit is not given by merit or by repeated acts of free will (Ezekiel 36:32). "Not for your sake am I about to act... Be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel."

2. Because this is what distinguishes the regenerate from the unregenerate: the former possesses this supernatural habit, whereas the latter does not. "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). "Be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness" (Ephesians 4:23-24). The act of faith, which can be put off like a garment, is not put on here. "No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him" (1 John 3:9). This new birth is the principle of new life (John 1:13).
3. Because the saints are the temple of God, and His Spirit dwells in them (1 Corinthians 3:16). In them is given by Christ "a spring of water welling up to eternal life" (John 4:14). But they are not the temple of God merely through the bare power of believing; for the bare power of believing does not habitually denominate a sinner as faithful, even according to the adversaries. Nor is a bare act, which passes and which a sleeping man may forgo, a spring of living water. Therefore, it is a habit. But it is not a habit acquired by our labor and study, because we are called freely, not by works (2 Timothy 1:9).

4. Although the active infusion of God's life is not the obedience that God demands from us, as the Arminians say in *Scriptura Synodica*, article 4, pages 154-155, yet the passive infusion is commanded to us, and we are obliged to have new life, both by the summary of the Law (Matthew 22:37) and by the express commands of God (Ezekiel 18:31; Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10).

Question: Do the Remonstrants rightly teach, as stated in *Scriptura Synodica*, article 4, pages 154–155, that a habit is not required for action simply, but only for better action, and therefore that an infused habit is not required, but that sufficient and accompanying grace alone is enough, without such a habit? We deny this.

1. Because to assert that some gracious habit or supernatural power is required only to believe more easily, and not simply to believe, is the grace of the Pelagians; for they said that grace is not simply necessary, but only to believe more easily, just as we row with oars and more easily sail with the wind. Hence, in the same way, pure nature, without grace, would suffice for supernatural acts.
2. If their habit, acquired by repeated acts, is the formal principle of supernatural acts, why should not an infused habit with greater right be such a principle? And if the acquired habit is such a principle, then all praise, both for conversion and salvation, would be due to human industry, not to grace given from heaven. But if such an acquired habit is not the formal principle, then this habit contributes not essence but ease to the substance of the act.
3. If the habit of the life of God is not infused into us, from where do the secondary acts of faith proceed? In that case, faith is not

the gift of God. First, because the habit of faith is not infused, nor is the power of believing infused, which would denominate a person as faithful; because, according to them, the power of believing can coexist with final unbelief. They deny that the act of believing itself is infused, for then free will would be overturned.

Question: If only the power of believing were from God and the free act from man, would the chief work of conversion still be from God, because the imparting of the power to eat and drink is a nobler act than eating and drinking? The Remonstrants say yes. *Coll. Hag.*, page 335. We deny this.

1. Because the imparting of the power to believe, according to the Adversaries, is not the imparting of the new life of God, just as the imparting of the power to eat and drink is the imparting of natural life. For, according to them, the act of believing is conversion, and the converted differs from the unconverted by the bare act.
2. Because the imparting of the power to believe is not conversion, nor any formal act of conversion. For such a power is conferred upon many who never believe. But believing, according to them, is conversion. Therefore, the chief work of conversion is attributed to free will and taken from God.

Question: Because God converts us with irresistible force, is the will therefore coerced, as the Remonstrants say in articles 3 and 4, page 20: (1) that there is an external agent armed with irresistible power, (2) that the will resists and struggles against it, and (3) that lesser resistance is overcome by greater power? We deny this.

1. Because the will, from being unwilling and reluctant, becomes willing by the removal of the heart of stone and the infusion of a new heart (Ezekiel 36:26).
2. Because a will that is willing but acts unwillingly and against its own inclination is a coerced will. But there is no such will here.

Question: Does God overturn freedom because He irresistibly determines the will to one outcome? The Remonstrants affirm this. We deny it.

1. Because God, who is infinitely wise and omnipotent, does not overturn the nature of secondary causes, except in the case of a miraculous transmutation of substances, as when He turned water into wine or the rod of Moses into a serpent. But conversion is not a miraculous transformation of substances of this kind; rather, it is a transformation of qualities within the same substance, which remains in its own nature.
2. Because God moves the free will in such a way that it freely moves itself to the same end to which it is moved by God.
3. Because if certain created motives, which are infallibly directing, can turn the will infallibly while leaving freedom intact, then, even more so, the Creator of wills can accomplish this.

Question: Are only the elect internally called? The Remonstrants teach, in Articles 3 and 4, page 32, that all in the visible Church, both elect and reprobate, are internally called. We teach that only the elect are internally called.

1. Because in Romans 8:30, it says, "Whom He foreknew, He also predestined; whom He predestined, He also called; whom He

called, He also justified; whom He justified, He also glorified." Therefore, only the elect, who are justified and glorified, are internally called, for even the reprobate, who are not justified and glorified, are externally called.

2. Because those who are called are set in contrast to those to whom Christ and the Gospel are a "stumbling block" and "foolishness," as stated in 1 Corinthians 1:24, and who, therefore, are perishing.
3. Because God gives the means effectively only to those whom He intends to glorify, and one of these means is the internal calling.
4. Because only those who are "ordained to eternal life" are called, believe, and obey the divine calling, as in Acts 13:48.
5. Because the internal calling flows from this one source: that God has elected those so called to eternal glory. Ephesians 1:4-6.

Question: Does internal calling add nothing beyond external calling except God's will and desire that all should convert and be saved, as the Remonstrants say in Articles 2 and 3, page 10? We deny this.

1. Because internal calling adds internal grace, which is infallibly effective from the eternal election of God. Romans 8:28 refers to those "called according to His purpose."
2. Because the infallible effect of internal calling is the creation of a new heart and new spirit, by which we walk in God's commandments (Ezekiel 36:26-27). But external calling has no such effect.
3. Because, otherwise, the hardened and obstinate reprobate would be called in exactly the same manner as the elect who are

certainly to be converted. For, according to Scripture, both are exposed to external calling, and both are desired by God to be saved, if the Adversaries are to be believed.

4. Because external calling is mere persuasion, and the will to save the called adds nothing real to them, according to the Adversaries; thus, it follows that the internal grace of conversion in their view is mere Pelagianism.

Question: Does the efficacy of grace depend on grace itself or on free will? To understand this question, note that it is not asked whether: (1) Grace has its intrinsic power of operation from free will, for grace is the formal principle of supernatural acts, as both sides concede; (2) The efficiency of actual grace in its specific operation comes from free will, for it does not; it comes from the nature of grace, that it acts in a supernatural and spiritual manner, suitable to its nature and essence, as an agent determined to one end; (3) Whether to will or not to will, to assent or dissent, and such vital acts flow from grace as from a formal principle, for grace itself does not formally will or not will, but only the will equipped with the habit of grace does so.

Question: Is conversion, therefore, determined by actual grace according to the eternal purpose of God's election, by grace habitual and instructive to the free will? Or is conversion determined rather by free will itself, indifferent but determining itself to one of two opposing options—conversion and assent to God's calling, rather than dissent?

The Arminians suspend the efficiency and secondary act of grace upon the event, that is, upon the actual influence of the free will, indifferent in itself to act or not to act. However, we hold that the actual efficiency of internal grace depends:

1. On the intention of God, who chooses freely.
2. On habitual grace as the formal principle.
3. On actual grace.
4. **Because Scripture teaches this:** "The LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart" (Deuteronomy 30:6). "I will give you a new heart, and put a new spirit within you" (Ezekiel 36:26-27). "You have seen those great trials, the signs, and those great wonders. Yet to this day, the LORD has not given you a heart to know, nor eyes to see, nor ears to hear" (Deuteronomy 29:3-4). "I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants; they shall spring up like grass among the waters, like willows by flowing streams" (Isaiah 44:3-4). Here, the flourishing and the secondary act of grace are attributed to the outpoured Spirit. "I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and supplication; they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced; and they shall mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child, and shall grieve bitterly for Him as one grieves for a firstborn" (Zechariah 12:10). "I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the LORD; they shall return to Me with their whole heart" (Jeremiah 24:7). "I thank You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that You have hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them to babes. Yes, Father, for so it seemed good in Your sight" (Matthew 11:25-26). "All that the Father gives Me shall come to Me" (John 6:37). "Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me" (John 6:45). "For to you it has been granted on

behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake" (Philippians 1:29). "For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13).

5. **Because all solid consolation, patience of the saints, all faith, all gratitude is overturned** if the cause effectively determining one to believe is changeable human liberty, and not the special grace of God.
6. **It contradicts true humility;** for if actual conversion is from free will and not from grace, then the converted person ought to attribute the glory of conversion to himself, not to God and His grace.
7. **If the efficacy of grace regarding the outcome depended on free will,** then conversion and salvation would be of the one willing and running, not of God who shows mercy; nor would God have mercy on whom He wills.
8. **We would pray in vain for the conversion of people or give thanks to God for conversion,** contrary to Scripture. Ephesians 1:17-18, 2 Thessalonians 1:3, Colossians 1:12-14.
9. **The entire ministry of the Gospel would be overturned,** which aims that man, stripped of all personal boasting, should glory only in God, and in Christ his Savior, and in His grace. 1 Corinthians 1:26-31, Matthew 11:25. All the arguments previously given for the irresistible and unchangeable operation of special grace also strongly support this assertion.

Question: Is it not the case that non-conversion should be attributed to God, rather than to the human being who refuses to believe and resists God's calling, if a person is not converted because

God has denied efficacious grace? The Remonstrants argue that the blame for non-conversion falls upon God, not upon man, if the efficacy of grace does not depend on free will. We deny this.

- 1. Because God, who withholds efficacious grace, which He is not obligated to give to anyone, will be the physical cause of non-conversion in a negative sense, but will not be the moral cause or be culpable for non-conversion in a privative and moral sense: for God is free to do with His own as He pleases.**
- 2. Because God thus withholds efficacious grace, which He is not bound to give, so that the one who remains unconverted acts contrary to God's command and even delights in being without that efficacious grace, and out of the innate freedom of his depraved will, maliciously resists God's call.**
- 3. Because God here is an agent above every law, whereas man is subject to the law and acts against legal obligation; God, however, is an agent not out of the debt of justice or natural equity, but purely from His own free good pleasure.**
- 4. Because if non-conversion is attributed to God in this sense, then conversion would be due to the good use and influence of free will, which would mean grace is given according to merit—a Pelagian view.**

Question: Can it happen that, with equal habitual grace given to two people, one is converted because he wills to be, while the other is not converted because he does not will to be? The Arminians affirm this. We deny it.

- 1. Because the converted person, through free will, would separate himself from the non-converted, and he would have something in which to glory, and could say, "I have the act of conversion from myself, which I did not receive from God, which the other, equally equipped with grace, chose not to have."**
- 2. Because free will, not grace, would then be the cause of conversion.**
- 3. Because there would be no reason for the converted person to give thanks to God for his conversion.**

Question: Is it due to free will, or rather to the nature of grace, whether milder or more intense, that supernatural acts of believing or repenting are more or less intense? The Remonstrants claim it is due to free will. We deny this.

- 1. Because Paul says, "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me" (1 Corinthians 15:10).**
- 2. Because the one who believes and repents more intensely would have something that he did not receive from God, and could boast in it as if he had not received it.**
- 3. Because it would be in vain to pray for increased faith, and it would be improper for the apostles to say, "Lord, increase our faith," if stronger and more intense faith depended on free will and not on God's grace.**

- 4. There would be no reason to give thanks to God for more intense faith.**
- 5. We would not humbly acquiesce in the wise dispensation of God, who distributes grace in the measure that seems good to Him.**
- 6. If more intense faith comes from free will and not from God's grace, then faith itself, both simply and in its positive degree, would also be from free will and would not be a gift of God.**

Question: Does God, therefore, exert His actual grace upon a supernatural work because the created will first exerts itself, or rather, does the will exert itself because God, by His actual grace, exerts influence prior by nature? The Remonstrants say that God exerts His influence upon a work because our will first exerts its own influence by nature, not the other way around. We deny this.

- 1. Because the gracious influence of God is the cause of all supernatural acts; therefore, it is the cause why we obey God's calling.**
- 2. Because the bride rightly says in the Song of Solomon 1:4, "Draw me, and we will run after thee."**
- 3. Because our will would otherwise precede the grace of God, and grace would not precede the will.**
- 4. Because all the glory of conversion would be owed to free will, which goes ahead, not to grace, which would merely follow as a servant.**

5. **Because the eternal decrees of God's election, calling, adoption, internal vocation, conversion, perseverance, and ultimately glorification would depend on him who wills and runs, and not on God's all-encompassing free grace.**

6. **Because this was the blasphemous opinion of Cassian, in his third book, chapter 13: "Grace never seeks or expects any efforts of good will from man, lest it seems to bestow its gifts on one who is utterly sleeping or slothfully dissolved in idle ease." Thus Prosper argues against the Collator in book 13, chapter 11: "The great question is whether, because we have shown the beginning of good will, God has mercy on us, or because God has mercy, we attain the beginning of good will?" This was Cassian's error, and against it, Prosper and Hilary disputed with the Massilians, as Augustine did in his letter 107 to Vitalis.**

Question: On what does the certainty and immutability of conversion depend—on free will or on God's grace? The Arminians say it depends on free will. We, however, say it depends on God's grace.

1. **Because conversion and the number of the elect to be saved would be uncertain and contingent if the certainty of conversion depended not on the decree of election and God's grace, but on a cause wholly changeable, fickle, fallible, contingent, and indifferent to acting or not acting.**

2. **If this were the case, it would rest with free will that no mortal would be converted or saved.**

3. **The existence of the Church and the fact that Christ is King, Spouse, Head, with subjects, a Bride, and members, would depend on free will, not on God's grace.**
4. **Because God could not convert and save more than those who are actually converted and saved.**

Question: Do the Remonstrants rightly deny that the Lord opened the heart of Lydia irresistibly, because He acted with her will through precepts, promises, reasons, and arguments? In other words, does the irresistibility of grace conflict with precepts, promises, and means? We deny this.

1. **Because God commands faith in the Gospel, yet He works it in us through the exceeding greatness of His power and the efficacy of the strength which He exercised in Christ when He raised Him from the dead (Eph. 1:20).**
2. **Because the irresistibility of grace and the invincible dominion of God over the will perfectly coexist with the freedom of the will.**

Question: Do the Remonstrants rightly say, in *Apologia* chapter 17, page 184, that the Lord opened the heart of Lydia because the entire substance of Paul's preaching consisted of precepts, promises, reasons, and arguments from God? We deny this.

1. **Because in this way, God would also be said to justify men simply because the entire substance of the Law—precepts, promises, reasons, and arguments—comes from God.**

2. **Because, in this manner, the internal grace by which God opened Lydia's heart would be nothing other than Pelagian grace, that is, the words of God consisting of precepts, promises, reasons, and arguments of the Law.**
3. **Because, if this were so, then God would have opened the heart of Lydia no differently than He did that of Simon Magus or Judas the betrayer, since the entire substance of preaching, consisting of precepts, promises, reasons, and arguments, was also provided to Judas and Simon Magus by God.**
4. **In the same way, Plato opens the hearts of Aristotle's disciples to understand physics and metaphysics, because all their arguments, aided by common grace, were conceived by them.**

Question: Does the efficacy of grace depend on a congruous calling? That is, do men convert to God because He applies persuasion that is tempered to a particular person, in a particular state, place, and time, which He foresees will move the will to obey Him, even though this persuasion, in itself, could be resisted? This is asserted by Bellarmine, Fonseca, Suarez, Valentia, and Arminius (*Antiperistasis*, p. 665) and the Remonstrants in *Collatio Hagana*, p. 311, though, after more mature judgment and consideration, they abandoned this view in *Remonstrant Confession*, chapter 13, thesis 10. We deny this.

1. **Because all persuasion, of whatever kind, is Pelagian grace, and it cannot heal the corrupted will any more than golden words can restore sight to the blind or life to the dead.**

- 2. There can be no congruous adaptation to any natural disposition of man, who, through inherent folly, perceives the Gospel as foolishness.**
- 3. Because this opinion relies on the concept of *Scientia Media* (Middle Knowledge), which is foolish and profane.**
- 4. Because it makes the efficacy of grace depend on free will, which can reject all persuasions.**
- 5. Because it overturns the dominion of Divine providence over human wills, and supposes that no more nor fewer can be converted by God than He foresees, before any act of His will.**
- 6. Because it attributes the cause of non-conversion to God's failure to call congruously, which our theologians condemn.**
- 7. The reason why men are not converted, according to Scripture, is not because they are not called congruously, but because they are not of Christ's sheep, are not drawn by the Father, because God has not given them a heart to understand, nor have they heard and learned from the Father, etc.**

Chapter 12:

The Justification of a Sinner

Romans 3:28

We conclude, therefore, that a person is justified by faith apart from the works of the Law.

A question arises: Are we justified by our own works?

To set the parameters of this inquiry, it must first be established that:

1. A person is not properly justified by themselves but by God.
2. The gratuitous love of God in Christ somehow contributes to justification.
3. Faith is required, though there remains controversy over the mode of faith's presence.
4. Good works cannot be absent from one who is truly justified.
5. Full remission is required, as nothing impure can enter the kingdom of heaven.
6. A person cannot contribute of their own accord sufficient satisfaction for their sins, which is necessary for justification.
7. A person is truly and really made just from being unjust and impious, not merely by imagination or bare opinion; although it may be questioned whether this righteousness is inherent in Christ and imputed to us or inherent and infused in us.
8. Satisfaction rendered to the Law is included in the justification of the sinner.

First, the Question Is Asked: Are we justified by faith, that is, by a trusting reliance on Christ?

Here, the question is not about the faith by which we assent to all the Word of God as true, but about the faith by which we confidently lean upon Christ or upon God through Christ as the object, and upon the Word of promise as the good to which we cling.

Secondly, Is a Person Justified by Faith Alone? That is, by faith alone, not in the sense of a solitary existence, as if faith existed without hope, charity, and sincere zeal to please God in all things by His grace and to obey Him, and thus justified. For such faith is dead and vain and does not have any activity in relation to Christ, apprehended by faith; but is a person justified by faith alone in the solitude of its role, the solitude of the act of apprehending Christ and His righteousness, and the solitude of its causal efficacy? In such a way that every condition of merit, preparation, or cooperation is excluded from being a condition, whether of hope, charity, or any preparatory operations disposing us to justification, and all good works, whether done by mere natural strength or with the assistance of divine grace?

Thirdly, Is a Person Justified by Faith Alone? Not by any inherent power, merit, excellence, or dignity of faith itself; but correlatively, because faith apprehends Jehovah, our righteousness (Jeremiah 23:6), that is, Christ, who is our righteousness by imputation.

On Whether We Are Justified by Works

Are we, then, justified by works?

1. Not in the sense that works are performed by natural strength without the aid of grace. Thus, the Papists consider the works of the Law, by which Paul denies that we are justified.

2. Are we justified by works, not as they are regarded in themselves, not as they merit justification? (This is how Vorstius speaks in his *Apologia* on Article 24, pages 34-35.) But by works, insofar as they are considered part of faith, or as if they coalesce with faith itself into one final act? Just as the Remonstrants argue in their Confession, Chapter 10: inasmuch as faith necessarily includes good works and a reformation of the entire life according to the commandments of Jesus Christ; indeed, to such an extent that obedience is included as an essential characteristic of faith, and such obedience neither can nor should be opposed to faith? This is what Socinus states in his work *De Servatore*, Book 4, Chapter 11: Thus, faith and works, that is, obedience to the commands of Christ, are what justify us before God as the form of faith.
3. Are we justified by faith as a good work and a partial righteousness, graciously reckoned by God as full righteousness? The Papists, Remonstrants, and Socinians desire that we be justified in this way—by works considered in that manner, and by faith as a good work. We deny this.
4. We are justified by faith apart from works (Romans 3:28). Not by works of righteousness which we have done (Titus 3:5, Galatians 2:16, διὰ τῆς πίστεως). We are justified by faith (Romans 5:1, ἐκ τῆς πίστεως). Only through faith (Galatians 5:6, Romans 3:24). Salvation is by grace (σωτηρίαν, gratis). In Luke 8:50: "Do not fear, only believe, and she shall be saved."
5. In the manner that Abraham, the father of all believers, was justified, so are we justified. But Abraham believed, and it was counted to him as righteousness (Romans 4:3), not out of debt—that is, not even by works that follow faith—for in such a case,

Abraham would have had cause to boast. Therefore, the argument holds. The reason is not only because it was written for Abraham but also for us (verses 23-24).

6. Because Christ was made sin for us, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21). He was made a curse for us (Galatians 3:13-14), so that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles in Christ Jesus. He was made to us by the Father wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Corinthians 1:30).
7. Because the promise of salvation is not to those who fulfill the Law but to those who believe. Therefore, the inheritance is by faith, so that it might be by grace, to establish the promise to all the seed (Romans 4:16).
8. Because, as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by Christ's obedience many are made righteous (Romans 5:19).
9. There is no peace of conscience, no approval, no confidence, no hope of glory, except from the act of believing in Christ, who fulfilled the Law for us.
10. For the glory of the merits and death of Christ, and the mercy and grace extended to miserable sinners, is detracted from if we are justified not by faith alone in Christ but also by our own works.

But it may be asked: Are we not justified by works, provided they are performed by the help of the grace of regeneration, as the Papists teach? Or by obedience of works, insofar as they are the fruits, results, and natural properties of faith, as the Remonstrants argue?

(Confession, Chapter 10, Theses 2:3, and Chapter 18, Thesis 3, and Apology, Chapter 10). We deny this.

1. For this is Paul's very valid conclusion: "Both Jews and Greeks are all under sin" (Romans 3:9), and "every mouth is stopped, and the whole world is made subject to condemnation because of sin" (v. 19). Therefore, no one is justified by works. Hence, it follows that the righteousness and obedience of works by which we are justified before God must be free from sin and must deliver a person from condemnation and all guilt of sin. However, no one among mortals lives who, even through the grace of regeneration, can produce an obedience of works that is free from all sin. For "cursed is everyone who does not continue in all the things that are written in the book of the Law, to do them" (Deuteronomy 27:26, Galatians 3:10, Proverbs 20:9, 1 John 1:8).
2. Because if justification were by works done by the help of grace, which does not determine the free will to good works but leaves it in its absolute indifference, then a person would have something in which to glory before God. For one must glory not in grace but in free will; for he who is not separated by grace—the believer from the unbeliever, the worker from the non-worker—is instructed thus: Because free will, according to the teaching of the Jesuits and the Arminians, makes the separation, and therefore it provides a just and proper ground for glorying before God in human nature, not in the grace of God.
3. Because these words of Romans 4:4, 5 would have this sense according to the Jesuits and Arminians: "To the one who works" (that is, who fulfills the righteousness of the Law without any sin or violation of the Law), "the reward" (of justification,

remission, and eternal life) "is not reckoned by grace but as a debt" (that is, according to the perfect rule of the Moral Law, by which eternal life and remission of sins are owed by merit and justice). "But to the one who does not work" (that is, does not fulfill the law of legal righteousness exactly by his own strength), "but believes in him who justifies the ungodly" (that is, relies trustingly on Christ to obtain absolution and the remission of sins), "his faith is counted as righteousness" (that is, he is justified by a gracious acceptance, not by his own merit). From this, it follows:

1. If anyone produces good works by the strength of grace, they are owed not out of the grace of God but out of debt, the reward of remission and justification. Hence, the adversaries' justification is not by the grace of God but by a legal debt.
2. It follows that God grants grace by which the Law may be perfectly fulfilled: and in this way, justification would indeed be by grace, but also by secondary debt and in a certain respect. But no such grace exists for anyone, which makes them entirely without sin.
3. It follows that Adam, before the fall, could not have been justified by the works of the Law and legal debt, because the grace for fulfilling the Law was a supernatural grace, as the Papists, Arminians, and Socinians teach. Hence, all the regenerated are justified in the same way by grace, even under the Covenant of Grace, just as Adam was justified by grace under the Covenant of Works. And this certainly cannot be suppressed or avoided; for they teach that God would have been unjust and cruel if He had imposed a law

on Adam that was impossible by the powers of pure nature. Therefore, to be a just Lawgiver, He was obliged to provide a supernatural righteousness by which the Law and justification would be possible for Adam and would not exceed his powers. They sing the same refrain about fallen humanity, namely, that God does not command anything impossible for humans; therefore, for the same Law to be possible under the Covenant of Grace, God is obliged to provide a sufficient grace, by which a person, by working through supernatural grace, can attain justification by works no less than Adam once did.

4. Because if we are justified by works of the Law, even those done by the power of grace, the distinction between the Covenant of Works, or the Law, and the Covenant of Grace, or the Gospel, becomes meaningless. For Galatians 3:17 says, "Now this I say, that the covenant previously ratified by God, referring to Christ, the Law which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not annul so as to abolish the promise" (v. 18). "For if the inheritance is of the Law, it is no longer by promise. But God gave it to Abraham by promise." Hence, no one is justified by doing good works unless they perfectly fulfill the Law—"Do this, and you shall live"—and continue in all that is written in the Book of the Law to do them (v. 10). And thus Christ would have died in vain, having become a curse and malediction. And this distinction, full of sweetest consolation, is abolished by the Papists and Arminians, who teach that the Gospel is nothing other than a new Law, or a Law made perfect; indeed, they even say it is the very same Law, but made easy and possible for us by the Spirit of grace, so that we might be justified by it. Bellarmine on Justification, Book 4, Chapters 3-4. But it is indeed true that the same moral doctrine exists in the Law and in the Gospel, taken in a broad sense; but in the manner of justification, the

two Covenants, Law and Gospel, clash with contrary fronts. For the Gospel justifies by believing, not by working through grace; for if grace were to establish and strengthen legal justification and make it possible and easy, but rather by believing the promise, through which alone the inheritance of life is obtained, and not by works of the Law done with the help of grace. For if it were so, the promises of the Gospel would not be valid except on the hypothesis that we perfectly fulfill the Law through the grace of God, which is not the Gospel and Covenant of Grace, whose sole condition is faith in Jesus Christ.

5. Because the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us precisely because Christ, on our behalf—that is, in our place and stead—as our Surety and Guarantor, died, became a curse for us, and sustained in Himself the curse and penalty of the violated Law which was due to us. Therefore, necessarily, a righteousness flows from Christ to us, a Surety's righteousness, the kind which a Guarantor provides for debtors. This is imputed righteousness.

On Whether Arminius Taught Correctly in His Letter to Hippolytus

The question arises: Did Arminius teach correctly in his letter to Hippolytus when he asserted that it is impossible for God to impute the righteousness of Christ to us as unrighteousness, since the obedience of Christ is the very righteousness according to the strictest rigor of the Law; while the righteousness of the sinner is gratuitous? Furthermore, is Episcopius correct in disputation 22, thesis 4, when he says:

"It is not, therefore, the proper righteousness of Christ, neither active nor passive, nor that which Christ has merited by both, and which we

obtain through Jesus alone; for it is not properly the righteousness of Christ that is imputed, but that by which, for His sake, righteousness is imputed to us who believe in Him." This means that the righteousness of Christ is not imputed to us, but that because of Christ's righteousness, which He has obtained by dying and satisfying for us, it is granted that our good works, and therefore the act of believing, are imputed to us as righteousness by the gracious estimation of God?

So the Arminians assert. Thus, Arminius himself responds to Article 31: "If a creditor, to whom a hundred florins are owed, accepts ten as payment in full, and thus considers the debtor as discharged, so it is reckoned to the debtor." And the Papists, along with the Socinians, affirm the same. Socinus, in his *Dialogue on Justification*, pages 16-19, and Smalcius, in his disputation against Franz, holds this position.

But we believe that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, and by it, we are justified before God.

1. As Isaiah 53:5 states, "He was wounded for our transgressions, crushed for our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His stripes, we are healed." Verse 11 adds, "He shall bear their iniquities." Verse 12 continues, "He bore the sins of many." Galatians 3:13 says, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us." Philippians 3:9 states, "That I may be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the Law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith." Romans 3:11 adds, "But now, apart from the Law, the righteousness of God has been manifested." Verse 22 further explains, "The righteousness of God through

faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe." Verse 23 notes, "For all have sinned." Verse 24 concludes, "And are justified by His grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." This righteousness in verses 21-22 directly opposes inherent righteousness, which in verse 23 is defiled by sin. But this is solely the imputed righteousness of Christ.

2. Our justification is based on this imputation. Romans 4:6, "Just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God credits righteousness apart from works," saying in verse 7, "Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered."
3. Because Christ, by dying, satisfied God in the place and stead of sinners, just as if they themselves had undergone death in their own person; for Christ, by His death and obedience to the Father, acquired righteousness, not merely personal, but surety-righteousness. For a just person is one who has fully paid the penalties due to sin and fulfilled the Law of God by obedience. Yet, He did this not for Himself but for others; He obeyed the Father both for Himself and for us. And surety and sponsor righteousness belongs properly to those for whom the bail and surety is undertaken.
4. Scripture expressly states that Christ became our righteousness by dying for us and obeying the Father; that He became a sacrifice, a curse, and a victim for our sins. This is declared in 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 3:25, Romans 5:6,7,10, John 15:13, 1 Peter 3:18, Isaiah 53:12. But it is nowhere written that Christ died and obeyed the Father so that our good works, performed by the power of grace, should be considered satisfactory to the justice of the Law, and be regarded as our righteousness before

the tribunal of the dread Judge, in such a way that Christ's acts of justifying, redeeming, and saving should consist in this—that Christ, by His merits, made us our own justifiers, redeemers, and saviors. For if that were the case, the power of Christ's merits would be such that they would communicate the meritorious power of justification, the remission of sins, and eternal life to our own works. But this fruit of Christ's death appears nowhere in the entirety of Scripture.

5. For the sole argument of Arminius in the contrary does not conclude correctly. For the righteousness of Christ is surety righteousness, fully conformable to the Law of God, and also gratuitous. It is conformable to the Law of God because Christ perfectly satisfied the Law's demands in every respect. And because it is imputed to us, and formally so, that it might be ours through the active imputation or reckoning of God and our faith, graciously apprehending it, it is entirely gratuitous. Nor are these things contradictory. For if a sponsor pays a thousand florins on behalf of a friend, and the debtor owes nothing more, then according to legal justice, this is a strictly and rigorously perfect payment. But in so far as this payment is imputed to the debtor, who could not pay, it is a gratuitous payment.

Romans 4:3

"For what does the Scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.'"

We recognize here a metonymic and figurative expression. For that which we apprehend is imputed to us as righteousness, just as one might say, "My hand has provided for me," meaning the wealth acquired by the industry and labor of my hands has provided for me. Hence, the question arises: Is the act of believing imputed to the

believer, not figuratively, correlatively, or metonymically, but properly, so that it becomes our formal righteousness before the Tribunal of God? Arminius, in his disputation on justification, affirms this, as does Bellarmine in *De Justificatione*, Book 1, Chapter 17. We deny it.

1. Because we are not justified by any work in us. "By grace you have been saved" (Ephesians 2:5). "Not by works of righteousness which we have done" (Titus 3:5). "If it is by works, grace is no longer grace" (Romans 11:6).
2. Because the judgment of God is according to truth (Romans 2:2). God cannot regard the act of believing as the perfect fulfillment of the Law, for to believe is not to keep the Law exactly and in every point.
3. We are justified by the grace of God and by the redemption that is in Christ Jesus (Romans 3:24), and by the righteousness of Christ imputed to us. Therefore, we are not simultaneously justified by some acts within us.
4. It is ἀγραφοῦς (unwritten) that Christ has merited that our faith should be meritorious for the remission of sins and eternal life; for faith, actions, and all our sufferings are not worthy of the glory that is to be revealed (Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 5:17-18).
5. The righteousness with which we must appear covered before the Tribunal of God is one that is without sin and cannot coexist with sin (Romans 3:9, 22-23; Galatians 3:10-13). Yet the faith of the elect coexists with sin (1 John 1:8; Psalm 130:3; Psalm 143:2; Proverbs 20:9).

1 John 1:8

"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

The question is asked: Can we, by the grace of God granted to the elect and the faithful in this life, perfectly keep the Law? The Remonstrants, together with the Papists and Socinians, affirm this. We deny it.

1. Because, apart from the fact that the Apostle John, in the cited passage, asserts the contrary, it is written in Proverbs 20:9: "Who can say, 'I have made my heart clean; I am pure from my sin'?" And in James 3:2: "For we all stumble in many ways." Also, in 1 Kings 8:46: "There is no one who does not sin." Ecclesiastes 7:20 adds: "Surely there is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins."
2. Because "cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things that are written in the book of the Law, to do them." Therefore, those who seek justification by the works of the Law are under a curse, because there is no other reason for this conclusion than that no one, whether regenerate or unregenerate, can continue in all things written in the Book of the Law.
3. Because in all people there is a culpable deficiency and an inability to fulfill the Law; and a morally impure and corrupt cause cannot produce morally pure and perfect effects. And Paul, the chosen vessel, truly says of himself in Romans 7:14: "The Law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin." Verse 18 adds: "For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh." Verse 19 continues: "But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that is in my members."

4. Fallen men, who are not yet fully reformed to the image of God and are bound to love God with all their heart, with all their soul, and with all their strength, cannot perfectly fulfill the Law, even by the grace of God given in this life. But all the regenerate are such and are thus bound to love God; for this is the sum and end of the Law, which all mortals without distinction are obligated to fulfill. The major reason is that no one after the fall, in this life, can love God with the utmost intensity, for there is no love for God here that cannot be increased and perfected.

The claims of the adversaries are vain and false when they assert that men are obligated to love God above all things objectively, willing the highest good for God, and to esteem Him above all other things; yet they deny that we are bound to fulfill the end of the Law except in will and effort, that is, they claim the Law does not bind us to love God intensively above all things, for this is impossible in this life. But the Law does not bind us to the impossible.

Response:

1. This distinction is vain and fallacious. For Christ rebukes a lesser love for Himself, a lesser appreciation for any person or thing than for the Savior Himself. Matthew 10:37, Luke 14:26-27: "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." Thus, whoever loves God less than created things, and so esteems God less than parents or children, loves God too weakly and tepidly, and loves the creature more intensely than the Creator. Whoever loves God above all things appreciatively, judging Him to be preferred over any desirable object, loves God most intensely. For the degree of esteem for a beloved thing follows the degree, measure, and intensity of that love. However, there is no saint in this life who does not often violate this love

for God with disordered and excessive love for themselves or their own, or even for sin, demonstrating in practice that they value these things more than God—as did the devout Eli in 1 Samuel 2:29, and all saints whenever they sin. Thus, the parts of this distinction coincide.

2. It is false that the end of the Law does not bind; nor is the argument valid that the end is impossible because this impossibility was culpably contracted by us. It is not an absolute impossibility, but only in a certain respect and conditionally.
3. If we are bound to love God with all our strength, then a remission of strength to three when the Law demands an intensity of strength to eight will be a violation of the Law.
4. Because no one, not even the most just of mortals, dares to appear before the Tribunal of God relying on their inherent righteousness (Psalm 143:2; 130:3; Job 42:5; 9:3; 1 Corinthians 4:4).
5. All who keep the Law shall obtain eternal life under the title of legal obedience. But no mortal attains, or can attain, eternal life under this title. Therefore:
 - The major is evident from Romans 2:13 and Galatians 3:12: "The one who does these things shall live by them."
 - The minor is evident from the whole Gospel. Romans 8:3-4, Galatians 3:21: "If a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law." Likewise, verse 22: "Scripture has confined all under sin." Likewise, Galatians 2:21: "If righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died for nothing." Likewise, Galatians 3:10: "For all who rely on the works of the law are under a

curse."

6. Because if anyone offends in one point, he becomes guilty of all, as James 2:10 states. Yet there is no mortal who does not offend in one point. Therefore, etc.
7. Whoever seeks righteousness and life through the fulfillment of the Law becomes a debtor to the whole Law (Galatians 5:3-4). But the regenerate are not debtors to the whole Law; they are under grace, not under the Law (Romans 7:6).
8. Those who can fulfill the Law by the grace of God are given the Spirit in such a measure that the grace infused is no longer imperfect and capable of increase, but perfect and sufficient to love God with all the heart, all the soul, and all the strength. Yet no mortal has been given such grace:
 1. Because all are called to grow in grace (2 Peter 3:18, Philippians 3:12, 2 Thessalonians 1:3).
 2. Because the Spirit distributes to each one as He wills (1 Corinthians 12:11).
9. Scripture says that the Law is a yoke which neither we nor the Jews could bear, and that it is impossible to observe due to the weakness of the flesh, to make way for the fulfillment of the Law by Christ (Romans 8:3, Romans 7:14-15, 16-17, compared with 7:24 and 8:1).
10. The adversaries admit that men cannot escape all sins, such that they must say daily, not only humbly but truly, "Forgive us our sins," and that there is no one (they say) who can even avoid venial sins. But every sin, however venial (as they call it), is a

violation of the Law. Therefore, those who cannot, by grace, avoid such sins cannot, by grace, fulfill the Law.

Romans 6:23

"The wages of sin is death."

Since Paul asserts that every sin, taken indefinitely, merits eternal death—which in this place is set in opposition to eternal life—therefore the question arises:

Is there a distinction to be made between mortal and venial sin? The Remonstrants affirm this, as do the Papists, when they say in their *Apology* (Chapter 11, fol. 130) that loving God with the whole heart means simply not worshiping idols, being diligent and earnest in observing those commandments that directly concern God. They claim that here is not expressed a perfection of righteousness considered mathematically or arithmetically, such that it would require an absolute perfection in all respects and exclude any flaws or imperfections.

We say:

1. Every sin in the regenerate is venial by accident, even if it is most grievous; for the regenerate, truly grieving for it and repenting, obtain forgiveness of it in Christ through the mercy of God (1 John 1:7). Thus, even Paul's blasphemies and persecutions are considered venial (1 Timothy 1:13).
2. A venial sin is called a sin of infirmity, which is not committed out of malice, and it is venial by accident because it is found in the same subject along with more grievous crimes, for which one obtains forgiveness in Christ Jesus. Hence, we readily acknowledge degrees of sin, as Augustine does in *Enchiridion*,

Chapter 64, and in his Epistle 89: "There are certain sins that are called crimes, and certain sins without which no one lives in this world."

Among the Hebrews, there is a certain sin called "sin of pride," stemming from a root of arrogance, acting arrogantly (which is contrasted with error committed out of ignorance), and also "rebellion" and "impiety"—when someone sins with a high hand and a stiff neck (Numbers 15:22). Hence in Romans 6:13, ἀδικία (unrighteousness); in Ephesians 5:6, ἀπειθεία (disobedience); in 1 Timothy 1:9, ἀσέβεια (impiety); in Hebrews 12:3, ἀποστασία (apostasy).

A mortal sin, as Thomas rightly says (*Summa Theologica*, I-II q. 88, art. 1), is called so by analogy to a disease that is called mortal because it induces an irreparable defect. There are two principles of life corresponding to two kinds of death. One is legal, and thus every sin is inherently deadly, as Gerson states in *On Spiritual Life*, Lecture 1, Letter A. This is life through justification. The other is the principle of life through sanctification; thus, there is some sin so light that it is not destructive or expulsive of the seed of God and new life. In this sense, Augustine acknowledges venial sin, and we agree with him.

But the question is: Is there any sin, under the New Covenant, that is venial by its nature, and in relation to the Law of God (from which we must derive the formal nature of sin), that is venial due to its cause, mode, or the slightness of its matter, and deserving of pardon, and which, by the rigor of the Law, does not exclude the sinner from the kingdom of heaven, nor does it merit eternal damnation? The Arminians and the Papists affirm this. We deny it.

1. Galatians 3:10: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things that are written in the book of the Law." But whoever commits even the least sin does not continue in all that is written in the book of the Law; therefore, he is subject to the curse of the Law, that is, to eternal death. Ezekiel 18:4: "The soul who sins shall die." Romans 6:23: "The wages of sin is death." James 2:10: "Whoever keeps the whole law but fails in one point has become guilty of all." For James argues, not from the greatness of the crimes, as the Jesuits would have it, but from the authority of the Lawgiver (v. 11): "He who said, 'Do not commit adultery,' also said, 'Do not murder.'" Hence, the infinite authority of God prohibits both this sin and that sin, and forbids both the theft of a penny and the theft of a thousand florins. Matthew 5:19: "Whoever breaks one of the least of these commandments and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 12:36-37: "On the day of judgment, people will give account for every idle word they speak." With Purgatory abolished and no temporary place of punishment remaining on the day of judgment, it is necessary that people pay eternal penalties for idle words, which, because of the slightness of the matter, the Papists and Arminians classify as venial sins.
2. Every sin against the love of God is a violation of the Law and merits eternal punishment because it contradicts the greatest commandment of the Law, which is always violated inasmuch as we do not observe God's commandments (John 14:14; Deuteronomy 10:12). But venial sins are against the love of God.
3. Every sin against the infinite Majesty merits eternal punishment. But what they call venial sin is such a sin.

4. For the same sacrifice that represented the one sacrifice of Christ for sins of ignorance (which they call venial) and for more grievous crimes was offered under the Law (Leviticus 4-5, Hebrews 10:4-5).

The question arises: Is venial sin not against the Law, but only beside the Law? The adversaries affirm this. We deny it.

1. Because venial sin is prohibited by the Law of God. For what prohibits the general kind also prohibits the specific instance. For example, theft in general is against the eighth commandment; therefore, even the theft of a penny is prohibited.
2. Venial sin is against right reason, which is the Law written on the heart (Romans 2:15). Whatever contradicts whiteness as a color contradicts every color. But the dictate of right reason is the divine Law, which is predicated of the Law of nature, as a genus is predicated of a species. Venial sins are contrary to right reason (such as stealing from one's neighbor or wasting words idly), as Suarez, Azorius, and Durandus concede, though Bellarmine, in no way, denies it.
3. Because every sin is in opposition, privatively, to a morally right act, just as a jocular lie is contrary to the truth, which we ought to speak. And a word or deed beside the Law of God, not contrary to the Law of God, is the same as a kind of blindness in an animal that is beside, but not contrary to, sight; or a kind of death that is beside, but not contrary to, life—like partial blindness and partial death, which are middles by participation in both extremes. However, venial sins (as they call them) are not half-virtues and half-vices; nor is there in moral actions a middle ground by participation in both extremes, as the theft of

a penny and an idle word are not some intermediate thing between a morally good act conforming to God's Law and a morally evil act that is contrary to God's Law.

Galatians 5:17

"For the flesh desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are opposed to each other, so that you do not do the things you wish."

From this, it necessarily follows that the will and reason, in all the regenerate, are such principles of the most excellent actions that, being tainted with natural concupiscence, all our works, even the most perfect, must necessarily be stained with some blemish of sin. Hence, the question arises:

Are the most excellent works of the regenerate tainted with sin? The Jesuits and Arminians deny this, teaching that the blemishes and stains adhering to the works of the regenerate are not properly sins or such as would, according to the strictness of the divine Law, exclude men from heaven or make them liable to eternal condemnation. To establish the parameters of this question, we affirm:

1. That the merits of Christ are of such value and potency that they could elevate the good works of the regenerate to complete purity, fully conforming to the Law of God; yet we absolutely deny that Christ's merits actually accomplish this. For the merits of Christ indeed remove all legal guilt from our good works, but not every physical stain; because, although our justification and remission are complete and perfect in this life in regard to the removal of guilt, our sanctification is not perfect in regard to the removal of physical stain.

2. It is utterly false when the adversaries—Becanus, Gregory of Valencia, Bellarmine, and Pererius—say that we teach: (1) that good works are mortal sins; (2) that the good works of the regenerate are good only in some respects and not absolutely, but are in themselves mortal sins. For we teach that the good works of the regenerate are good: (1) with respect to the substance of the act; (2) with respect to the formal object; (3) with respect to all four causes—efficient, material, formal, and final (Psalm 119:1, 167; Galatians 5:22; Philippians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 10:31).
3. We teach that the culpable stain adhering to our good works is legally removed by Christ, so that our works are pleasing to God through and because of Christ the Mediator; yet the stain remains physically and really, contaminating our works in a culpable manner.
4. Thus, the good works of the regenerate are not formally and in the abstract mortal sins—far from it. The adversaries falsely accuse us of this out of malice. Yet, in concrete terms and materially, they are stained and tainted with the blemish of sin; or, while they are good as to the substance of the act and in their causes, and it would be a sin to omit them, they are nevertheless, in their manner, degree, and in certain circumstances (or rather in the degrees of those circumstances), vitiated by a culpable defect. Therefore, these works are vitiated, but they are not vices; they are sinful, but not sins; they are culpable, but not culpability. Therefore, the Lord earnestly exhorts us to such works, and we declare that those who do not perform them should be cut off, like trees that do not bear fruit, from the vineyard of the Lord; indeed, that these works are pleasing to God, commendable, praiseworthy, and profitable (Matthew

5:16; 1 Timothy 6:18; Matthew 26:10; 1 Peter 2:5; Philippians 4:18; Hebrews 13:6, 16).

Yet we teach that they are not so perfect as to be without culpable stains and blemishes, so that they require remission in Christ.

1. Ecclesiastes 7:20: "There is not a righteous man on earth who does good and never sins." Job 9:3: "If one wished to contend with him, he could not answer him once in a thousand times." Verse 28: "I know that you will not acquit me." Verse 30: "If I wash myself with snow water, and cleanse my hands with lye," verse 31: "yet You will plunge me into the pit, and my own clothes will abhor me." Psalm 143:2: "Enter not into judgment with your servant, for no one living is righteous before you." Psalm 130:3: "If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?" But certainly, if the works of the regenerate were free from all sin and truly perfect, why would not a man be righteous in the dreadful judgment of God?
2. There would be no need for the most holy to pray, "Forgive us our sins," if they could produce works so perfect as to be free from all stain of sin.
3. The same is evident from the confession of the saints. Isaiah 64:6: "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." And this is the confession of the Church and the godly from Isaiah 63:15 to 64:8: "But now, O Lord, you are our Father." It does not speak of ceremonial righteousness, as the adversaries claim. (1) For he says, "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." (2) He adds in verse 7, "There is no one who calls upon your name, who rouses himself to take hold of you."

4. Because the flesh always struggles against the Spirit, even in the most holy (Romans 7:18; Galatians 5:17). Concupiscence inhabits all (Hebrews 12:1; 1 John 1:8). Hence, as a man whose leg is dislocated cannot walk upright but limps, so it is impossible for the regenerate, in whom this principle of moral dislocation resides, to perform all their works out of the most intense love for God, with sincerity in the ultimate purpose of all their actions, and with the fervor required by the Law of God in every way they act.
5. Because men would be perfect in this life and fully conform to the Law in all respects if they could produce good works without any stain of sin, which the Apostle denies of himself (Philippians 3:18).

Romans 7:18, 23

"For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out." Verse 23: "But I see another law in my members, waging war against the law of my mind and making me captive to the law of sin that dwells in my members."

Hence, it is clear that Paul asserts about himself that even in his most excellent actions there is a corrupt principle striving against him, and retarding the fervor of his actions, namely, the indwelling concupiscence.

Thus, the question arises: Is the struggle between the Spirit and the flesh, in all the regenerate, whenever they perform good works, perpetual? Or is it absent in some who are perfectly and completely regenerated? The Remonstrants, in their *Confession* (Chapter 11, Section 6), state that there are some who are perfectly regenerated, who serve holiness with a certain pleasure, joy, and delight, and perform righteousness and truth with all their heart, all their soul,

and all their strength. Not that they never sin, but that they have cast off sinful habits; and if they do sin, it is through error, surprise, or the clouding of the mind, and not due to indwelling sin. In their *Apology* (Chapter 11, fol. 128), they deny that there is necessarily and always a struggle between the flesh and the Spirit in such persons, because they have the habit of grace, by which they easily and willingly do actions that were previously burdensome and difficult.

We teach that by the infused habit of grace in the regeneration of man, the acquired habit of sinning is removed, but the natural inclination to sin is subdued and tamed. Titus 3:3; Ezekiel 36:26-27; Hosea 14:8. But it is false to say that the habitual propensity to sin, which retards and diminishes the fervor of supernatural actions and inclines them contrary to what is right, is removed.

1. Because in the regenerate Paul, there is another law waging war against the law of his mind and bringing him captive to the law of sin (Romans 7:23). Galatians 5:17: "The flesh desires against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; these are opposed to each other, so that you do not do what you want." 1 Peter 2:11: "Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul."

Further Proofs of This Conflict Being Sinful on the Part of the Flesh:

1. Because it is forbidden by the Spirit of God as sin. Galatians 5:16: "Do not gratify the desires of the flesh." Therefore, what the flesh desires is sin.
2. It is opposed to the Spirit, which inclines toward good and that which is consistent with the Law of God.

3. Paul exclaims that on account of this struggle, he is captive, enslaved, sold under sin, and miserable, and he seeks deliverance in Christ (Romans 7:14, 23, 24, 25).
4. It is sin in its seed, which is the principle of all moral actions, not merely a clouding of the mind. Because 1 John 1:8 says, "If we say we have no sin," and therefore are not affected by any internal habit of sin, "we deceive ourselves." Therefore, there is in all an internal habit of sinning, by which they are called sinners. Proverbs 20:9: "Who can say, 'I have made my heart clean'?" Therefore, in every person, there is an unclean heart. This cannot but be a propensity opposing and resisting the inclination of grace and the Spirit in the regenerate. Therefore, there is always a habitual struggle and a conflict of the first order (like fire against water) in every regenerate person; hence, no one is free from the natural habit of sinning.
5. James 1:14: "Each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire." Therefore, each person who sins has an inward, enticing desire, and thus does not sin merely by a clouding of the mind.
6. If there are some so perfectly regenerated that they are free from all habits of concupiscence and any acquired habit of sinning, then there are some who can say, "We know that in us dwells good; we have no sin; we have purified our souls." Nor would it be necessary for them to say, "Forgive us our sins." But this is exceedingly sacrilegious against Divine grace.
7. Furthermore, there would be some who do not need to pray, "Increase, O Lord, grace in us; remove the stony heart; subdue the desires of the flesh." Because such people would have cast off every habit of sinning, both innate and acquired, and would be

in the same state as the good angels and Adam in his state of innocence, in whom there is no habit of sinning, no concupiscence, no propensity to sin.

8. Indeed, such people could say, "We do not need Christ as a Savior anymore, nor an Advocate and Intercessor before the Father, any more than the good angels or Adam before the fall; for we have already cast off every habit and propensity to sin."
9. It would not be necessary for such people to crucify the old man and its carnal affections or to subdue the desires that wage war against the soul.

Romans 7:14

"We know that the Law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin."

Question: Is the Apostle here speaking of an unregenerate person who is under the Law, or of a regenerate person under grace? Arminius, in his exposition of Romans 7, argues to deny the struggle between the Spirit and the flesh in the regenerate, claiming that Paul is speaking in the person of the unregenerate, who groans under the Law. So once argued the Pelagians, as Augustine says. Likewise, Erasmus, Castellio, and Socinus. We, on the contrary, affirm that Paul speaks of a truly regenerate person.

1. Paul continually speaks about himself: "I am carnal," "I acknowledge," "I will," "I do not will," "It is not I, but sin in me," "I give thanks to God."
2. It is false and contrary to the Word of God to say that the unregenerate could be considered "dead to the Law" and "married to another, namely, to Christ" (Romans 7:3-4).

3. Paul explicitly distinguishes in verse 5 between himself, whom he speaks of, and the unregenerate; or between himself when he was unregenerate and now himself groaning under this struggle: "For when we were in the flesh, the passions of sins, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in our members to bear fruit for death" (Romans 7:5). Verse 6 continues: "But now we are delivered..." Behold, there is a clear change of state and person, and he expressly states that he has been delivered from the Law, and he continues to speak of himself as one delivered from the Law.
4. To consent to the Law that it is good, and to delight in it with the inner man, is the peculiar property of the regenerate alone (Psalm 1:2: "His delight is in the Law of the Lord"). But what beatitude belongs to a person under the Law, and thus cursed and alienated from Christ, in whom all the nations of the earth are blessed?
5. Only the regenerate, not the unregenerate, have an "inner man" (Romans 2:29; 2 Corinthians 4:16; 1 Peter 3:4).
6. It cannot be said of the unregenerate, as a servant of sin, that he wills good, does not will evil, and hates sin. But in the regenerate, God works a new heart (Ezekiel 36:26), and to will and to do for His good pleasure (Philippians 2:13). Indeed, in the regenerate, all affections are renewed, as is evident throughout Psalm 119—delight, joy, fear, hope, trust, etc. But in the unregenerate, the mind is darkened (Ephesians 4:18), the conscience is defiled (Titus 1:15), and indeed the will, affections, senses, eyes, hands, ears, tongue, throat, feet, and all within them are polluted (Romans 2:10-20).

7. The unregenerate does not serve the Law of God with his mind, nor can he say what Paul says of himself in verse 17: "It is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me," for the unregenerate, as much as he is, is entirely given to sin and enslaved to it. It is falsely denied that the unregenerate, who sins against the light of conscience, does not entirely sin because he sees and approves better things by natural light but follows worse. For if this reasoning were valid, the sin against the Holy Spirit (in which the sinner, illuminated with the greatest supernatural enlightenment possible to one enslaved to the devil, sins) could be excused: "It is not I according to the enlightened mind who blaspheme against God, but sin which dwells in me." And thus all the sins of the unregenerate, where the enlightened conscience is set against the lower appetite for sin, would be sins of infirmity, not reigning sins; and would be excused in the same way that Paul, in this chapter, asserts that he and all the regenerate sin more lightly.
8. For the unregenerate, sin is a delight, not a burden. But here, Paul exclaims that he is captive, i.e., drawn almost unwillingly to sin; that he is wretched and in distress in this body of death, that he desires to be delivered, and he gives thanks for his deliverance in Christ. These things do not fit the unregenerate.

Matthew 3:10

"Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

From this, the necessity of good works is established if we desire to be saved. But the question arises:

Are good works necessary as a cause of justification, and therefore also of salvation? The Arminians affirm this. We deny it. But for a

clearer determination of the question, three distinctions must be made:

1. The right to eternal life.
2. The particular application of that right to certain and specific persons.
3. The actual possession of eternal life.

Secondly, we must distinguish between a cause without which it does not happen (a necessary condition), or what Calvin calls an inferior cause, and a superior cause.

We, therefore, propose our position through these assertions:

Assertion 1: The right to righteousness and eternal life is due solely to the merits of Christ, not to our works.

1. Because the blood of Christ is the ransom paid for us (ἀντίλυτρον), not our works, not our sufferings (Romans 3:24-26, 4:12; Ephesians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Revelation 1:5).
2. Because there is no meritorious power in our works (Romans 8:18; 2 Corinthians 4:17).

Assertion 2: Neither are our good works prior dispositions or causes qualifying us for justification under the promise of God.

1. Because justification is not by works, but by mere grace, as has been proven elsewhere.
2. Because there is no such promise in Scripture: "He who performs such good works will be justified before the Tribunal of God."

Assertion 3: The applying cause of the right, or meritorious title to righteousness and eternal life, is faith alone; because faith alone

apprehends the righteousness of Christ and His merits. But Christ is our righteousness, and eternal life has been obtained solely by His merits and blood.

Assertion 4: Nothing prevents us from calling good works the inferior cause of the actual possession of eternal life. So teaches our Calvin in his *Institutes*, Book 4, Chapter 14, Section 21: "There is nothing to prevent the Lord from embracing works as inferior causes." But why is this so? Because those whom He has predestined to the inheritance of eternal life in His mercy, He, by His ordinary dispensation, leads into its possession through good works. What precedes in the order of dispensation is named as the cause of what follows. Finally, in these expressions, the sequence is marked rather than the cause; for God, in heaping grace upon grace, takes the reason for adding the latter from the former.

Hence that saying of Bernard: "Good works are the way to the kingdom, not the cause of reigning," where he excludes them only as principal causes. Therefore, Bucer, in the Colloquy of Regensburg in 1547, Chapter 6, calls them in some sense causes of eternal reward. Zanchius, in *De Natura Dei*, Book 2, Chapter 5, and in Part 2, *De Praedestinatione Sanctorum*, Question 3, says, "They are instrumental causes rather than efficient ones; and causes, as they say, without which it does not happen."

Assertion 5: Good works are understood to have a causal power regarding eternal life in three ways:

1. Condignly meritorious: This we reject as blasphemous, contrary to the Papists, as we have proven elsewhere.
2. Having an inferior and instrumental causal power, granted to them by the grace of God, as Gisbertus Voetius states in *Therfite Heautontemmerumenos*, Section 1, Chapter 2: just as running is

a cause of obtaining the crown, fighting of victory, and a proper diet of health. Here, it is not appropriate to make a precise distinction between a means and a cause, or between a way and a cause; for since good works are not passive but active means, the means here is an inferior cause. Hence, our light afflictions "work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (κατεργάζεται) (2 Corinthians 4:17). The Holy Spirit speaks this way; they effect, they cause for us. We cannot distinguish here between causes and signs because mere signs have no causality; nor is the dawn in any way a cause of the day; nor are we in any way a cause, even an inferior one, of the fire. But our course of good works actively relates to the actual possession of eternal life. Yet this causality:

1. Is not principal.
2. Is not meritorious.
3. Does not arise from the works themselves, but from the grace of God. Therefore, they are more properly called "effective causes" rather than innate; they act not by their own power but according to the dispensation of God.

Therefore, the following distinctions are unnecessary in this question:

1. The distinction between presence and causality, or between presence and efficiency.
2. The distinction between cause and sign.
3. The distinction between a means or way and a cause.
4. The distinction between passive and active means, unless prudently explained.

5. Good works are understood to have a causal power regarding eternal life in a principal, dominant, and predetermining manner, flowing from our Free Will and not from the predetermining grace of God, as the Arminians imagine. In this way, they would claim that good works are causes of eternal life, which we judge to be blasphemous.
6. For if the one who runs and competes, but has not received strength from the Lord to do so, deserves the praise and glory of the prize and victory, not the Lord—who was merely a spectator—then if it is solely in the power of Free Will to determine itself, with no determination of the free will by God or His grace, good works would be the principal causes of eternal life, not the grace of God.
7. The glory for good works and eternal life would not belong to God, not to the Lamb who was slain for our sins, not to divine grace (because even if all these were granted, the free will could still determine itself for good works or not), but rather glory would belong solely to free will.
8. Conversion, perseverance, and eternal life would be absolutely in our hands, not in God's or His grace; likewise, non-conversion, apostasy, and eternal damnation.
9. Because Scripture everywhere denies that we are saved by works; instead, it affirms that this is by the grace and mercy of God: Ephesians 2:8: "By grace you have been saved through faith (and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God)." Verse 9: "Not by works, lest anyone should boast." 2 Timothy 1:9: "He saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus." Titus 3:5: "Not by works of righteousness

which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit." Romans 6:23: "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God (not wages) is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

10. Because the Covenant of Works, or Law, and the Covenant of Grace, or Gospel, would be confused if salvation were from our works. For the cause of eternal salvation is the same as the cause of our justification before the Tribunal of God. Indeed, we do not even wish to assert that perfectly legal works are necessarily required for the possession of eternal life; rather, it suffices that the works be Evangelically good and acceptable to God through Christ the Mediator.

1 John 1:7

"And the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin."

From this, we understand that justification is the complete remission of all sins whatsoever. Therefore, the question arises:

Is our justification a single, complete, and continuous act, which is therefore not to be repeated? Or is justification interrupted and broken off whenever the justified sin, and is renewed whenever they believe and repent again? The adversaries teach that justification is successive, interrupted, and cut off, and that it is advanced and perfected by degrees. Arminius, in *Disputation 48*, Thesis 12, and Episcopius, in *Disputation 22*, Thesis 12, hold this view. But we assert that justification is a single, undivided act, whose sense can be renewed daily; however, it is perfected by no degrees, but is wholly placed in an indivisible moment.

1. Because all the sins of those who are justified are washed away by the blood of Christ (1 John 1:7). Their sins are blotted out as a

cloud (Isaiah 44:22). They are cast into the depths of the sea (Micah 7:19). So that if the iniquity of Israel is sought, it shall not be found, nor shall there be any left (Jeremiah 50:20). Therefore, their sins, once forgiven, are never so imputed again as to require a new justification.

2. The remission that Christ obtained on the cross is the same remission conferred upon the believer in justification. But on the cross, He obtained a complete remission of all and every sin. Therefore, the same applies in justification. The major premise is supported by reason: it would be monstrous (ἄτοπον) and absurd to think that Jesus Christ satisfied for some of the sins of believers on the cross, but that they themselves would have to expiate other sins in hell; for then Christ would be a half-Savior and an imperfect Redeemer of such people. Yet Christ, in Hebrews 9:12, "obtained eternal redemption," and in Colossians 1:20, He "made peace by the blood of His cross." Therefore, He removed all conflict and cause of enmity.
3. From this position, it would follow that God's special favor in Christ could be cut off, and His decree of election could be withdrawn, changed, and rescinded hour by hour; if, as often as the elect believe and repent, they must be justified again and predestined anew (Romans 8:30). And as often as they sin, justification must be revoked, and the decree of election rescinded, and in its place, the decree of reprobation must follow. Thus, there would be almost infinite revolutions and reversals of God's contradictory decrees and of His immanent acts of loving and hating, imputing and not imputing sins, along with the mutable and unstable acts of our free will.

4. The Covenant of Grace (Jeremiah 31) is called "eternal," and it promises the continuity and perseverance of those in the covenant (Jeremiah 32:40; Isaiah 54:10, 11; Isaiah 59:21). Therefore, it is not interrupted or broken. Otherwise, it would follow that truly believing individuals could fall out of this covenant, and that not all whom God predestines, calls, and justifies would be glorified, contrary to what the Apostle explicitly states (Romans 8:30).
5. It follows that no one is ever completely justified, and that no one has all their sins cast into the depths of the sea until they finish their course in faith and repentance, which contradicts countless passages of Scripture.
6. Either the justified person falls from justification due to any light sin of infirmity, or (as the sophists speak) venial sin, or only for more grievous offenses. If the first, then justification would have to be repeated and reiterated a hundred times each day, which Sacred Scripture never implies. If the justified person does not fall from justification due to lesser sins, there would be no need for these lighter sins to be forgiven in the blood of Christ. Therefore, they are not sins at all. And if they are sins, the justified person does not fulfill the Law of God and is not justified by good works. If they fall from justification only for more grievous sins, then these grievous sins are either expiated by the blood of Christ or not. If the first, then the satisfaction of Christ and the remission obtained by Christ would be apprehended by the believer piecemeal, one part after another, a third part after the second, a fourth after the third. Thus, if someone dies before being re-justified after falling from justification, they are justified in part, and one part of their sins is fully remitted while the other part must be expiated eternally

in hell; and such a person, who once truly believed, is eternally condemned, which is absurd. If, however, they are not expiated by the blood of Christ, they are simply irremissible, like the sins of the devils.

The whole difficulty of this question seems to depend on the idea that sins are forgiven before they are even committed, since the regenerate person must, after each sin—especially the more grievous ones—again apprehend and apply to themselves the remission of sins in Christ. But this difficulty is easily resolved. The saints indeed pray daily for the remission of sins; yet once they have been justified, they pray for the sense and renewal of the remission already once apprehended and applied.

It is not absurd, but indeed necessary, that all the sins of the regenerate, both those already committed and those to be committed in the future, were expiated once and for all by the one sacrifice of Christ and are already blotted out in the mind and intention of God. The sense of that expiation already accomplished is repeatedly apprehended and applied through new acts of faith. For it must be well understood that the remission of sins does not mean that sins are no longer sins, or that the sinner is no longer a sinner, in terms of the physical and real inherence of sin in the subject. Rather, it means only that the sins are not imputed, i.e., that the moral obligation to the penalty, which would satisfy divine wrath, is removed. This is no different than a pardon given by an earthly king to a traitor and one guilty of high treason, granted out of the mere grace of the prince; such a pardon does not mean that the person to whom it is granted ceases to be a traitor but only that he ceases to be a traitor liable to execution, being freed from all legal obligation that, before the pardon, bound him to suffer the capital punishment due for treason. For royal pardon does not, by any physical action, retract the

treasonous acts committed by the person who would have been subject to execution.

Thus, sins are removed in two ways:

1. **Legally and in the fiction of law** (as they say), by a purely judicial and forensic removal. In this way, sins are taken away in justification—not so that they no longer exist, but so that they are not imputed, as Augustine says. Therefore, justification does not effect any physical change in the justified person but only a moral or legal change by which the person is released from the obligation to punishment. This release occurs entirely in the mind of God and is apprehended in its entirety by the believer the very moment they are justified; and the sense of this is daily renewed and reiterated.
2. **Really and physically**, regarding the physical inherence of sin in the subject. In this manner, sins are removed in sanctification, which, in this life, is begun and imperfect, just as our sanctification in this life is imperfect and only initiated. Thus, sin is expelled by physical action only gradually and successively, just as the morning light or the first dawn gradually and successively dispels the darkness of night.

Acts 13:43

"To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

From this passage, it is evident that faith is the only instrument for apprehending Christ. However, concerning the nature of faith, there exist significant questions between us and the Arminians.

Question: Do the Arminians rightly teach, as in their *Apology*, Chapter 10, Section 1, that faith in the matter of justification is to be considered only insofar as it naturally includes, by its own property, obedience, that is, conversion, repentance, and the observation of the commandments, and not correlatively, as it apprehends the righteousness of Christ? We deny this and maintain that faith justifies only correlatively.

1. This is evident from the cited context, and from Romans 4:6: "Just as David also declares blessed is the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works."
2. If faith essentially includes works in this action, then the blessed one would be he to whom works are imputed without grace (Romans 11:6): "But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works; otherwise, grace would no longer be grace. If it is by works, then it is no longer by grace; otherwise, work would no longer be work."
3. Because if faith here is considered as including repentance, then faith justifies as repentance, and thus repentance itself justifies, which is absurd.
4. Because this is mere Socinianism. Socinus, in *Praelectio*, Chapter 17, states: "Faith is not the apprehension of any satisfaction, but obedience to the commandments of Christ under the hope of future immortality." By this reasoning, if to repent and amend one's life under the confidence of obtaining eternal life is faith, then to obey the Law under the confidence of obtaining eternal life through works of the Law will be legal justification. Thus, in this sense, men would be justified by faith in the Law, just as they are in the Gospel.

1 Timothy 1:15

"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost."

In these words, Paul affirms three things concerning faith:

1. That its object is the Word of God, insofar as it is true. Hence, the Word of the Gospel is called a "faithful saying" in relation to the intellect, which must be certain of the truth of the Gospel Word.
2. That its object is also good in relation to the heart, will, and affections. Therefore, the Gospel is called a "saying worthy of all acceptance," (ἄξιος πάσης ἀποδοχῆς), a saying worthy to be received in every way; and this is the formal and specific object of saving faith, namely, Christ—not only as One who narrates the truth, which the intellect apprehends, but also as One who promises good things, namely, the remission of sins, righteousness, and eternal life.
3. He presents the inseparable effect of faith in these words, "of whom I am the foremost." Hence, the true and saving believer applies to himself personally all the promises of the Gospel.

Question: Is faith not a special confidence in mercy, but rather such a confidence (as the Remonstrants define in their Confession, Chapter 11, Section 2) by which I firmly determine that it is not possible for me to escape eternal death and obtain eternal life except through Jesus Christ and by the way prescribed by Him? We deny this.

1. Because, in this manner, the object of faith is not Christ and His mercy towards all believers, but the history of the Gospel, in which I firmly believe that only through Christ and the way prescribed by Him in the Gospel will I escape hell and obtain eternal life. In this way, the Jews trusted in Moses and Joshua concerning the promised land, that is, that they would escape from Egypt and reach the promised land by no other way than that prescribed by Moses and Joshua. To believe in Christ in this way is merely to believe Christ narrating that, through repentance and faith, men obtain eternal life. But this is a historical faith, which even the demons and many reprobates possess. For they can believe and firmly determine that it is not possible to escape eternal death or obtain eternal salvation except through Jesus Christ and the way prescribed by Him.
2. For the object of this faith is not Christ crucified for sins, and made by God to be our wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, but merely the way of reaching eternal life prescribed by Christ, that is, the mere letter of the Gospel and a historical narrative.
3. By the way prescribed by Christ through which we escape eternal death and obtain eternal life, they understand (as they themselves explain in the same place, Confession, Chapter 11, Section 4) the way of true obedience, or good works (for so they define their obedient confidence there). Hence, this faith is that of the Arminians and Socinians: "I confidently rest and rely on my good works, prescribed by Christ in the Gospel, by which I am certain that I shall attain eternal salvation and escape eternal death, and not by any other way." Thus, they do not include even a syllable about Christ dying and satisfying for our sins in the object of their faith.

Our theologians rightly conclude that Christ is true God, consubstantial with the Father, because Christ is the object of faith and our Mediator and Surety, who, by His death and blood, has fully satisfied God the Father for our sins. They, however, assert that Christ is the object of faith only as He historically narrates and declares to us the true way and reason for obtaining eternal salvation. In this way, the Apostles, who in their canonical writings also narrate to us the true way and reason for obtaining eternal salvation, would be the object of faith. From this, it is clear that they secretly deny that Christ is God, consubstantial with the Father; and they define for us saving confidence and faith as mere reliance on our good works prescribed by Christ. But Paul, on the contrary, in Romans 4 argues that Abraham's justification by faith excludes all confidence and boasting in good works.

Certainly, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which commands good works as inferior causes of eternal life, is the object of faith only in terms of the "how" (quo), while Christ the Mediator, who died for sins, is the object in terms of the "what" (quod). Therefore, they incorrectly define faith, confidence, and trust in our own good works prescribed by Christ as the means to obtain eternal life. For what hope, what fleeting consolation, what unstable joy, what false, futile, and shadowy peace of conscience does a trusting reliance on our good works provide in the day of temptation and at the final moment of life? Who does not know this? The testimonies of repenting Papists among us, with wavering consciences, show that they cast away their confidence in their own works and merits in the agony of death, despise it, and flee to the satisfaction provided solely by Christ through His precious death and blood.

1 Timothy 1:15

"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ

Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost."

3. True Faith in Scripture is not merely a firm assent to the way of worshiping God prescribed by Christ, which is the historical and dogmatic faith of the Papists; but beyond an assent of the mind, it is defined by the heart's trust in God through the Mediator, and a confident reliance by the sinner upon the bosom of Jehovah. Thus, we read:

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart" (Prov. 3:5), "Have faith in Me" (Isa. 50:10), "I have relied on You from birth" (Psa. 71:6; 125:1). Likewise, in Isaiah 48:2, "They leaned upon the God of Israel." The verb $\mu\psi$ (sha'an), which means "leaned," as used in Psalm 112:8, "His heart is upheld," and in its unusual form Niphal, means to lean or rest upon, as in Isaiah 31:1 and 2 Samuel 1:6, where Saul leaned upon his spear. The same is used in Isaiah 10:20, "And those who have escaped from the house of Jacob shall lean upon the Holy One of Israel." Hence, it is also connected to ψ (shebet), meaning "staff" (2 Sam. 22:19; Isa. 3:1, "staff of bread"). Thus, we lean upon God in Christ as a weary traveler leans upon a staff or walking stick. Similarly, the Hebrews express trust with the verb that means "to roll oneself upon God." Psalm 22:8 says, "He rolls himself upon the Lord." In Jeremiah 34:4, "The heavens shall be rolled together like a scroll," and in Genesis 29:10, "Jacob rolled the stone away from the mouth of the well." Psalm 37:5 states, "Roll your ways upon the Lord." Therefore, whoever believes rolls himself and his burdens upon God, which is far more than merely assenting to God as One who speaks the truth.

Thus, $\epsilon\rho\chi\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$ εἰς τὸν Χριστὸν (to come to Christ, John 6:37; Matt. 11:28-29) means to believe (John 6:46), and $\pi\iota\sigma\tau\iota\varsigma$ εἰς τὸν θεὸν (to

trust in God, Rom. 10:11; John 14:1). Also, to receive Christ (τὸν Χριστὸν λαμβάνειν, John 1:12).

4. Faith and reliance on God is opposed to trust in horses, chariots, flesh, and the arm of man (Isa. 31:1; Jer. 17:5). But to trust and lean on a horse is not to believe in the horse as one who speaks truthfully, but to rely on the strength and speed of the horse with affection and confidence. Therefore, faith is essentially confidence in the heart.

5. Fear is opposed to faith. "Why are you fearful, O you of little faith?" (Matt. 8:26). But fear is not in the mind, but in the heart and affections. Since contraries exist in the same subject, it follows that faith is not merely a bare assent in the mind, but a confidence in the heart.

6. The object of justifying faith is the mercy of God in Christ, by which He justifies the ungodly (Rom. 4:5). But the type of trust that the Remonstrants propose—whereby we state that we are to be saved in no other way than that prescribed by Christ in the Gospel—is no more an object of mercy toward the elect and believers than the omnipotence, truthfulness, and justice of God are objects of faith when we believe that eight souls were saved in Noah's ark or that God could kill a thousand Philistines with the jawbone of an ass.

7. This faith of the Remonstrants is mere Socinianism. For Smalcius, a Socinian, in his book *On the Divinity of Christ*, Chapter 14, defines faith not only as assent but also as a trust by which we place our hope and confidence in Christ, depending entirely on Him with firm hope to obtain the things He promised to those who obey Him; that is, if we correct our lives according to His prescription, etc.

Question: Is the Word of God the only instrument, both preparatory and consummative, for generating faith, so that the Remonstrants rightly state in the *Acts of the Synod of Dordrecht*, Articles 3 and 4 (pages 62 and 128), that no immediate action of the Holy Spirit is required upon the mind and will to produce faith, but that the objective, moral, and persuasive action of the Word alone suffices?

We acknowledge that faith comes from hearing, but we also firmly believe that the Holy Spirit exercises certain immediate actions upon the mind and will, which are not moral but real and physical, whereby He creates in us the power and supernatural habit by infusion.

1. Because God does not draw men to Himself by mere moral persuasion, nor are supernatural powers of believing infused by mere persuasion, as an orator, by his speech, cannot give a lame man the ability to walk, restore sight to the blind, or raise the dead.
2. If the Word is the only and sole consummative instrument of faith, no more noble actions are required than those which a pastor can perform, which is absurd.
3. Because God alone, by His efficacious grace, causes us to will and to act (Phil. 2:13). But if there were no more eminent action than the moral operation of the Word, God would so effectuate the willing and acting by His grace that it would ultimately be in the power of the free will to either cooperate with or resist God persistently.
4. The action of God in generating faith is an act of omnipotence by which God raised Christ from the dead (Eph. 1:19-20) and is no

less than an act of creation (2 Cor. 4:6), and therefore is irresistible. But if everything were accomplished by the moral action of the Word alone, both preparatory and consummative, there would be no action of omnipotence here.

5. Here, we do not recognize anything enthusiastic, though this is an act of omnipotence that the moral causation of the Word cannot reach. For, 1) enthusiasm arises when an inspiration is expected apart from any action of the Word of God. Here, we teach that the moral action of the Word is necessary, although we also require a more eminent action, namely, real and physical. 2) Enthusiasm occurs when something is expected that is beyond or against the Word of God. We, however, expect the same infusion of the Spirit of regeneration and the granting of a new heart, which God has promised us in the Covenant of the Gospel, not anything else.

Chapter 13:

On the Perseverance of the Saints

John 10:28-29

"And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all."

From this passage, it is clear that Christ argues for the unchangeable and certain perseverance of the saints, basing His argument on the

omnipotence of His Father. He who is greater than all and mightier than all cannot be deprived of His sheep, and it is necessary that He be greater and stronger than all who attempt to snatch His sheep from His hand. But My Father, who has given Me the sheep, is greater than all; none is greater, none more powerful than He.

Concerning the perseverance of the saints, there are four main views today:

1. **The First View** is that of the more recent Jesuits, who assert that the elect, and those called according to the absolute decree of election, can never totally or finally fall away, but that many who are truly regenerated and justified can indeed fall away both finally and totally from grace.
2. **The Second View** is held by certain pseudo-Lutherans who deny the final apostasy of the saints but admit total apostasy, that is, they argue for complete interruption while denying final severance.
3. **The Third View** is that of the Papists and Arminians, whom we further divide into three groups:
 - **1. The Papists**, generally, defend the apostasy of the saints along with their doctrine of the uncertainty of salvation.
 - **2. Arminius himself and the interlocutors at the Hague Conference (pag. 401)** state that they do not call into question the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints, but merely seek a fuller understanding. However, they deny that the arguments of their adversaries conclusively prove that the regenerate cannot fall from grace.
 - **3. The disciples of James Arminius, the Remonstrants at the Synod of Dordt; Corvinus**

against Moulin; Tilenus in his criticisms of the Canons of the Synod of Dordt, and Peter Bertius concerning the Apostasy of the Saints, all teach that the truly regenerated and justified can indeed fall away both finally and totally. They do this:

1. To avoid what they call the fatalistic Stoicism of absolute election.
2. To free God from being the cause of sin, as they understand it.
3. To exalt human liberty, which, with grace set aside, they wish to make the sovereign architect, independent and unrestrained, of election and reprobation, salvation and damnation, in place of God.

4. The Fourth and True View is that the truly regenerated and justified cannot fall away finally or totally from the state of grace, nor can they depart from God or perish eternally.

Before we establish the state of the question, however, we must first refute some of the calumnies of our adversaries:

1. **Bellarmin, Suarez, Gregory of Valencia**, with all sense of shame cast aside, attribute to Wycliffe, Calvin, and Luther the heresy of Jovinian and the Begards, namely, that some truly, by the grace of God, are made incapable of sinning. This we deny. We teach that the truly regenerate can fall into dreadful and grievous sins and often incur a guilt worthy of damnation. Indeed, this very calumny strikes them (not us) who uphold the article of the possibility of fulfilling the law by the grace of God.
2. The **Arminians slander us**, asserting that we teach that the truly faithful, regardless of whatever sins they may commit, are still bound to believe with absolute assurance that they are

certain of their final perseverance. We do indeed teach the certainty of assurance of final perseverance for every believer, but not in such an absolute sense that it is free from all condition of godly care. We do not teach an assurance that would have one believe they will persevere, whether they fear or not. Rather, we speak of a hypothetical assurance that is joined with the constant exercise of holy fear, diligent faith, and effective love.

3. They **accuse us of teaching** the impossibility of the saints' apostasy in a way akin to the impossibility of change in God and His divine decrees. We, however, teach here that the impossibility of apostasy is hypothetical, depending on the decree of election and true regeneration; it is limited and qualified, extrinsic and modal, not intrinsic and pure. Indeed, as far as we are concerned, given our own frailty, apart from the grace of God, we could fall away and perish.
4. They **maliciously attribute to us** an inevitable perseverance, as if it were necessary for us to persevere even if we were unwilling or opposed, as if by some fatal strength and power of God, according to His immutable decree, we were compelled and dragged, so that no matter how carnally secure we might be, we would still persevere by any force or injury. This we utterly reject.

Thus we teach:

1. That the baptized can completely fall away.
2. That a distinction must be made between the essence of the special grace of the elect and the many things that are either part of it or accompany it. These we categorize into six elements:
 1. *Habitus* (the habitual state of grace).

2. The acts of grace.
3. The sweetness in doing good, which makes one's actions easier.
4. The sense of grace.
5. A solid assurance of one's state.
6. Peace and joy of conscience.

Therefore, we teach:

1. The *habitus* of grace can be reduced and diminished by more serious sins.
2. Gracious acts can be interrupted.
3. The sweet ease of doing good works can be lost.
4. The sense of special favor and mercy can be lost, and almost entirely vanish.
5. The solid and firm assurance of one's final perseverance can be weakened and undermined.
6. Consolation and peace of conscience, along with pious security, may grow faint and wither for a time.

The question at hand is this:

1. It concerns not infants but adults.
2. Not temporary believers, whom some call *pædoanabaptists*, but those who are truly regenerated and justified.
3. Nor is it asked whether it is absolutely impossible for the faithful to fall away; for if we consider their inherent corruption, they can indeed finally fall away.

Thus, the question is:

1. Whether adults,
2. Truly regenerated and justified,

3. Not because of their inherent weakness and corruption, but
4. In spite of the intercession of Christ, the vital principle of faith, the immutable covenant of God, election, the keeping and power of God—whether they can fall away so that they do not only sin gravely in the outcome but:
 1. Lose all right to the Kingdom of God, which they once had in Christ.
 2. Fall away from the favor and free grace of election.
 3. Be entirely and finally removed from the state of being children of God and fall away from it?

The answer is affirmed by the Roman Catholics, Jesuits, pseudo-Lutherans, Arminians, and Socinians. We deny it.

First Argument: From the Immutability of God.

If Romans 8:39, "those whom God foreknew, He also predestined; and those whom He predestined, He also called; and those whom He called, He also justified; and those whom He justified, He also glorified;" if Romans 11:29, "the gifts (χαρίσματα) and the calling of God are irrevocable;" if Romans 11:7, "Israel did not obtain what it sought, but the elect obtained it;" if John 13:1, "whom Christ loves, He loves to the end;" if the purpose of God according to election stands firm (Romans 9:11); if the foundation of God stands firm, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His" (2 Timothy 2:19); if it is impossible for the elect to be deceived (Matthew 24:24); then it follows that true believers and the justified cannot totally and finally fall from grace. But the premise is true; therefore, so is the conclusion.

Second Argument: From the Truthfulness of God.

What God, who cannot lie, has promised in His Word, He will certainly and unfailingly fulfill. But God, who cannot lie, has

promised in His Word total and final perseverance to those who are in Christ. Therefore, God will certainly and unfailingly ensure that they persevere. The major premise is not denied by the adversaries, except that they retreat to the idea of conditional perseverance, saying, "if only the faithful do not fail themselves, if only they pray, if only they use the grace given them by God diligently and with the fear of the Lord." But indeed, the grace that prevents them from failing themselves, and the grace that enables them to pray and fear God, is also a part of the perseverance promised by God (Jeremiah 31:40, Zechariah 12:10). Therefore, it is not a condition of perseverance. For otherwise, God would be promising that the saints would unfailingly persevere, only if they would persevere. The minor premise is supported by Jeremiah 32:38, 40; Isaiah 54:10; Matthew 16:18, and also by Augustine in *On the Good of Perseverance*, chapter 2.

Third Argument: From the Perpetuity and Stability of the Covenant of Grace.

The continuance of the faithful in the state of grace is more stable than God's natural covenant with the revolutions of the sun and moon, and firmer than the law with day and night (Jeremiah 31:35-37); more steadfast than the mountains and hills, which cannot be removed from their place (Isaiah 54:10); more certain than the covenant with Noah, in which God swore that He would never again flood the earth with water (Isaiah 54:10). It is as certain as the promise God made, confirmed with the oath of His sacrament, that He would fulfill it (Hebrews 6:17-18, Psalm 89:30-35, etc.).

Argument 4: From the Custody and Protection of God.

Those who are guarded by the power and protection of God for eternal life cannot totally and finally fall from grace. But all who are

truly regenerated are thus guarded. (1 Peter 1:5; 1 Corinthians 1:8, 10; Philippians 1:6; 2 Thessalonians 3:3).

Argument 5: From the Omnipotence of God.

If one must be greater and stronger than the Father to snatch away the sheep of Christ from the hand of God the Father and Christ (John 10:28, 29), and if such a one must be greater and stronger than any creature (Romans 8:35, 37, 38, 39); if God is able to preserve His own (Jude v.24); and if God uses His omnipotence to establish the faithful saints blameless in the sight of His glory, then the regenerated cannot fall from the state of grace. But the former is true, as proved by the cited passages.

Argument 6: From the Intercession of Christ.

If Christ lives for His people and serves as an Advocate for them when they sin (1 John 2:1) and intercedes for them (Hebrews 9:24-26); if He prays for all, not only the Apostles but also for those who will believe in Him till the end of the world (John 17:20-24), that they might persevere and be kept to the end and obtain eternal life, and that their faith may not fail (Luke 22:32), then those who are regenerated cannot fail to persevere to the end. For the Father always hears the Son praying (John 11:42; John 6:37, 38).

Argument 7: From the Nature of Divine Grace, Not Merely Habitual, But Both Habitual and Actual.

Those who are born of incorruptible seed, who cannot serve sin, nor commit it (unto death and with all effort and strength of will), because the seed of God remains in them; in whom is a fountain of water springing up to eternal life; and who are planted by the rivers of water so that they cannot wither; such as these cannot totally and finally fall from grace. But all who are regenerated are such (1 Peter

1:23; 1 John 3:9; Psalm 1:3; John 4:14; John 7:38; Matthew 7:24; Luke 8:15).

Argument 8: From the Covenant Between God the Father and Christ.

Because God the Father promises the ends of the earth to Christ (Psalm 2:7-8), and offspring and children are given to Him by God, provided that He lays down His life for His people (Isaiah 53:10). And the people are made willing (Psalm 110:3), and His dominion is from sea to sea (Psalm 72:8).

But if the saints could fall away, these promises would be void, and God the Father would not keep this covenant with His Son, which is blasphemous.

Argument 9: From the Seal of the Spirit.

Those who are sealed for the day of redemption (2 Corinthians 1:21; Ephesians 1:23; 4:30); who have received the firstfruits of the Spirit and the guarantee, and are already saved in hope, and who now sit with Christ at the right hand of the Father; such cannot utterly fall away. But the faithful are such. The reason for the major premise is that hope does not disappoint or deceive (Romans 5:5). The seal of the Holy Spirit is not a deceptive or uncertain seal. What consolation, what peace, what joy would arise from it, if hope were deceitful and would put to shame those who hope? (Romans 14:17). The minor premise is evident (Romans 8:23, 37). And there is no need for a seal on the heart to confirm general truths in the New Testament, like "whoever believes will be saved." For these are sufficiently confirmed by the testimony of God and His Word to all. And neither the Devil nor many hypocrites deny them, and the faithful seldom and less frequently doubt them. And this seal does not more certainly confirm Peter's salvation, provided he freely perseveres, than it does Judas the traitor's.

Argument 10: From the Dominion and Victory of the Saints.

Those who are so dead to sin that it does not reign over them, who cannot serve sin; who through faith so obtain victory that they cannot be overcome; such cannot fall away. But sin no longer reigns over the regenerate (Romans 6:8, 9); they cannot serve sin (1 John 3:9; 5:4); since they are born of God, they overcome the world (1 John 5:18), they keep themselves so that the wicked one does not touch them (1 John 5:18; Revelation 20:6; Romans 8:35-37).

Argument 11: From the Distinction Between Temporary Believers and True Believers.

If some fall away from the faith they professed for a time because they were never truly faithful, then true believers cannot fall away. But the former is true; therefore, the latter follows. The reason for the major premise is this: having true and saving faith is the adequate cause for some to persevere, and thus, some fall away because they lack this faith. Just as life is the cause of movement and sensation, and therefore one does not move or feel because one is not alive, so those who have life must necessarily move and feel. The minor is proven by 1 John 2:19: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." Similarly, Luke 8:18, John 2:23-24, Matthew 13:21, John 17:9, Isaiah 40:24, 30-31.

Argument 12: From the Relationship Between the Faithful and Christ.

If the faithful could finally and totally fall away from the faith, Christ would no longer certainly be the head of the Church, as He might lack members; He would no longer be the Bridegroom, with no bride; not a King, with no subjects; not a Savior and Redeemer, with

none saved or redeemed; not the God of the eternal Covenant, with none bound by it; not Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption made by God, as there could be none capable of His Righteousness, Wisdom, Sanctification, and Redemption, with all being apostates. Faith would disappear from the Catholic Church; the praises and victory of the Lamb could fail, and the Devil would be the victor; Christ would be defeated. It is vain for the Arminians to argue that Christ is a King because He has the right and authority over all mortals, even if no one acknowledged Him as King in fact. For He rules in the midst of His enemies (Psalm 110:2), and Christ is King in the actual preservation of His subjects to eternal life; the Head in the actual influence upon His members; the Bridegroom in that eternal marriage with the Bride, contracted in this life and eternally celebrated in heaven, as is expressly taught in countless passages of Scripture, especially in Psalm 45 and 110, Jeremiah 31, and throughout the Song of Solomon.

Argument 13: From the Unconquerable Dominion of Divine Grace.

If, with all the actions of grace being placed and all left to indifferent Free Will to persevere or not, all could finally fall away, then Christ would be a weak King, unable to preserve His own; His kingdom would end and not be eternal, contrary to what is affirmed in Daniel 2:44, Luke 1:33, Psalm 145:13, Isaiah 9:7, Micah 4:7, Revelation 11:15.

Argument 14: From the Prayers of the Saints.

We cannot pray with faith and sure confidence for the perseverance of the saints, contrary to John 14:13, 14. Nor can we pray, "Hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done; lead us not into temptation," because it is not within God's power to fulfill these

prayers if it is within Free Will's power to totally and finally fall away from God.

Argument 15: From the Confidence of the Saints and the Graces They Owe as Persevering.

We could not believe and hope that we would be saved by God's grace, nor could we give thanks to God for perseverance if it were in man's power to finally fall away from God.

Argument 16: From the Hope, Joy of the Holy Spirit, and Consolation.

These would waver if the perseverance of the saints were not infallible and necessary; for the hope, consolation, and joy under the hope of glory, which the Remonstrants offer to the elect believers, according to their doctrine of the apostasy of the saints, does not pertain to them any more than to the reprobate and hypocrites; that is, because a man is externally called, he has only a feeble consolation that he will be glorified if his Free Will does not fail from God's grace and protection. But a most determined apostate, before he falls away, can seize this joy and consolation with equal right as the faithful; and afterward, if he repents, he may again fall away.

Argument 17: From the Purpose of Creation.

For in vain would He have created all the children of men, contrary to Psalm 89:47. Neither would God have formed His chosen people for Himself and for His glory, contrary to Isaiah 43:21: "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." The doctrine of gracious and supernatural providence over His people would also collapse, contrary to Isaiah 46:3: "Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb: and

even to your old age I am he, and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver."

Argument 18: From the Doctrine of Faith.

If the truly elect and regenerate could perish eternally, all the articles of faith would be fundamentally overthrown. The doctrine of Christ's conception and incarnation for the salvation of His people would be null and void. The article concerning the death of Christ and its efficacy, His resurrection, His triumph over death, the Devil, and hell would be rendered vain if these enemies could eternally triumph over all true believers and the elect. What would be the purpose of the doctrine of Christ's descent into hell and His suffering of infernal torments, which we would have had to endure according to the order of justice? What purpose would there be in the doctrine of Christ's ascension into heaven to open a new way for us through the veil of His flesh, His advocacy and intercession at the right hand of God the Father, or the preparation of heavenly mansions, if indeed it were possible that no mortal should ascend into heaven?

The doctrine of the sending of the Holy Spirit, who leads us into all truth, and of Christ's remaining with us and dwelling in us until the end of the world would also be vain if it were possible that the Holy Spirit could abandon His own. The doctrine concerning Christ's Catholic Church would also be null and void if it were possible for it to become the synagogue of Satan. All its privileges would be void, namely, that it is one in the unity of Faith and Spirit, that it is holy, Catholic, the Sister and Bride of Christ, the glorious Brother and Husband, if indeed it were possible for no such assembly to exist in the world. What would be the communion of saints? What mutual love would there be among the members of Christ? What would be the free justification and remission of sins? What glorious resurrection of the righteous if it were possible that all the truly

regenerate should completely fall from grace and perish eternally? Finally, what hope would there be of eternal life and the glorious marriage between the Lamb and His Bride, celebrated forever, if it were possible for all mortals to end up in hell as apostates? All these blessings contained in the Apostles' Creed would be only promised, never bestowed, or entirely taken away.

Argument 19: This Doctrine Directly Opposes Both the Law and the Gospel.

For the regenerate who perform good works throughout their whole life may lose their crown at the final hour of death, and it may come to pass that through the Gospel and faith in Christ, no less than through the Law and legal righteousness, there is no eternal salvation if the regenerate and true believers can fall from saving faith and the grace of Christ.

Argument 20: Finally, the Glory of God to Be Declared by the Glorified.

The glory of Redemption, our salvation, and all things by which the saints are distinguished from hypocrites would depend not on the gracious Providence of God's sovereign rule but on mere contingency or chance. There would be no determined number of the elect and the reprobate, for this number would wholly depend on the free will of those who persevere or fall away, making it entirely uncertain. For if future contingencies cannot be known by God, then He does not know who will persevere and who will not. Thus, the perseverance or apostasy of the saints would escape and elude all knowledge and acts of divine Providence.

MATTHEW 13:20

"But he who receives the seed on rocky places is the one who hears

the Word and immediately receives it with joy;
verse 21. Yet he has no root in himself but is temporary, etc."

Here the Question Arises: Is a faith that is *πόκαρπος* (fruitless) and temporary essentially saving faith, differing not in kind and nature but merely in accident, namely, in duration, from the saving faith of those who receive the Word in good soil? Just as seed growing in rocky ground and in good ground produces fruits of the same species? The Remonstrants in the Acts of the Synod, p. 129-130, teach so, because Luke 8 says of these, 1. "They believe for a while." 2. "They receive the Word with joy," which is a sign of a teachable and good heart. We deny that this faith is truly saving, and we contend that it differs in nature and kind from saving faith.

1. Because the specific difference of faith is derived from the formal object of faith. Now, the object of temporary faith is not Christ as Christ, nor the promises of the Gospel as such (because that object endures in the time of persecution, but here the object fails when persecution arises); rather, it is something of the Gospel and something of Christ, namely, external prosperity or the Gospel insofar as it is adorned with external prosperity. Therefore, when the prosperous success of the Gospel ceases, this faith also ceases, just as the effect ceases when the cause is removed.

Objection: There is no reality of truth in external prosperity; therefore, this is not the formal object, because it does not pertain to the object of the intellect.

Response: External prosperity is a motive, not the formal ground; nor do they believe the Gospel as it is a supernatural good. The object of temporary faith is the truth of the Gospel promises as delightful, or as a good in the sense of a pleasing and useful good, holding

promises of present and future life, not of an honest good or in the sense of morally honest goods. Thus, the object of temporary faith is like a physical good that naturally moves and attracts the appetite; and the object of saving faith is a moral good and morally upright.

2. In the definition of an accident or adjunct, some addition is taken from the subject, or rather from the ὑπόστασις (substance) and the relation between the subject and the accident; as a human in the definition of visibility, a nose in the definition of being flat-nosed, a horse in the definition of neighing; and the relation of a human to visibility essentially distinguishes the property of being able to laugh from all other qualities of that genus. Therefore, since the subject of saving faith is a good and honest heart καρδία καλὴ καὶ ἀγαθὴ (Luke 8:15), while the subject of temporary faith is a stony and hard heart, which is characteristic of the unregenerate (Ezekiel 36:26, Ezekiel 11:19), a man without root, that is, not rooted and established in Christ by true faith (Colossians 2:7), εὐθάδε ἐν Χριστῷ, not engrafted or planted in Christ like soil moistened with water, this temporary faith differs in kind from that which is in those who are rooted in Christ and have an honest and good heart. Just as an honest and good man, rooted in Christ, differs in theological kind and essence (in its moral existence, so to speak) from a dishonest and wicked man who is not rooted in Christ and lacks the vital sap of saving grace (as stony and rocky ground lacks all sap), so too does this temporary faith differ in kind from that which is only different in duration or less firm or more firm rooting in its subject, just as less and more white differ.

3. For this sole reason, the temporary believers fall away, Matthew 13:6, "Because they have no root, they wither." And Mark 4:6,

"Because they had no moisture," meaning they lacked the Spirit of sanctifying grace, who alone makes men naturally barren fruitful. And this is the sign that arid and rocky men, with stony hearts, cannot but wither and fall away when the sun of persecution arises. But true believers, it is necessary to say, cannot certainly fall away in times of persecution, nor do the Arminians dare to assert it.

4. Saving faith necessarily produces good fruits from a vital and supernatural principle, as do all true believers. Psalm 1:5; Matthew 7:7; Jeremiah 2:17, 20; John 15:5: "He who remains in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit." Therefore, temporary faith, which does not produce fruit (as is the case with all temporary believers, whose faith is like seed never ripening into an ear), is dead faith, and is not truly and essentially faith any more than the faith of demons (James 2:19) or a lifeless corpse is living. Nor can it be answered that the temporary believer is alive; for that is to beg the question.
5. The purpose of this parable is to show (because many often gathered to hear Christ, who afterward fell back and departed from Him) who are good and honest hearers and who are temporary and insincere, having only a faith that is glorious in the eyes of the world, not true and saving.
6. If temporary faith is therefore true faith because it is called faith in the text, then those had true faith to whom Christ would not commit Himself, John 2:24. Or if temporary faith is therefore true and saving because temporary believers grow for a time, by the same reasoning, those who serve riches and pleasures, and therefore cannot serve Christ, the other Master, among whom the seed of the Word is choked by the cares of riches and

pleasures, would have true and saving faith; because Luke 8:7, "And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it." Those enslaved to Mammon cannot believe savingly, even according to the admission of our opponents. If, however, they are said to believe savingly, 1. Because they assent to the Gospel, 2. Hear the Word with joy, 3. Profess faith, then Herod, who heard John gladly and with delight (Mark 6:20), and Simon Magus, who believed (Acts 8:13), would have saving faith. For they did not lack assent, joy, or profession, but they lacked what is essentially required: a good and honest heart and vital sap. Finally, what the opponents say is frivolous, that it is not denied that they have a root, but only that they do not have a root in themselves; because the root must be in the very soil that has a root; otherwise, temporary believers have in themselves the principle from which their vain and false faith flows, namely, a stony heart. And growth in this parable is nothing other than appearing to the world like seed with false hope of harvest and promising an empty hope of harvest where there is no true root; although, when the Word grows, when scattered in good soil, it means that it flourishes from a true root. Nor is it absurd that the same word should signify different things when applied to different subjects.

Question: Is temporary faith hypocritical, so that temporary believers cannot be said to fall away when they abandon temporary faith, because no one falls away from Christ by renouncing hypocrisy? The Remonstrants affirm this; we deny it.

1. Temporary faith can be understood in two ways. (1) It is a faith that appears to be true and saving but is not actually so, much like something that appears to be a real metal but is only painted wood. In this sense, temporary faith is rightly called

hypocritical, for it is only apparently, not truly, a saving faith—κατὰ δόξαν (according to appearance), not in reality.

2. Hypocritical faith can also refer to a faith that is utterly false and feigned, which has nothing at all of true faith. In this sense, temporary faith is not hypocritical; rather, it is true to its degree, though not saving, just as brass resembling gold in color is not a hypocritical metal—it is truly a metal, but it is hypocritical gold. Similarly, a painted man is not a purely fictitious being or a mere image made up to deceive; it is truly something that exists and is genuinely represented, but it is not truly a man. Common essential attributes within the same category can be affirmed of many things, while more specific attributes are denied; for instance, "this is a substance," "it is a body essentially," but "it is not living," "it is not animated." Thus, temporary faith, in the genus of saving faith, is hypocritical and only apparently faith; yet it is not false and hypocritical in all respects.

Temporary faith can rightly be called a "degree toward the thing," or a material beginning, but not a degree in the thing itself or a formal beginning of justifying faith. As yellowness is a degree toward whiteness with some essence of color, it is not essentially whiteness, but distinct in kind from it; therefore, it is only a degree toward the species. But white as two is a degree toward whiteness as four or five, and indeed a degree in the thing itself and a formal beginning, differing from whiteness as four in degree, not in kind and nature. Likewise, an embryo is a degree toward a living and animated man, yet it is distinct in kind from a human; however, an infant in the womb, endowed and actuated by a rational soul, is a degree toward a fully mature adult man and indeed a degree in the thing itself, differing in degree, not in kind and nature, from an adult man.

Thus, for an embryo to become an animated man, it must cast off the essential form of the embryo, yet it does not need to cast off its entire essence, for it retains the seminal matter. Likewise, for temporary faith to become saving and justifying, it must shed the specific form of temporary faith; yet it is not necessary to cast off everything that belongs to the essence of faith, because assent to all of God's Word must remain. Therefore, a temporary believer must cast away what is false and feigned in temporary faith if he wishes to renounce hypocrisy, and in doing so, he does not thereby fall away from Christ, provided he retains what is material in temporary faith, namely, assenting to God's Word as true. But whoever abandons these things, to that extent, falls away from Christ.

HEB. 6:4

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, who have tasted of that heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, (v. 5) and have tasted the good Word of God and the powers of the world to come, (v. 6) if they fall away, to be renewed again unto repentance."

From this passage, the adversaries attempt to prove that the truly regenerated and justified can completely and finally fall from grace. (See Script. Synod. art. 5. p. 237.)

We deny that those whom the Apostle speaks of here were truly regenerated.

1. For this passage, as our theologians after Athanasius rightly note, is to be understood concerning the sin against the Holy Spirit; it is not merely a simple sin, but a "παραπτώματιον"—a total apostasy. And that such a sin cannot fall upon the truly elect and justified is proven by countless passages of Scripture,

as has been seen above; this is also noted by Pareus in his commentary on this text.

2. Because those of whom he speaks here did not have "their senses exercised to discern both good and evil," nor were they capable of solid food. Indeed, they were in need of elementary instruction in the basic principles of Christianity, as is evident in chapter 5:12-14. But the Apostle says of the elect and truly believing, to whom he writes in verses 9 and 10 of this chapter, that he is "persuaded better things of them and things that accompany salvation," noting their diligent love by which they ministered to the saints.
3. Because the whole argument is formed by an affirmative from both premises in the second figure.

They who were regenerated were enlightened, tasted the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit. But those justified and regenerated to whom the Apostle writes are enlightened, have tasted the heavenly gift, etc. Therefore, etc. Otherwise, the major premise in its converse is manifestly false and addresses the matter in question.

4. Because when the Apostle here does not speak of more gross hypocrites but of professors who are somewhat more enlightened, it is not uncommon that those who were never truly born again may "taste" the sweetness of the Word and the felicity of the world to come with their lips. For in this context, "to taste" opposes a deep and rooted impression on the heart, affections, and powers of the soul. Hence, "to taste death" (Matt. 16:28), and Christ is said to have "tasted death," and yet we know He was not completely subjected to the dominion of death. Likewise, in 1 Pet. 2:3, it signifies an initial perception of grace,

which precedes the first birth and generation of an infant. To "taste death" is attributed to believers, of whom it is denied that they will die (John 11:26). Therefore, "to taste the powers of the world to come" does not necessarily mean to partake in eternal life, as those who have the "first fruits," but rather as those who do not partake. And although the material object of this tasting is the good Word of God and the powers of the world to come, it is not the formal object; for there is a great difference between loving a wife as a harlot with an adulterous love and loving her as a wife with a conjugal love. Similarly, celestial joy and spiritual gladness often affect Herod or the temporary believer as a pleasant good, while they affect the true believer as an honest good, but not under the same formal aspect. Just as a spiritual man has spiritual joy in God from temporal goods, so an unregenerate man can conceive a natural joy from a supernatural object. The affections and movements of the will and heart do not take their specification from the material object.

5. The participation in the Holy Spirit refers to the common gifts of the Spirit and the communication of the sacraments and the promises of the Gospel. Yet, although these extraordinary gifts are granted to temporary believers, there is a profound silence about the remission of sins, justification, sealing of the Spirit, the firstfruits of the life to come, or gratuitous election unto salvation—all of which are essential markers that distinguish the true believer from the non-believer.
6. The impossibility of renewal is never ascribed to the truly elect and believing according to the doctrine of the adversaries, who maintain that universal grace is readily available to all in this life. For what they imagine to be "ἀδύνατον"—meaning

"exceedingly difficult"—suggests a light penalty for a far more heinous sin, which is actually less severe than the punishment for a lesser sin.

7. To "crucify again the Son of God" does not more imply that the Son of God was once crucified for these individuals than it does for those who unworthily partake of the Lord's Supper, who are said to be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. Such people are not thereby considered as those for whom the body of the Lord was broken and His blood shed on the cross, as Amesius observes in his *Antisynodals*.

Thus, those who partake unworthily are not truly among the saints, even though they bear the outward signs of holiness, yet contain within themselves nothing of true sanctity. (See Jude, v. 12-13).

1 Timothy 1:19

"...which some have cast away, and so have made shipwreck concerning the faith." (v. 20) "Of whom are Hymenaeus and Alexander."

Question: Were Hymenaeus, Philetus, Alexander, Demas, David, Solomon truly regenerated and yet eventually apostatized? The Remonstrants affirm. We deny.

1. Because Hymenaeus and Alexander are said to have wandered from the faith, as from a mark or goal — that is, from the sound doctrine of faith, specifically, denying the chief article of faith, the resurrection of the dead. Here, *faith* is understood as the object of faith, or the faith that is believed, not as the habit of saving faith, or the faith by which one believes unto salvation.

For sound faith concerning the resurrection of the dead does not necessarily imply regeneration.

2. Many reject a good conscience who never had it. For they did not reject a good conscience in the formal sense, as though they had possessed it, but in the sense that they rejected the sound doctrine, which is interpreted as having a good conscience. Therefore, Paul places a specific exception and explains where their defection lay: "περὶ τὴν πίστιν ἐναυάγησαν" (they made shipwreck concerning the faith).
3. We do not deny that they rejected the same faith objectively that was in Timothy — that is, sound doctrine, which Timothy embraced savingly, but which they embraced only theoretically and tenuously, like those who possess the habit of sound theology acquired only through study until they denied the resurrection. But it was not the same faith in kind and nature; rather, they differed as the habit of faith or theology supernaturally infused in the truly regenerate, and the habit of faith or theology acquired through study and exercise, which even the unregenerate may have, like the wicked prophets and ecclesiastics (Matthew 7:22-23).
4. Because Demas loved the world more than was fitting for a faithful pastor, and, indeed, during a time of severe persecution, he deserted another faithful pastor. It does not follow, therefore, that he was an apostate.
5. Nor can it be rightly concluded that Demas was written in the book of life and elected because he salutes the saints in Colossians 4:14 and was an assistant to Paul, unless it were said in Philippians 4:3 that the names of all his assistants, without exception, were written in the book of life, which is not stated.

Yet, according to charity, Paul could have judged so of each one at that time.

6. Eminent theologians believe that Alexander, who risked his life for the Gospel with Paul, as mentioned in Acts 19, was eventually the most hostile enemy of Paul, referred to in 2 Timothy 4:14. Not all who suffer for the truth are necessarily truly regenerated; it is known, for example, that Socrates drank hemlock because he denied the multitude of gods.
7. We deny that David was an apostate because he did not walk in the works of the flesh. Neither does one or another work of the flesh necessarily exclude someone from the kingdom of heaven, except demeritoriously; for there is a great difference between David being a man of death demeritoriously and being excluded from the kingdom of heaven demeritoriously (which we acknowledge concerning David) and being a man of death formally and actually (which we deny concerning David). It is not significant what the adversaries say, that David was an apostate because he despised the word of the Lord and caused the enemies to blaspheme (2 Samuel 12), and at that point had no good works declarative of faith; for in this case, all the saints who sin and are sleeping would have fallen from grace. However, it is certain: 1. That he fulfilled notable roles as a judge at that time, and pronounced a sentence worthy of a good king upon the one who had taken away the lamb. 2. That God made an everlasting covenant with David. 3. That David prayed that God would not take away the Spirit of grace from him; therefore, he had the Spirit of adoption. 4. The Arminians cannot consistently with their principles say that a supernatural habit and power of believing, praying, and repenting was infused into him at the first sermon of Nathan the prophet, for they deny any

infusion of a supernatural habit; they also deny that prophetic sermons, which only operate persuasively and morally, infuse supernatural powers. Instead, they hold that all supernatural power for believing and repenting, and any habit, is acquired only through frequent actions and repeated exercise and diligence. However, it is known from history that David sincerely repented, believed, and composed Psalm 51, a truly penitential psalm, at Nathan's first sermon. Consequently, the seed of God, i.e., the habit of saving grace, lay hidden in David under that dreadful fall.

Finally, concerning Solomon, we say, with the Apostle, that he was not at all an apostate: 1. Because Scripture asserts that God Himself loved him; therefore, He loved him to the end (John 13:1), and he, in turn, loved God. 2. God promised never to desert Solomon, as He had deserted Saul, the apostate. 3. Although Solomon gravely sinned, it cannot be proven from Sacred Scripture that he placed his trust in idols or attributed divinity to them, as the pagans did. Though he, in a lamentable example, committed external acts of idolatry, he did not incite the people to idolatry, as Aaron did; he did not compel them, as Jeroboam did; he did not worship in his own person; nor did he place the idols in the Temple.

Philippians 2:21

"...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling."

Question: Does the very nature of exhortations, which serve to engender fear, thereby negate the reason for the promise by which God absolutely assures perseverance? The Remonstrants affirm this (Script. Synod. p. 278). We deny it.

1. Because, in the case of a physical and brute perseverance, wholly devoid of any knowledge, exhortations and moral persuasions

intended to produce fear concerning non-perseverance would be ridiculous. It would be as if God were to exhort the heavens and the earth to persevere in their existence, although they continue by a physical necessity (Psalm 119:90: "They continue to this day"). However, moral exhortations designed to produce fear are most appropriate means for those who are, morally and ethically, and with true understanding, to persevere absolutely according to the divine promise.

2. The reason for the absolute promise of perseverance is not nullified when a saint fears that he may fall away. For the fear of falling away, as a means of not falling away, is also absolutely promised. (Jeremiah 32:40-41).
3. The fear of falling away does not conflict with the promise that ensures one will never fall away, any more than the faith of David, which believed he would be king of Israel, conflicted with his pious caution in fleeing from Saul's anger and the hands that sought to kill him. Likewise, the faith of Joseph and Mary (who believed that God, by His irresistible power, would preserve the infant Christ alive until He reached maturity and, as an adult, offered Himself to God on the cross for the sins of the world) did not conflict with the pious caution by which Joseph and Mary fled into Egypt with the child, by special command of God, lest Herod should slay the infant Christ along with the other children.

For the faith that believes, "I shall absolutely persevere," and the fear that says, "I might not persevere," do not have contradictory objects; nor is there a contradiction in relation to the same thing. The object of faith is God's irresistible grace, working in me to ensure my caution against falling; the object of fear is the possibility of falling

away, assuming I am culpably negligent and less careful in persevering. The object of faith here is the irresistible action of God as promised; for my own action in persevering is not, properly speaking, the object of faith. The object of fear is my culpable negligence and lack of pious fear.

You might say, "Is it not unnecessary to fear falling away, since God will irresistibly prevent it?"

Answer:

1. God causes me to fear falling away, so that this fear becomes a means to secure my not falling away.
2. The non-production of pious fear in me by God is not the object of pious fear; indeed, it is a sin to fear what, by divine faith, we are to believe will not happen. The formal object of fear is my natural negligence and security, not my apostasy. Thus, fear, properly speaking, concerning the outcome, has no place here; only caution and a pious concern for the means.
3. There are two kinds of fear: one concerning the end, namely, eternal death; the other concerning the means leading to that end, namely, my sins. Fear concerning the end is of two kinds: absolute and conditional. Absolute fear concerning the end is when one fears eternal death as an impending event. This fear is not commanded of the regenerate in exhortations or warnings, for it is a fear of despair, to which God never exhorts anyone; and it is formally the guilt of unbelief, to fear that this event might happen, which turning aside rests solely with God, as the common saying goes: "It is ours to do our duty, but the event belongs to God." For fear, properly speaking, obliges us to believe that God is truthful in His threats, and therefore will actually inflict the evil He threatens. But to believe that God will

actually inflict eternal death is directly contrary to the faith by which the elect are bound to believe in final perseverance and eternal life.

Another kind of fear is a conditional fear; it is a dread and fear of eternal death being inflicted upon me, not simply, but on the condition that I should carelessly neglect the day of salvation, or if I have neglected it. This fear cannot but exist in one who believes with a "legal faith" in the threats of God, whether those threats are found in the Law or in the Gospel. The former fear, which is called "the fear of despair," because it formally includes sin, cannot be commanded of those who are justified. However, the fear of dread, which is called conditional, can indeed exist in one who is firmly persuaded that he will escape the evil, insofar as it is an event to be inflicted.

For who does not feel dread and fear when he sees another's head struck off by the sword, even if he is persuaded that he will escape that death himself? Who, standing on the edge of a riverbank near the brink of a deep and dangerous chasm, does not shudder, even if he knows with certainty that he will never fall in? As it is said in 2 Corinthians 5:11, "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." Paul was entirely convinced that neither the schemes of the world, nor the flesh, nor the devil could separate him from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:35-39). Yet even Paul was not without a felt dread and trembling concerning the final judgment.

There is also another kind of fear regarding the means; and this too is twofold: one is conditional, the other absolute. **Conditional fear** occurs when a regenerate person, assuming he is deserted, doubts and fears concerning God's favor and his own perseverance for a

time. As long as this doubt stands, it is evil and sinful to be secure instead of fearful, even though the doubter is obliged simply to put away his doubtful conscience and fear. Hence, this fear is rationally great under that hypothesis.

Absolute fear regarding the means occurs when a regenerate person fears lest he should indulge in sloth or suffer the penalties for his negligence and carelessness. This fear (when its object is final carelessness and impenitence) is the same as despairing over one's own perseverance and is damnable, because he who fears in this way doubts the outcome, which is properly God's domain; he doubts whether God will fulfill His promises to instill pious fear in the heart, as in Jeremiah 32:40.

However, when the object of this fear is the natural inclination to fall away, it is nothing other than the care to do what God commands, along with caution and the avoidance of laziness, indifference, and rebellion. In such cases, this fear is pious and a genuine effect of exhortations and threats.

Here, it is easy to answer the argument presented by the Synodists in Article 5, page 292. They argue that things which cannot, by their nature, accomplish what they are intended to accomplish are useless as means to that end. But, they say, the threats of eternal death made to the faithful, if they cannot fall away, cannot serve their purpose, which is to generate the fear of eternal death. Therefore, they conclude, such threats are futile.

Response: The threats of eternal death, when viewed with respect to the truly regenerate, are not threats in the proper sense; they contain something peculiar that does not exist in human threats, just as the promises, with respect to the reprobate and the non-believers, are not promises in the proper sense.

For these threats, as they pertain to the regenerate and inasmuch as they are directed to them, are not properly called threats; because this threat (I will inflict eternal death upon Peter if he remains impenitent) is equivalent to saying, (I will inflict eternal death upon Peter if I deny him the efficacious grace of faith and repentance); and this is equivalent to saying, (I will have Peter perish eternally if I have eternally reprobated him).

However, such a supposition posits nothing because a condition posits nothing when what is conditioned is a nonentity and nothingness. But Peter is not eternally reprobated. Therefore, the minor premise is false, and its proof is also false, because God does not wish that Peter, a believer, should fear eternal death. Nor are the threats intended to generate the fear of eternal death; rather, they are intended to promote caution and a careful use of means, in the manner of a person fearing eternal death.

For example, the threat (If David does not flee from Keilah, Saul will kill him) is not intended to make David fear that he will never be king of Israel or to doubt God, who said through the prophet that he would be king of Israel. Similarly, when God says to Christ, (flee from the people who are trying to stone you), it does not mean, (fear that you will never redeem the world by the death on the cross). What was said elsewhere regarding the evangelical promises proclaimed to all and each within the visible Church, though actually pertaining only to the children of the promise, as Paul says in Romans 9, is to be said here of the evangelical threats proclaimed to a mixed crowd, but in God's intention, only pertaining to the reprobate and the unregenerate.

The Question Arises: Are the Remonstrants correct to rhetorically argue against the necessary perseverance of

the faithful according to us? Article 5, pages 276-277, says: "You all who believe in my Son, and are therefore assured by an undoubting certainty of faith, at my will and command, indeed, with your hearts sealed to this very end, are persuaded that you can in no way, even by the most grievous sins, totally or finally fall away from the faith, and that I will effect perseverance in you by my irresistible grace, and that nothing is required of you besides thanksgiving; yet I warn, beseech, and exhort you to persevere in the faith, lest there be in you an evil and unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God; if you fall away, you shall perish forever; if you persevere, you shall be saved."

Response: This is nothing but mere empty rhetoric. Throughout this entire ridiculous discourse, God the Father might as well address His Son in this way: "Assure yourself, my Son, that it cannot happen but that, after 33 years or thereabouts, and after preaching the Gospel and performing glorious miracles, at the hour appointed and fixed by my eternal decree, you shall endure the ignominious death of the cross for the salvation of the human race; and this is as certain as that my decree cannot be rescinded and my knowledge cannot be deceived. Nevertheless, my Son, make sure in the meantime to flee from the violent hands of the Jews who seek to stone you or throw you headlong from the hill, lest perhaps you be stoned to death before that appointed hour instead of being crucified."

For just as an absolute decree and certain knowledge concerning such a future event can coexist with cautious fear, lawful care, and caution lest that event fail to occur, so too can God threaten with punishment those who do not persevere, even those who are preordained by God, through His irresistible grace, to persevere. Just as the cautious flight of Christ and His avoidance of the violent hands of the Jews, who sought to stone Him, coexisted perfectly with the

certainty of faith in Christ, by which He knew that He would not be killed before the hour appointed by God the Father, as these passages prove: John 11:53-54, Luke 4:29-30, John 10:39-40, Mark 1:45, compared with John 7:30, 8:20, 13:1, Matthew 26:45, Mark 14:41.

2. We do not teach anything of the kind, namely, that God instills in us the persuasion that, regardless of any grievous sins, we cannot totally and finally fall away from the faith.

To possess faith and to commit the most atrocious crimes with the full force and intent of the will (as the Remonstrants claim can happen to true believers) are truly ἀσύστατα (incoherent) and contradictory.

3. The strength of their argument rests on the claim that there is no force or efficacy in a threat that promises a punishment we are certain by faith will never be inflicted upon us. This is a weak argument.

1. Because the regenerate are not always fully and entirely persuaded, without any intervening doubt of conscience, that this evil will never actually be inflicted upon them. In such cases, the threat is useful to deter them from the sin that would merit that evil.
2. The threat of eternal death indeed would have no force for those who are certain by faith that they will escape eternal death, unless God had willed that the fear, or rather the horror, of eternal death be a means of avoiding the sin that leads to eternal death.

4. They place the supposed futility of the command in the fact that God commands an obedience (namely, perseverance) that He Himself effects in us irresistibly. This objection was also raised by the Pelagians, who could not tolerate

Augustine's words, "Give what You command, and command what You will." Meanwhile, they themselves cannot deny that God commands internal illumination of the mind, as it is written in Psalm 32:9, "Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding," while their doctrine also teaches that God irresistibly enlightens the mind. The same objection was once raised by carnal Jews in Romans 3, who claimed that it was impossible for men to be justified by the obedience of the Law, even though Paul exhorted men to perfect obedience to the Law under the penalty of eternal death, and at the same time denied that the Law was nullified but rather established.

5. To claim that our doctrine requires nothing from us except thanksgiving is a diabolical slander. For we teach that perseverance requires universal obedience to all God's commandments, without exception, not under the title and name of legal obedience, but as evangelical gratitude toward our Redeemer.

6. When they deny that commands or threats are means and instruments of our perseverance unless God works perseverance in a merely persuasive and entirely resistible manner, through a purely persuasive, contingent, mutable, and uncertain action of the Word, this is like denying that a pen is an instrument of skilled writing because the pen itself is not endowed with any skill. Certainly, the pen by itself does not skillfully inscribe letters, yet it does so when elevated above itself by the hand of a skilled writer. Likewise, the action of the Word as a means and instrument, even if it is merely persuasive and resistible, becomes more than merely persuasive when elevated by the Holy Spirit; indeed, it becomes necessary and irresistible.

Thus, it is vain for the Remonstrants to argue, as they do in Synodist Article 5, page 279, "If God works perseverance irresistibly through exhortations, then exhortations are not the means of perseverance, but some irresistible force brought about by exhortations would be the means." This is the same as saying, "If a writer writes skillfully with a brute, mindless pen, then the pen is not a medium or instrument of skilled writing, but some artificial force through the pen would be the means." For God working perseverance irresistibly through the Word and the Word itself, without the elevation of the Holy Spirit, working perseverance only resistibly, are no more in conflict than a pen that does not necessarily or skillfully write by itself and a pen that writes necessarily and skillfully in the hand of a skilled writer.

For it is known that the instrumental cause shares in the more eminent and noble action of the principal cause when it is elevated in its exercise by the principal agent, which it could not perform by itself and unassisted. The Word of God by itself is a dead letter, working only persuasively and resistibly, and it cannot by itself illuminate the blind or convert the soul. But the Word by God, that is, elevated above itself by the Spirit of God, is mighty to demolish strongholds in the soul (2 Corinthians 10:4) and is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes (Romans 1:16). It is not said to be power simply, but the power of God as exerted.

It is also false for them to say that the Word by itself has no efficiency in relation to perseverance if God works perseverance irresistibly; for the Word by itself has moral efficiency to produce perseverance, and elevated by God, it has more than moral efficiency. By itself, it has a mutable, contingent, uncertain efficiency; but elevated by God and animated by the grace of the Holy Spirit, it has an immovable, necessary, and certain efficiency. Otherwise, the Remonstrants must

acknowledge no higher action of God in procuring perseverance than a moral one, that is, they must teach with the Pelagians that all the grace required for the perseverance of the saints is merely the letter of the Law and the Gospel, which grace can be provided by any mere human pastor.

7. Although no one is certain by the certainty of faith that they will persevere unless they heed exhortations, and heeding them, in itself, is a contingent and mutable condition, yet heeding exhortations, as it is subject to God's decree of election and God's preordaining grace, is not that mutable and contingent condition of the jurists, which is indifferent to being or not being, as if a mere Pelagian cause, i.e., a mere free will were at work here. But obedience to exhortations is itself the perseverance immovably effected by God through grace, believed with the certainty of faith, and at the same time commanded by God. These things do not contradict one another.

Question: Can those who are certain of eternal life, as if it were already theirs, be moved to obedience by the promise of eternal life? The Remonstrants deny that those who already possess this good can be moved by such a promise (art. 5, p. 297). We affirm the contrary.

- 1. Because someone who is certain that he will outpace all his competitors and win the prize is moved to run more swiftly, knowing that he will obtain the prize only by running.** Likewise, one who is persuaded of eternal life is moved to run, because included in that persuasion is the knowledge that he will attain eternal life only by running. If, however, a person were certain that he would attain eternal life

whether he obeyed or not, whether he ran or not, then he could not be morally moved by the promise of eternal life to obey, run, or persevere. But the faithful are not taught this by Christ, and such an absolute certainty—ridiculous and vain—is falsely attributed to us by the Arminians.

2. Because Christ was certain of future glory, and yet, for the joy set before Him, He endured the cross, despising its shame (Heb. 12:2; Ps. 16:9-11). Christ says in John 15, "I have chosen you," and yet, in the same passage, He says, "Bear fruit and remain in Me." Did David, knowing he would be king of Israel, not accept the throne offered to him by the tribes of Israel because of the promise of the kingdom and his hope of it? This would be a strange conclusion indeed.

3. The elect do not yet have eternal life in act and possession, but we are saved in hope (Romans 8:24), and that hope is proven false if it does not rest on sincere obedience as a secondary foundation (1 John 3:3; 2 Cor. 5:7). Indeed, this hope produces a fear accompanied by religious caution, causing us to avoid sin (though not with a fear of despair concerning the outcome) and filial reverence, whose object is the goodness of God (Hosea 3:5; Ps. 130:4), by which we do not fear anything as a punitive evil (2 Cor. 7:15). This is not, however, a servile fear marked by terror and trembling.

Question: Do the faithful, when they sin so grievously as to be men of death (2 Sam. 12:7) and incur the guilt of eternal death unless they repent, therefore fall totally from the grace of God? The Arminians affirm this (art. 5, p. 303). We deny it.

1. **Because the Lord has promised to raise up the righteous whenever he falls** (Ps. 37:24).
2. **Because not only for grievous sins but also for lesser sins, even for idle words, do they demeritoriously incur the guilt of eternal death if God were to enter into judgment with His servants.** But the Adversaries will not say that, for the slightest sins, men totally and finally fall from grace.
3. **Because God is angry at the sins of believers, but not at their persons** (Ps. 89:30-34). Nor do the more grievous sins of the regenerate cause God, with whom there is no change or shadow of turning (James 1:17), to alter His choice from electing to eternal life to rejecting.

Matthew 16:18.

"Upon this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

In these words, we have the promise of Christ concerning the unshakable perseverance of the saints, such that those built upon the Rock—whether Christ Himself or Peter's confession—cannot perish.

Question: Does God promise perseverance to believers not absolutely, but conditionally, provided they remain vigilant, pray, and perform their duties? The Remonstrants affirm this (art. 5, p. 293). We deny it.

In the meantime, we note that the promise of perseverance, according to the state and condition of those who receive it, can be described either as dissolved or as absolute. The dissolved promise is

for carnal men who turn the grace of God into lasciviousness—such as our adversaries falsely accuse us of, as though God promised perseverance to those who are slothful or even walking according to the flesh. Such a promise is not recognized by us. The other is absolute, as it is distinguished from the conditional. For although all in whom God fulfills the promise of perseverance necessarily watch, pray, and perform their duty, yet to watch, pray, and perform one's duty is not a qualifying condition of the person in whom the promise of perseverance is fulfilled; rather, it is the very thing promised.

Further, there is one type of personal condition, or passive condition, namely, if one is elect according to God's purpose, then the promises of perseverance are made to him absolutely. Another is a condition of duty, or an active condition; thus, to one who is negligent or slothful in duty, the promise of perseverance is not given absolutely and indiscriminately. We maintain, according to the Scriptures, against the Remonstrants, that the promise of perseverance is not conditional but absolute.

- 1. Because if God promises perseverance in faith provided they pray, watch, and perform their duty, then God promises perseverance only if they persevere:** for we are commanded to persevere in praying, in watching, and in performing our duty (1 Thess. 5:17; Matt. 26:41; Eph. 6:18; Gal. 6:9). Indeed, in this way, either God would promise perseverance to devils and those fallen into the sin against the Holy Spirit—which is absurd—or God only promises the potential for perseverance, not actual perseverance, which contradicts Scripture (Jer. 32:40; 33:35-37; Isa. 54:10-12; 59:21-22). This also conflicts with the prayers of the saints, who pray for actual perseverance, not potential perseverance; for potential perseverance is not perseverance at all, and such prayers of the

saints would be answered even if all believers were to become the most wretched apostates (Matt. 6:13; Ps. 71:9). It is also against Christ's prayers (Luke 22:31; John 17:15, 20; Rom. 8:38). Lastly, the potential for perseverance is merely the faculty of freely persevering or finally falling away, which God could not promise without deceiving us.

2. **Because the question will arise again: does not God, in promising us perseverance, also promise us the grace to persevere in praying, watching, and performing our duty (since to perform one's duty is itself perseverance)?** If He promises the grace to watch and to perform our duty, He promises it either conditionally or absolutely. If the former, there will be an infinite regress. If the latter, we have what we intended to prove. If He does not promise the grace to persevere in performing duty, then such perseverance is without any grace promised to us by God and is a matter of pure free will.
3. **To suspend actual perseverance upon the acts of our free will is pure Pelagianism;** for thus our free will is established as the efficient cause, the sovereign and independent fabricator of election and reprobation, salvation and damnation.

Question: Has Christ chosen no one to persevere and predestined them graciously from eternity? The Remonstrants affirm that no one is said to be peremptorily and irrevocably elected to glory except the one who finally perseveres and dies in true faith, so that even perseverance is not dependent on the gracious predestination of God but is said to be suspended on the fickle, inconstant, and variable will of free choice. We teach the

opposite: namely, that perseverance is the effect of gratuitous election to glory.

1. **Because in Ephesians 1:3-6**, we are said to be chosen before the foundation of the world to live blamelessly and to the praise of grace. Therefore, we are also chosen unto final sanctity.
2. **Because the intention and purpose of Christ in dying and giving Himself up for His church is** (Eph. 5:27) that He might present to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. Therefore, He destined it from eternity to this perfection and consummate holiness.
3. **Because God has predestined us through the sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience** (1 Pet. 1:2), and in verses 3-4, He has begotten us again unto an incorruptible inheritance, undefiled, reserved in heaven for us.
4. **Because, in 1 Thessalonians 5:9**, God has not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, He has predestined us to the necessary means of that salvation, which is perseverance in faith.
5. **Because God works in us both to will and to do according to His good pleasure** (Phil. 2:13). Therefore, according to that gracious good pleasure, He has decreed from eternity to work constantly in us to will and to accomplish unto the end.
6. **Because if perseverance depended on free will and not on the grace of election, then salvation would depend on works and on us and our free will.**

7. **Because we are God's workmanship, created for good works, which God prepared beforehand** (Eph. 2:10). Therefore, we are created for continuous good works and final perseverance.
8. **That faith which is called "the faith of the elect" is so called because it is given only to the elect from this sole source, because they are elected.**
9. **If from this golden chain in Romans 8:30**, God glorifies us because He predestined us from eternity, then He also continues our effectual calling to the end because He predestined us.

Question: Has Christ, by the merit of His death, obtained perseverance for the elect? The Remonstrants deny this so that they may not be compelled to say that the elect, who cannot be deprived of the benefits purchased by Christ's death, cannot fail to persevere. We teach the opposite.

1. **Because God has blessed the elect with every spiritual blessing in Christ** (Eph. 1:3). Therefore, also with perseverance in Christ.
2. **Because Christ gave Himself up to death for His church so that He might present it glorious and without blemish to God the Father** (Eph. 5:27). Therefore, by His death, He merited that we should be finally and completely sanctified. For since He died that we might have the remission of sins through His blood, it follows that remission is merited for us by the death of Christ.

3. **Because, as stated in 1 Peter 2:24, Christ bore our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness.**
4. **Because, in Romans 5:2, through Jesus Christ, we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.**
5. **Because God cannot but grant us all things with Christ, who was delivered up for us all (Rom. 8:32). Therefore, also perseverance.**
6. **Because we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us, especially in overcoming sin (Rom. 8:37).**

These points clearly demonstrate that perseverance is both the effect of God's eternal election and the merit of Christ's redemptive work on the cross.

Acts 2:21

"And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

Question: Does the promise of final perseverance and salvation adhere immediately only to faith that endures to the end, that is, to faith considered only in its entirety as it lasts to the end, so that faith is not seen as essentially living and true, but rather as only worthy of the gracious reward of eternal life by its enduring to the end? The Remonstrants affirm this in Article 5, page 189. We deny it.

1. Because eternal life is promised to a true believer even in the last hour of life, at the eleventh hour, as in the case of the thief who

believed sincerely, even if that faith lasted only for a day or a few hours. As it is written, "He who believes has eternal life."

2. Partial faith, that is, faith that endures for a short time, is not essentially or specifically different from the total faith that the Remonstrants describe as enduring to the end. If, therefore, someone were to die in that faith which endures for a short time, they would be saved (as it is written, "He who believes shall be saved"). Thus, we have our conclusion: either they would be saved, or they would perish eternally, and thus someone who truly believes in Christ would perish, which contradicts the whole gospel.
3. From this doctrine, it follows that the promise of eternal life is not granted by grace and through the gracious good pleasure of God, but is instead dependent upon the meritorious duration and rootedness of faith in the subject. It would mean that faith lasting for a shorter time is insufficient to receive the reward of eternal life, and only total faith is graciously considered worthy of the reward of eternal life. This also contradicts their own teaching, as they declare in their Apology, Chapter 18, page 182, that the elect who are temporarily and revocably chosen are truly and in reality chosen to participate in the promised life in the gospel for the time during which they believe. Thus, they have, by virtue of the divine promise and the merits of Christ, a right to eternal life for that time.
4. According to this assertion, if a true believer in Christ, who has believed for 70 or 80 years, is suddenly overtaken by death due to some unexpected contingency preceding the decree of God, and at the very hour in which he does not believe, he would necessarily suffer the eternal punishment of momentary

infidelity in hell, and would be deprived of the reward for the saving faith he held throughout his life. Conversely, if someone who has not believed but lived in unbelief for 70 or 80 years were to believe even for an hour before death, that momentary faith would be crowned with the reward of eternal life. Meanwhile, this whole dispensation is, according to a created free will, not determined by God from eternity or in time, but acting randomly and contingently, more changeable and uncertain than the hinges of a door or the wheels of a chariot. Consequently, it necessarily follows that no one can be certain of the complete remission of their sins or of eternal glory; no one is truly justified, no one covered by the righteousness of Christ, no one truly elected to glory in this life. This would certainly torment the pious souls of believers with perpetual uncertainty, depriving them of all living hope, certain trust, solid peace of conscience, stable joy in the Holy Spirit, and pure and vivid consolation.

Although the Remonstrants believe it necessary to contend for the apostasy of the saints as though they were defending their altars and homes, they still leave this issue open as a debatable matter on both sides, as mentioned in *Scriptura Synodica*, pages 186-187. They question whether God, by His absolute right and in some extraordinary manner, might reward certain believers—who have been long and greatly exercised in the pursuit of godliness and tested by temptations as by fire—with the gift of indefectible perseverance. However, we do not consider this to be disputable in the slightest.

1. Because God graciously bestows the grace of indefectible perseverance upon all who are born again.

2. Scripture does not recognize any gift that is not obtained by the merits of Christ, who establishes and confirms all His own until the day of His glorious coming (Ephesians 1:3). Therefore, there is no such absolute right concerning certain particular believers.
3. The idea of a reward for those who have long been exercised in the pursuit of piety and tested by temptations, and a reward given on the basis of absolute right, are mutually contradictory. For every reward of obedience is according to strict justice, and strict justice and absolute right are at odds with each other. Otherwise, God could, by His absolute right, reward infants newly regenerated with indefectible perseverance—a notion that the Arminians would not concede. Indeed, the Apologists themselves acknowledge, in chapter 17, page 195, that God reserves the full right to grant such a gift to certain individuals whose service He wishes to use for the conversion of others, by an extraordinary and irresistible calling. Thus, for the Arminians, this is a disputable issue, and they find the doctrine of Calvin and the Reformed Churches to be highly probable.
4. Given indefectible and absolute perseverance, and thus absolute election to glory, it is very likely that the Reformed Churches teach rightly and soundly.
5. Evangelical exhortations, commandments, threats, and promises can indeed be proposed to the Prophets, Apostles, and others long and greatly exercised in the pursuit of piety. Thus, God may rightfully threaten eternal death to those whom He has determined to preserve unto eternal life by the gift of indefectible perseverance and the operation of irresistible grace (which, however, is condemned in our doctrine). And God may morally attract those confirmed by the gift of indefectible

perseverance with the hope of eternal life as an argument; and God may command those to persevere who, nevertheless, cannot help but persevere due to the force of the irresistible operation of grace—this too is condemned by our opponents.

6. It is highly probable that the doctrine is true that the Prophets, Apostles, and others who persevere indefectibly can freely sin and freely persevere, and yet, by the irresistible and indefectible grace, they continue to persevere and obey.
7. The Christian religion remains intact even if men are said to sin freely and also cannot but sin by the necessity of God's decree; and to obey freely, and yet, by the necessity of the decree and the salvific grace of regeneration, cannot but obey.
8. It is a probable opinion regarding absolute election without any foresight of faith or merits, and absolute reprobation based purely on God's good pleasure.
9. It follows that, according to Arminian doctrine, those confirmed Apostles and others endowed with the gift of indefectible perseverance: 1. Cannot lie, steal, perjure, act unjustly, or fall into sins that destroy the conscience. 2. It follows that such persons are subject to no law, no command, no promises or threats of the Law or Gospel. 3. There is no need for them to fear God, guard themselves against sins and the snares of temptation from the world, the flesh, and the devil; but they may securely sleep on both ears, neglecting prayer, diligence, and the careful working out of their salvation with fear and trembling. 4. Confessing sins, lamenting and grieving over the indwelling sin with Paul in Romans 7, asking for the forgiveness of sins, hoping for eternal life if they persevere to the end, praying for the grace of Christ by which they persevere—all these would be useless

and ridiculous to such individuals. Yet all these consequences and many others are objected against our doctrine of the absolute perseverance of the saints.

Question: Is a person judged by divine judgment to persevere in faith if: (1) they do not sin against the clear and evident dictates of both natural reason and supernatural revelation; and (2) they apply a moderate diligence to correct and amend their weaknesses, to which all people are more or less subject, depending on their temperament, age, place, and other circumstances? The Remonstrants affirm this in these words (art. 5, p. 189). We deny it.

1. Because they posit that every sin committed against the clear light of conscience, together with the sin of weakness to which one does not resist, makes one an apostate. According to this reasoning, those who speak idle words, who lie in jest, who provoke a brother with reproach, without any pang of conscience for such sins, would be considered apostates by divine judgment. Indeed, by this measure, one and the same person who believes salvifically could be an apostate a thousand times in a year or even in a month.
2. Neither would idolatry among the Indians, nor adultery in those nations where they practice promiscuous marriages and believe such unions to be lawful, be regarded as sins that devastate the conscience or drive out saving faith. This is because, in such cases, neither the dictate of natural reason nor that of supernatural revelation is clear and evident; rather, their minds and consciences are defiled, as it is written in Titus 1:15: "To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure." And those who kill the Apostles and the most faithful pastors of Jesus Christ think that by doing

this they offer service to God (John 16:1, 2), and they commit such sins without any dictate of conscience protesting. Yet, if such sins existed in those who are regenerated, they would indeed make them true apostates. Therefore, it is possible for a person to be an apostate who does not sin against the clear and evident light of conscience.

3. Because they do not acknowledge any principle of sin in the regenerate except for temperament, age, place, and other circumstances. Yet, there is in all the regenerate indwelling sin, the old man, the flesh, and the lust that continually rises up against the Spirit of God.
4. Because the pagans, according to the adversaries, could for a time neither sin against conscience nor against supernatural revelation; this is something that Cicero, Seneca, Aristides, and others demonstrated in their moral virtues, as they teach. Furthermore, they could also, according to them, apply moderate diligence in correcting the weaknesses of temperament, age, and place. Therefore, pagans, in the divine judgment, would for a time persevere in true faith.

Romans 7:17

“It is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.”

From this, the Apostle concludes, based on the struggle between the flesh and the spirit, that he does not sin with full consent and determination of the will, when he says, "It is not I who do it," that is, not I insofar as I am regenerated, and insofar as the Holy Spirit dwells in my will, mind, and affections, which makes the acts of sin more restrained and less intense. Therefore:

Question: Are all the sins of the regenerated merely sins of weakness, according to our theologians? The Remonstrants affirm this in *Script. Synod.* Article 5, page 211.

We respond with a distinction. The term "sin of weakness" is used in two ways.

1. It is used in opposition to sin that is committed from the dominion of reigning and prevailing concupiscence. In this sense, our theologians—Calvin, Beza, Zanchius, as cited in the *Coll. Hag.* Article 5, page 31—rightly teach that all the sins of the regenerated are sins of weakness, because they always sin with some resistance from the Spirit.
2. Those sins are also called "sins of weakness" which are of daily occurrence, such as natural lapses and blemishes that cling to even our best works. In this sense, it is false to say that our theologians teach that all sins of the regenerated are sins of weakness.
3. For the adultery of David, the idolatry of Solomon, the injustice and violence of Asa in imprisoning the prophet of God were grievous sins.
4. Because the saints, at times, indulge in carnal security, not without serious contempt for the calling of Christ. *Canticles* 5:2, 3, 4.
5. Because God, to increase their humility, sometimes permits the regenerate to fall into more grievous sins, so that they may perceive how little they are when forsaken by God, and what great thanks they owe to God, through the Mediator Christ, for the grace that strengthens them.

Question: Do the Remonstrants rightly condemn our theologians for teaching that the truly regenerated cannot sin with deliberate intent, with the full force of the will, with full consent, and with a settled malice? They do so on this account, in *Script. Synod.* Article 5, page 211.

We respond that sin committed with deliberate intention occurs in two ways:

1. Sin is committed with deliberate intention when it is done with knowledge and *διάνοια* (intent), after weighing the reasons on both sides, considering the advantages and disadvantages that would follow from the sin, and even contemplating the greatness and infiniteness of the divine Majesty and the wrath of the offended Deity. In this sense, it has never been denied by our theologians that the regenerated too frequently sin with deliberate intention.
2. Sin is committed with deliberate intention when the act is done with full, most composed, and entirely free deliberation, with the whole effort, striving, and impetus of the will, without any contrary act of the grace of the Spirit, as if the Spirit itself were protesting against and resisting the sin. This contrary resistance may be either the habitual or actual uprising of the Spirit's grace against the flesh, which seeks to make a man captive to sin. In this manner, we teach that the truly regenerated never sin.
3. Because sin does not reign or have dominion over them. Romans 6:4, 5, 6, 11, 14. The dominion of sin is characterized by the full consent of the will to sin, with avaricious agreement. Ephesians 4:19.

4. Because the regenerated are not slaves to sin, nor are they bound to the lusts of their desires, since their old self has been crucified. Romans 6:16–21; Romans 8:9, 10, 11; Ephesians 5:8; Colossians 3:1, 2, 3.
5. Because in the regenerated, the Spirit and the law of the mind—that is, the soul, mind, conscience, will, and affections, insofar as they have been renewed—oppose the flesh in all their sins. Thus, the consent to sin is diminished, and the intense effort and striving of the will, which was once at its strongest when one lived in the flesh and its desires, are weakened and slackened; so much so that the regenerated do not sin with the whole heart but with a part that resists being renewed. This is evident from Romans 7:17 and 23, where, just as a captive obeys a lord or tyrant to whom he is subjected with half his will or without full consent of the will, so the regenerated sin with half-hearted consent. And Galatians 5:17 shows that the Spirit and the flesh are like two men, two leaders, at war with each other within every regenerate person.
6. Because in 1 John 3:9, the regenerate cannot sin (that is, with full consent, from given malice and a corrupt habit; otherwise, there is no one who cannot sin, 1 John 1:8). And this is explained by "πᾶς τὸς γεγεννημένος ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ οὐχ ἁμαρτάνει," because His seed remains in them, and the anointing which teaches all things remains in them. 1 John 2:27. They have received the spirit of adoption. Romans 8:15. They have received the spirit which is from God. 1 Corinthians 2:12. The Father and the Son make their dwelling with them. John 14:23. Christ dwells in the heart through faith. Ephesians 3:17. They have the Spirit of God. Romans 8:9. They have within them the fountain of living water springing up into eternal life. John 4:14, that is, the Spirit of

God. John 7:38, 39. Hence, it is evident that habitual grace, that is, the Spirit of God once promised (Isaiah 44:3, 4; 54:11, 12; Ezekiel 36:26, 27; Zechariah 12:10; Joel 2:28, 29; John 6:45), remains in them. Through this grace, it is impossible for the whole heart and will to exert their full consent, strength, and utmost intensity toward sin; but they are rather held back, diminished, and subdued by God's grace. Just as an agent whose powers are broken, weakened, and subdued produces actions consistent with those subdued powers, not the most intense; just as fire heats a cold hand differently than warm water does. Hence, because of this resistance from the indwelling Spirit, the sin of the regenerate is lesser and lighter. Thus...

It is asked whether the resistance and reluctance of the Spirit against the flesh, in every sin of the truly regenerate, makes the sin less and lighter, so that on account of this resistance, it does not arise from the full consent of the will. The Remonstrants deny this. (Article 5, pages 255-256.) They assert that this resistance rather aggravates the sin of the regenerate than diminishes it; indeed, they argue that it reveals how vehement the consent of the will is in sinning, since, even with the conscience protesting, it could not prevent the will from consenting. Thus, they claim, this resistance increases and promotes the fullness of consent rather than diminishing and retarding it.

But I think here we must distinguish between:

1. A sin that is absolutely graver and a sin that is relatively graver, according to certain circumstances; or in regard to the scandal caused outwardly and in regard to the sin in itself.
2. A sin graver in terms of guilt and a sin graver in terms of the intensity and measure of the action.

3. The resistance with which the sinner himself cooperates and contributes, and the resistance against which the sinner himself resists, opposing his own strength.
4. A sin in terms of opposition, and a sin in terms of dominion.

Assertion 1: Sin is considered either:

1. In respect to the subject in which it occurs;
2. In respect to the free principle from which it flows;
3. In respect to the circumstances surrounding it.

In the first sense, regarding the matter of scandal, the adultery and murder of David, the prophet, are more grievous and bring greater blasphemy to the name of God among the Philistines and profane men than the incest of Absalom or the parricide of Adrammelech and Sharezer, who killed their father Sennacherib.

2. If we speak of sin in the category of obligation, due to the connection with God's benefits, the one who knows the will of the Lord sins more gravely and is punished more severely than the one who is ignorant. In this way, in the category of sin against the obligation of beneficence, the sin of the regenerate, who sins:
 1. Against the death of Christ,
 2. Against the grace of regeneration,
 3. Against the benefits of saving illumination,is graver than that of the unregenerate, who is not bound by so many benefits.

But if we speak of sin in the category of sin simply, insofar as it injures and violates the authority of the Lawgiver, then the unregenerate sin with a higher hand, a more secure conscience, and

a lighter touch and sense of the Divine Majesty, and thus with a more intense effort of their free will.

Assertion 2: In respect to the free principle from which sin flows, the unregenerate sin more grievously than the regenerate, because the less voluntary and the less vicious and culpable the inclination in the sin, the less there is of ἀνομία (lawlessness), and the less malice there is in the sin. But in the regenerate who sin, there is less voluntariness and less vicious inclination to sin than in the unregenerate. For in the regenerate, there is, as it were, a half-will—that is, the will, insofar as it is renewed and affected by the holy habit of grace, is inclined not to sin, and thus detracts the greatest part of consent from the sin to which the will, affected by the indwelling flesh, consents.

Thus, it is easy to answer the argument of the Remonstrants: It is graver to sin even while the conscience is protesting and the spirit is resisting in the opposite direction than to sin simply; but it would be far graver, and the act of consenting would be far more intense, if the Spirit were not present to resist, as He is not in the unregenerate, in whom the entire will, with the totality of its powers converging on the sin, gives full consent without any holy resistance in the opposite direction. Hence, an action culpable from a conscience seared with a hot iron and suffering from an evil heart is a far graver sin.

Assertion 3: In regard to circumstances and in some respects, the sin of the regenerate is more grievous than that of the unregenerate. For the regenerate sin against a greater illumination of conscience; and in this sense, their sin is indeed graver, as is evident.

Assertion 4: In terms of guilt, the sin of the unregenerate is graver than that of the regenerate because:

1. Sinners are outside of Christ.
2. They are wholly flesh.
3. They sin with full force.

Yet, sometimes, in regard to the matter and measure of the action, it can happen that the sin of the regenerate is graver than the sin of the unregenerate. For example, David sinned more gravely in committing murder than Absalom did in his officious lie, because in David's case, the matter was more severe and the sin more grievous. However, an unregenerate person, as a servant and slave, may serve a lesser sin as if it were a reigning master, while a regenerate person may not serve a much graver sin (such as adultery or murder) because such sin is a subdued and conquered slave through the grace of God.

Assertion 5: Sometimes, the resistance of the conscience diminishes sin; and this is always the case with the regenerate. Sometimes, resistance aggravates sin; and this is always the case with the unregenerate. Resistance diminishes sin when we sincerely align ourselves with the holy resistance, contributing our strength and consent to it. This occurs:

1. When we stand on the side of the conscience and the Spirit resisting the flesh.
2. When we grieve that the spirit has been overcome and the flesh has gained the victory.
3. When the greater inclination of the will tends toward the side of the spirit, even if we are not able to fully accomplish this. (Romans 7:18: "For I know that nothing good dwells in me, that is, in my flesh.") That is, even if the omission of good follows or the actual victory of concupiscence, just as a captive has a greater inclination of will toward walking freely than he has

strength to free himself from his chains. In this way, it is rightly said by our theologians that resistance diminishes sin. However, when we oppose the resistance of conscience and grieve that the conscience and spirit are resisting, wishing that such resistance would yield and not rise up against the flesh, then indeed, resistance aggravates sin. This occurs in the unregenerate whenever they sin, while natural reason and conscience protest; as was the case with Pilate, who condemned Christ against his conscience.

In spiritual sins, however, such as unbelief and spiritual security, natural conscience does not oppose the flesh. But in the regenerate, there is no such opposition accompanied by sorrow over the spirit resisting and yet being conquered by the flesh. Resistance also increases and intensifies guilt, rather than diminishing it, when that grief is not a pious resistance but rather from mere natural conscience and is joined with a burning hatred of God. As James 2:19 states, “The devils believe and tremble,” for the will of demons resists God whom they believe in, pursuing Him with hatred, and they wish there were no God, rejecting even the act of believing. Herod’s will resists the remorse that hinders him from killing John the Baptist and would wish for such resistance not to exist. However, the regenerate always consent to the resistance of the Spirit.

Assertion 6: In terms of the force of opposition, the sin of the unregenerate is far graver than that of the regenerate because the unregenerate use more strength in sinning than the regenerate. And in terms of dominion, the sin of the unregenerate is also graver, for sin has less dominion, and the evil inclination is weaker in the regenerate than in the unregenerate. The opposition of sin, with respect to multiple objects and extensively, is sharper and more vehement in the regenerate concerning the Spirit, because they have

a stronger adversary in the regenerate than in the unregenerate. For there is no spirit of grace in the unregenerate, nor does the flesh have such an adversary; therefore, the struggle is slower and weaker or almost nonexistent unless natural conscience opposes itself. But that is polluted and easily yields. For the natural pain and resistance arise because the unregenerate are offended by sin as something penal, not as something that offends God. But in the regenerate, resistance and remorse are present insofar as sin, as sin, is hated. (Romans 7:15: “For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do.”) Verse 22: “For I delight in the law of God according to the inward man.”

Assertion 7: Because of the light and the quality of spiritual illumination, there is more voluntariness in the sins of the regenerate. This is why David, in Psalm 51:6, aggravates his sin, saying, "You have made wisdom known to me in the secret place." However, in terms of the force of choice—which more deeply concurs with the reason of voluntariness than mere knowledge—there is far more voluntariness, and therefore much more guilt, in the sin of the unregenerate (in whom the *θέλημα* and the power of choice are wholly present, with full pleasure and consent) than in the sin of the regenerate.

It is of little consequence that some object, saying there cannot be two opposing wills concerning the same act when the regenerate person sins; they argue that before the regenerate sins, and while the soul is at a crossroads, the Spirit dissuades, making the sin of the regenerate perhaps less severe than that of the unregenerate. However, when the regenerate actually sins, and the flesh gains an actual victory over the Spirit, then the Spirit quiets, and the struggle ceases. To this, I respond: 1. Whether they are declaring ignorance or malice here, I do not know. For while a father disinherits an incorrigible son whom he wishes to correct and desires to enjoy his

inheritance, provided the son becomes virtuous; while a merchant throws goods overboard to save his life, yet wishes they could be saved; while one suffering from a fatal wound arranges for the amputation of a limb, which he would prefer to keep—all these actions, both before and during the act itself, involve a mixture of both voluntary and involuntary elements. In the very act, opposing principles coexist: natural love for the son and anger and hatred against the son's incorrigible vices; love of wealth and love of life are mixed and at odds in the same action. Just as a sprained ankle operates alongside the motive force in a limp, but with defective influence; and heat and cold coexist in the same process of warming; so too the flesh and the Spirit work together as one and the same free principle in the same action, both good and evil. Each contributes to the action, both by acting and by slowing down the intensity of the action. Hence, a supernatural good action is not the most intense because of the defective influence of the flesh, nor is a bad action the most intense because the Spirit subtracts some degree of voluntariness from the action.

2. The Remonstrants claim there is no conflict between concupiscence and the Spirit except before consent, but this is clearly false according to Romans 7:20: "Now if I do what I do not want to do" (where the reason for voluntariness lies on the side of "do not want"), "it is no longer I who do it, but sin living in me." By "sin," he denotes the part affected by flesh and corruption, in which there is some voluntariness; otherwise, it would not be actual voluntary sin in Paul, which is truly to deny this spiritual struggle.

Question: Do the truly faithful, by committing very grievous sins, not only avoid expelling the Holy Spirit and faith, but also retain the habit of faith under these sins in such a way that this habit remains

so pleasing to God that He is willing to grant eternal life because of it? The Remonstrants affirm this in Article 5, pages 195, 196, and 201, saying that we teach this. However, they heap many calumnies upon us in this regard. We respond with the following assertions:

Assertion 1: The habitual grace of the Holy Spirit is diminished, in terms of its degree, by the grievous sins of the regenerate. As it is written in Psalm 51:10, "Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me." Thus, the Spirit of God is greatly grieved (Eph. 4:30), so much so that His acts become weaker and more languid, and not as lively, vigorous, or easy as before. However, the habit of faith and habitual grace cannot be utterly eradicated. (1 John 3:9; John 14:23; 1 John 2:27).

Assertion 2: The acts of faith, repentance, and spiritual vigilance can be interrupted for a time under the sudden grip of wretched security; this is evident in David, who fell into negligence and sloth while committing adultery, and sought to defend the murder of Uriah with very frivolous arguments. It is also evident in the church, which, while sleeping securely, refused the entrance of the Bridegroom (Cant. 5:2). Experience in the saints shows this to be all too true.

Assertion 3: Here, we must recognize a threefold grace, favor, and love of God:

1. The first is the love of *eudokia* in gracious election. The regenerate cannot fall from this grace or love through any grievous sins.
 - First, because the firmness and immovability of this love do not depend on any works, acts, or conditions in the creature but solely on the grace of the One who calls (Rom. 9:11).

- Second, because this love and the decrees of God are altogether immutable (John 13:1; Rom. 11:29).
2. The second is the love of beneficence, which exists in God by way of execution, that is, in its effects. The regenerate can, in part, fall from this love through grievous sins. Thus, God deprived Solomon and others of many common gifts of the Spirit. After his dreadful defection, Solomon oppressed the people and lost the gift of governance to a great extent.
 3. The third is federal love, whereby God, according to the tenor of the Covenant of Grace, embraces His own. This love is to be considered in two ways:
 - First, as it is measured in relation to God's gracious election, and in this federal grace, the regenerate never fall, as previously proved.
 - Second, as it regards certain effects of federal grace, which can be interrupted and overshadowed by the grievous sins of the regenerate. Hence, 1) *Parrēsia* and *plerophoria* in prayer are diminished. 2) Spiritual joy ceases for a time. 3) Comforts become lukewarm. 4) The assurance of forgiveness, like a fire covered with ashes, lies hidden and obscured. 5) The regenerate experience some effects of the divine wrath, such as punitive terrors, under these sins (Psalm 89:39; Psalm 78:5-9).

Assertion 4: A regenerate person, under such grievous sins, retains within himself the internal habit of grace or the seed of God; thus, he remains truly faithful in habit and potential, though not actively fit to enter the kingdom of heaven until he repents (Rev. 21:27) because he is defiled. Nevertheless, he remains truly elect in God's decree and truly redeemed.

Assertion 5: The supernatural habit that remains in the regenerate under such grievous sins is, without a doubt, pleasing to God through Christ. For the new creation in the saints cannot be offensive to God; His image cannot but be pleasing to Him. But it is wholly false to claim, as the Remonstrants suggest, that we teach that this habit is so pleasing to God that He would grant repentance or even eternal life on account of it, even if there were no repentance.

1. Because eternal life and repentance are granted to the regenerate solely on account of Christ's merits.
2. Because unless the regenerate were to repent, they would necessarily perish forever, according to the Gospel warnings.
3. Because God, from the fountain of His gratuitous love in election, graciously revives the fallen regenerate; and just as from this source He gives repentance and perseverance, so He also restores interrupted perseverance from the same source, without any meritorious consideration of the habit of grace; for when the righteous falls, the Lord, with His hand upheld, lifts him up.

Question: Do the Remonstrants correctly deny any intrinsic and vital principle from which the very duration of faith necessarily follows, and likewise deny any external principle based on an absolute decree that would necessitate the perseverance of the elect? They assert this in the Synodical Writings, Article 5, page 140. We consider this to be blasphemy, and we present our position through the following assertions:

Assertion 1: There exists in all the regenerate a vital principle of eternal duration *de facto*, though not by the intrinsic power and virtue of eternal duration. For there is in them the *sperma tou Theou* (seed of God) (1 John 3:9), the law of God engraved on their hearts

(Jeremiah 31:33), a heart of flesh (Ezekiel 36:26), circumcised (Deuteronomy 30:6), a single heart and a new spirit (Ezekiel 11:19), a poured-out spirit (Isaiah 44:3; Zechariah 12:10), the abiding anointing in them (1 John 2:27), and Christ dwelling in their hearts through faith (Ephesians 3:17).

Assertion 2: Though this principle is never uprooted de facto, it is not intrinsically immortal or of eternal duration.

1. Because it does not prevent the saints from falling into the most grievous sins, from which, unless they seriously repent, they would perish eternally.
2. Because such a principle does not determine the regenerate to persevere or not to sin.
3. Because unless Christ intervened, habitual faith would fail (Luke 22:31). Therefore, by itself, it is not something immortal. However, as it pertains to the intention of God who predestines and de facto, it is rightly called an immortal seed.

Assertion 3: The external principles of our perseverance are the keeping power of God unto salvation through faith (1 Peter 1:5), the intercession of Christ (Luke 22:31; Hebrews 7:25; 9:24), and the actual grace of God (Philippians 2:13; 1 Corinthians 1:4; Jude 24). From these principles, the regenerate persevere, not out of a necessity of consequence, as falsely attributed to us, but out of a necessity of the consequent. The Arminians, however, contend that the saints persevere by no necessity at all—neither of the consequent nor of the consequence—but by the mere indifferent influence of free will, which allows all the regenerate to either stand or fall.

Question: Can an apostate, who once truly believed, by a certain knowledge whereby he recognizes the truth of what he once believed (even though that knowledge is devoid of all assent), rise again and

repent without the need for total regeneration or baptism? The Remonstrants affirm this in Article 5, page 176. We deny it.

1. Because it is Pelagian to suggest that a person could repent through mere knowledge, which even demons and the most hardened slaves of the devil and sin possess, when divine grace is required for repentance.
2. Because David prays in Psalm 51:10, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me," which is more than mere knowledge.
3. Because if such a one could rise from sins by his own efforts or the mere literal knowledge, then it would not be necessary for the preacher's proclamation to intervene.
4. If apostates have utterly cast off all saving faith, such that they are members of the devil, entirely excluded from God's favor and kingdom, and for the time being, non-elect (as they claim), then a new regeneration and the necessary means of baptism by God's command would be required.
5. Moreover, the knowledge that resides in the intellect cannot be extinguished by acts of the will, as they themselves affirm. Thus, the regenerate never totally fall, but retain within them an internal principle, namely, literal knowledge, by which they can restore themselves to a state of election, regeneration, grace, and adoption.
6. If such knowledge cannot be extinguished and is sufficient as a principle for rising again, then it would be false for Scripture to teach that it is impossible for those who have fallen into the sin against the Holy Spirit to be renewed, or to obtain forgiveness of sins in this life or the next (Hebrews 6:4-6; 10:26-27; Matthew 12:31-32).
7. The second regeneration will be accomplished by mere moral persuasion, without the infusion of a new vital principle. And

why should not the first regeneration be accomplished in the same way? What, then, would the grace of God be, if not a sounding letter?

Question: Do the Remonstrants correctly attribute to us the claim that God deserts us before we desert Him?

Response: This is a calumny. For if we speak of desertion in terms of merit, we desert God first.

1. Because the merit of sin precedes punishment.
2. Because God, punishing sins that precede by following sins, punishes by deserting sinners.

But if we speak of desertion in a purely negative and non-culpable sense, whereby God denies the grace of predetermination, which He owes to no one, then God deserts us before we desert Him:

3. Because God withdrew the grace of predetermination from Adam (or, as Calvin calls it in his *Response to the Slanders of a Rascal*, p. 1016, Fortitude and Constancy), by which grace, had it been given, he would have stood.
4. Because grace would not be grace if it depended on the whim of free will.

Question: Are the truly regenerate, who are justly excommunicated by the Church and delivered (by a non-erring key) into the hands of Satan, truly still believers and children of God, not excluded from the kingdom of heaven?

The Remonstrants deny this. We affirm it.

1. Because this conclusion is not valid: "Believers are justly and legitimately excluded from the kingdom of heaven in the ecclesiastical court; therefore, they are totally excluded from the kingdom of heaven in the court of God." For the primary

purpose of excommunication is eternal salvation; the accidental end is damnation (1 Corinthians 5:5).

2. Excommunication excludes from the kingdom of heaven only declaratively. Therefore, an excommunicated person, when the key is not erring, was already excluded from the kingdom of God; and is excluded only conditionally, as long as they do not repent. Thus, there is nothing here but an argument from divine threats, to which a response has already been made above.

Chapter 14:

Concerning the Certainty of Salvation

Romans 8:35.

"Who shall separate us from the love of God?"

The Apostle refers primarily to the active love of God, yet he does not entirely exclude God's passive love. Hence, the question arises:

Can anyone be certain that they are truly justified, in the grace of God, and assured of salvation? To properly frame this question, certain points must first be noted.

There are two kinds of certainty: that of the being and the object, or what is termed "entitative" and "objective." By this, the things of faith are most certain in themselves, particularly concerning general axioms and truths. Even our adversaries, both the Roman Catholics (Pontificii) and the Arminians, admit that this form of certainty is one to which falsehood cannot attach itself. However, the Arminians assert that many truths regarding future contingencies, even those foretold by God, are uncertain and open to either of two opposing outcomes. Thus, in the Old Testament, such things were not certain in themselves: for instance, whether Joseph would take Mary as his wife, or whether the Antichrist would come, or that the bones of Christ would not be broken.

Another kind of certainty is that of the mind, or subjective certainty, by which a thing is certain to me and my apprehension.

All subjective certainty relies on some form of objective certainty as its foundation. For no one can know with certainty that a thing is, unless it is certain in itself that the thing truly is. Arminians claim that the election, both peremptory and complete, of any person is never certain—neither with the certainty of the object nor the certainty of the mind—because it is not certain in itself that any person is absolutely elected until they die in faith and repentance. From this follows a natural wavering and uncertainty of the mind, stemming from the uncertainty of the thing itself.

Subjective certainty is further divided into two types. The first is intellectual certainty in the mind, by which I am assured of all truths found in the Word of God. The second is fiducial adherence or what the Scholastics call "certitude of affection," which pertains to the will and emotions, by which we lean on and hope in God.

The views of the Roman Catholics (Pontificii), Arminians, and Socinians differ greatly on this matter. Among the Roman Catholics, there are the older and the more recent views. The older views are the sounder ones. Cajetan, Scotus, Medina, Bannez, and Ambrosius Catharinus, in his "Apologia against Dominicus à Soto," hold that men can be certain they are in a state of grace. For this belief, Catharinus is censured by Franciscus de Sancta Clara in his work "De Natura et Gratia," problem 27, where he states, "I think Catharinus has fallen into Calvin's error by admitting this certainty to be a special grace, though granted to individuals." Yet, more recently, especially in the Council of Trent, Session 6, Chapter 6, it is taught presumptuously and heterodoxly that no one can know with the certainty of faith that they are in a state of grace, a certainty to which falsehood cannot attach.

Fiducial certainty, according to the Roman Catholics, is not generally and always present in the wayfarers (Viatoribus). Franciscus de Sancta Clara, however, softens this view of uncertainty, explaining Romans 8, "The Spirit Himself testifies, etc." He says, "I have spoken of a certainty of inclination or affection that arises from hope; and hence, among the Doctors of the Church, it is rightly called the 'certainty of hope,' which, though it may endure some fear, often excludes all actual fear of the opposite. For the time, it places in the soul a holy peace, security, and great confidence." We concede that the certainty of hope does not always and in every difference of time exclude all actual fear, although habitual fear may always remain. However, the Roman Catholics hold that this certainty does not exclude all habitual and actual fear, so that one may, indeed should, ordinarily fear and doubt whether he is in a state of grace, as taught by Gregory of Valencia (Tom. 2, Disp. 8, Quaest. 4, Puncto 4).

To the Apostles and the Virgin Mary, he attributes a certainty that excludes both the power and the act of fearing. To those who are highly familiar with God and His love, he grants a different kind of certainty, which excludes the act of fearing but not the power of it; though these rarely doubt so prudently that they might find signs of their salvation. Lastly, he assigns a third type of certainty, namely, a probable and conjectural knowledge of grace and salvation, to the common faithful.

The **Arminians and Socinians** do not grant any certainty of hope to anyone that would exclude all fear of ultimately falling away. Many Roman Catholics (Pontificii) deny the certainty of faith but admit the certainty of hope or confidence. The Arminians deny both.

1. They allow for a temporary certainty whereby a person, without any fear, may know and be assured that they are justified. But,

they maintain:

- No one in this life can know whether they are peremptorily elected to glory.
 - No one can know whether they have full remission of all sins and complete justification if they might ultimately fall away.
 - They declare that no mortal can have full certainty, excluding all potential or actual fear of the opposite, that they will persevere and be glorified.
2. They advocate for a hypothetical certainty of salvation and perseverance, stating that a person may be certain they will persevere in grace, provided that by free will they do not fall short of God's grace; but they deny absolute certainty. Indeed, they argue against the Jesuits, asserting that no mortal can know whether there will be any future bride of Christ in heaven, since they teach that all mortals could completely and finally fall away. Thus, the Arminians deny the certainty of faith in general, not only its application to individual believers, especially on the point concerning the apostasy of the saints.
 3. They consider it probable that some confirmed in grace might possess absolute certainty of their perseverance and salvation, which excludes all fear.

Thus, the question is not:

1. About extraordinary certainty, derived from extraordinary revelation.
2. Nor about the certainty of the object and being, although the Remonstrants also cast doubt upon this, suggesting it is possible that no one is actually redeemed and saved through Christ. The

Jesuits are more moderate here, conceding a suitable and vague necessity for the perseverance and salvation of the elect. The Arminians, however, deny all necessity.

3. Nor is it a question of conjectural and moral certainty, but of infallibility and a quasi-physical necessity, which by obligation excludes every act and power of fearing a final fall.
4. Nor is it about certainty obtained through natural revelation, but about that which is obtained through spiritual grace and the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit.
5. Nor is it asked whether the certainty of perseverance and their own salvation should always exist in every difference of time in the believer, but rather whether it ought to exist by right?
6. Nor about the certainty of those in a state of sin or those who do not use the means of perseverance in the fear of the Lord.
7. Nor about experiential certainty or certainty of sense, but about the certainty of faith.
8. Nor is it a question of present certainty, which the Arminians grant; but rather about future certainty—namely, whether they can be sure they will never totally and finally fall away?
9. Nor about that certainty which relies on the acts of free will, for which the Remonstrants argue; but about that which rests upon the merits of Christ and His grace.
10. Nor, finally, is it about that certainty which generally includes confidence and excludes fear. Such a certainty is granted by the Jesuits to some who have been long exercised in piety and faith; and by the Arminians, to some confirmed in grace.

The question, therefore, is this: Can adult believers be certain, not only in the present but also concerning their future state, with the certainty of intellect and supernatural trust, excluding all fear to the contrary (not indeed in every difference of time and in fact, but

by right) of their final perseverance and eternal salvation, absolutely assured by that special grace which is peculiar to the elect?

The Roman Catholics (Pontificii) and Arminians deny this; we affirm it.

1. Because in Romans 5:1-2, it is written: "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." The regenerate have a certainty of faith and hope that they shall be glorified; therefore, they have such certainty.
2. In Romans 8:38-39, Paul says: "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." And in Colossians 2:2: "That their hearts might be comforted, being knit together in love, and unto all riches of the full assurance of understanding, to the acknowledgment of the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ."

From this, if believers are persuaded by faith and receive consolation from it, that they will be saved, then they should not fear final apostasy.

2. Those to whom it has been promised that it is impossible for the truly regenerate to fall totally and finally from grace—this is due to the eternal predestination of God (Romans 8:30; 2 Timothy 2:19; Romans 11:29). Likewise, due to the intercession of the Son (Luke 22:31; Hebrews 7:25; John 17) and the sealing of the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption (Ephesians

4:30), they ought to, and indeed can, believe these promises to be true and be assured of them.

But such promises of their final perseverance have been made to all believers, as has been demonstrated above. The response of the Arminians to this has already been diluted. The evasion of the Roman Catholics, namely that believers cannot know with certainty of faith that they believe savingly, is (1) a begging of the question and (2) contrary to Scripture. As it is written: “And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments” (1 John 2:3), and again, “We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brothers” (1 John 3:14).

3. Whatever the Spirit of God testifies to us to be true, we are, by duty, to believe as true. The Spirit testifies to each of the faithful (1) that they believe, (2) that they will persevere to the end, and (3) that they will be saved. Therefore, these are to be believed as a duty. This is supported by Romans 8:16, “The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.” And if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him (Romans 8:17).

It is futile for Bellarmine to appeal here to a conjectural knowledge, for, he says, “it is not certain by divine faith whether the Spirit of God offers such testimony.” For just as, when God speaks in His Word, we are to believe not only that what He speaks is true but also that it is God who speaks, so also, when the Spirit of God speaks inwardly in the conscience, we are to believe that His testimony is true and that it is indeed God who testifies. Others claim that this refers to a certainty of hope, which often for a time excludes all actual fear of the opposite. But this is clearly false, as shown in 1 Corinthians 2:12,

“Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might understand the things freely given us by God.” And in 1 John 4:13, “By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit.” Therefore, it is established by divine faith whenever the Spirit bears witness with our spirit (Ephesians 4:18, 30). We are sealed with the Spirit unto the day of redemption. “And it is God who establishes us with you in Christ, and has anointed us, and who has also put his seal on us and given us His Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee” (2 Corinthians 1:21-22). If the Spirit seals believers for the day of redemption, they both can and should be assured of this sealing.

4. Because the saints were persuaded with the most firm certainty of their perseverance and eternal salvation. As Job declares, “For I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will stand upon the earth. And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God” (Job 19:25-26). And David in Psalm 23:6, “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.” Likewise, Paul in 2 Timothy 1:12, “For I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that He is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me.” And John in 1 John 3:16, “By this we know love, that He laid down His life for us.” This cannot be ascribed to a special revelation, for Scripture speaks of all for whom Christ laid down His life.

5. By the command of God. “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32). “Why are you afraid, O you of little faith?” (Matthew 8:26) Here, doubt is opposed to faith and rebuked by Christ.

Thus, these passages affirm that the promises given by God concerning the perseverance and salvation of the regenerate are firm and certain, not based on mere conjecture or human will but on the unchanging decrees and grace of God Himself.

6. For without comfort, without peace, without hope (which does not put to shame), without the joy of the Holy Spirit, there could be no state for the saints; instead, they would necessarily be occupied perpetually by the fear of hell, constant agitation, and wavering of conscience, trembling, terror, and the spirit of bondage, if they did not know:

1. Whether they are in the grace of God and in a state of justification.
2. Whether they will persevere to the end, or perhaps entirely fall away from grace and faith.
3. Whether they are immutably elected to glory, or, on the contrary, destined from eternity to everlasting torments with the Devil and his angels.

Against these uncertainties, there are clear testimonies to the contrary: Romans 5:1-4, 1 John 3:2, Romans 14:17, Colossians 2:2, Romans 8:35-38, Romans 15:4, 1 John 2:1-2, 1 Peter 1:3-4, 2 Corinthians 4:18, 2 Corinthians 5:1-3, 2 Timothy 1:12, 1 Peter 1:8, John 16:22.

7. What the saints pray for, according to the will of God, in the Mediator Christ, they can know with the certainty of faith that they will obtain. Now the saints pray for the testimony of the Spirit, final perseverance, and eternal glory. Therefore, etc. The major premise is derived from John 14:13, Mark 11:24, 1 John

5:14, John 9:31. The minor is established from Matthew 6:13, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Luke 22:31, Psalm 119:34-36.

Finally, Tertullian, in his "Apology," chapter 39, declares: "We are certain of the presence of God; an unwavering faith is secure in salvation." Cyprian, against Demetrius, in his sermon on mortality: "If you truly believe in God, why are you not secure? God speaks to you, and you are anxious with doubts? This is to have no faith in the house of God; plainly, let him fear death who has not been reborn; but he who has not been reborn is handed over to the fires of hell." Chrysostom, Homily 2 on 2 Corinthians: "If God, having given us this earnest beforehand, does not add the remaining possession of the inheritance, He Himself would suffer loss by the forfeiture of the earnest." Augustine, in his tractate on the Epistle of John, 5: "Let no one therefore ask another; let him return to his own heart; if he finds there love, let him be assured, for he has passed from death to life."

It is asked whether the Arminian certainty (which they attribute to believers) can stand with the Scriptures, or with faith and hope? They say yes; we deny it.

1. Because their certainty is conditional. For in Article 5, pages 194-195, they say: "A faithful person can be certain, by divine promise, that he will remain in the grace of God and undoubtedly obtain eternal life and salvation, provided he perseveres in faith and in the observance of God's commandments. However, he is not certain absolutely and simply that he will necessarily persevere in that faith which he once had."

Hence they deny: (1) All absolute certainty of perseverance, which is grounded in the promises of God and the immutable decree of

predestination; they only admit that certainty which depends on the indifferent freedom of the will to stand or to fall.

2. They deny such a certainty that excludes all fear of final apostasy and eternal destruction.

3. And they deny that certainty which relies on the grace of God and the infallible testimony of the Holy Spirit.

2. This hypothetical certainty is so vain that it cannot stand with God and His truth. For it contradicts the immutability and truthfulness of God in His promise of confirming us unto the glorious day of redemption, with the oath of God, the intercession and prayer of Christ. Indeed, the certainty of salvation, according to the Word of God, is as absolute and firm, excluding every cause or just ground for fear of the opposite, as is the promise of God that the world will no more be flooded by the waters of Noah (Isaiah 54:9-10) and as is God's faithful covenant of the succession of day and night, and the movements of the Sun and Moon (Jeremiah 31:35-36).

3. Because a conditional certainty of perseverance and salvation would instill and suggest trust, hope, comfort, and peace of conscience equally to the most wicked men as to the elect and believers. For it is certain that all mortals will persevere and be saved, provided they work righteousness to the end. And Cain could say, "I certainly trust that I cannot be driven out of the state of grace by any temptations, as long as I work righteousness in the fear of the Lord to the end." Furthermore, this would suggest terror, the fear of hell, miserable despair, and diabolical sadness, devoid of all comfort, to those who truly believe. For indeed, every believer ought to fear that they may perish eternally if they do not work righteousness to the end. Thus they could say, "Neither the intercession and prayers of Christ, nor the gracious care and

protection of God the Father, nor the superlatively powerful grace of the Holy Spirit can secure my perseverance, and consequently, my eternal glory, if I should cast away the grace of God and faith, which is as much within my power as it was in Peter's to dispute or not dispute in anger. For the anchor of hope is fixed, not in grace (which, according to the adversaries, cannot confer perseverance if free will resists), but cast upon free will in all temptations. And hope placed in a creature cannot fail to bring shame. Such a faith must waver and cannot be the faith of Abraham, the father of all believers, of whom the Holy Spirit says in Romans 4:20: 'He did not doubt in unbelief at the promise of God, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God,' verse 21, 'being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform.' But if God promises perseverance to believers conditionally in this way, then no one could be convinced that God is able to do what He has promised."

4. No one could pray for perseverance, and therefore could not give thanks to God for answered prayer, giving Him glory and gratitude; for a believer would say, "Grant me to persevere, O eternal God, by Your grace, provided I pray, watch, and perform my duty," which is the same as saying, "Grant me perseverance, provided I persevere; grant that I may pray steadfastly and perform my duty, provided I pray steadfastly and perform my duty."

5. This conditional certainty is consistent with the eternal destruction of a man endowed with such certainty of faith, and with being sealed unto the day of redemption by the Spirit.

It is asked whether the Remonstrants rightly pass over, in their doctrine concerning certainty, the certainty of our

election; and whether Grevinchovius rightly denies any sense of election in this life against Amesius (fol. 138)?

Response: The Remonstrants deny that anyone in this life can know that they are absolutely elected to glory because, according to them, no one is absolutely and irrevocably elected except those dying in faith. But we contend on the contrary that people ought to be certain of their eternal election—not with a certainty a priori (for who has known the mind of the Lord?)—but with a certainty a posteriori.

1. **1 Corinthians 2:12.** "For we have received the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God." Therefore, also to know the election made from eternity.
2. **Because all who are elected to glory are also predestined to conversion and adoption as sons of God (Ephesians 1:5-6).** And God has provided many *τεκμήρια* (proofs) whereby we may know we have been converted; therefore, also proofs whereby we may know we are elected to glory. The major premise is from Romans 8:30, Acts 13:48. The minor is from 1 John 2:3: "By this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments." And 1 John 3:14: "We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren." 1 John 4:2: "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments." Verse 16: "And we have known and believed the love that God has for us."
3. **Because we are commanded to make our calling and election sure through good works (2 Peter 1:10).**

4. **Because we know that we are called and justified by the peace of conscience, "πληροφορία" (full assurance), the sense of God's love diffused in our hearts, by a hope that does not put us to shame, by rejoicing in afflictions (Romans 5:1-4, Romans 8:15-17).** But those who are justified have the explicit Word of God that they are predestined to glory (Romans 8:30, Acts 13:48).
5. **Because not only the apostles but also the seventy disciples rejoiced greatly (Luke 10:20) that their names were written in the book of life. Therefore, they knew and were bound to know that they were elected to glory.**
6. **Because we are bound, by the example of Paul and the faithful, to give thanks and glory to God for our election (Ephesians 1:2-8, 1 Peter 1:2-4).** But no one is bound to give thanks for a gratuitous benefit in Christ which he does not know pertains to himself and is obliged to remain ignorant of.

The Question is Raised: Does not a greater certainty of perseverance be required of us than is borne by the very nature of the act of free will, than is the certainty we have from the indifferent acts of free will? The Remonstrants in *Script. Synod.*, article 5, page 198, teach that all certainty of perseverance must ultimately be resolved into the constancy of free will, which has the power to persevere or not persevere. But we, on the contrary, desire that all such certainty be founded upon the truthfulness, immutability, and constancy of God, upon the intercession of the Mediator, and upon the sealing of the Holy Spirit.

1. **Because under the Arminian certainty, all trust and hope of perseverance, and therefore the tranquility of**

conscience, are based upon the miserable human liberty, a pivot more changeable than any other.

- 2. Because a person is as blessed and as sure of their state of adoption as they can promise themselves that they will, through free will, cooperate with God's grace.**
- 3. Because this view entrusts all the promises of God, the eternal and unchangeable nature of the Covenant of Grace, the intercession of Christ, and its fruit before God the Father, to human liberty, that most miserable of guardians, which forsakes the fountain of living waters.**
- 4. They teach this to assert that absolute certainty of perseverance overturns all religion, the nature of free obedience, commandments, promises, and threats, and that it is better and more useful to lack such certainty.**
Yet they strongly believe it is very probable that there is an indefectible gift of perseverance, but only in a miraculous and extraordinary manner to some who are confirmed in grace. From this follows that those among them who are men of more rigorous mortification are freed from all bonds of religion and obedience; for they argue that one is obligated to obey God, even if endowed with the indefectible gift of perseverance. But they do not see that holy fear can very well coexist with the certainty of perseverance, and they always rely on this hypothesis that the fear of God and faith are contradictory. Certainly, the fear of hell and the spirit of bondage, which the regenerate do not receive (Romans 8:15), is contrary to true faith; for:

- 1. This fear is expelled by perfect love (1 John 4:18).**

2. **This fear is forbidden (Luke 12:32).**
3. **Because the regenerate serve God without fear (ἀπόβως) (Luke 1:74).** To interpret Zechariah as speaking of fear of men is against the context of the text; for it is added in verse 75, "That we might walk in holiness and righteousness before Him all the days of our life." Such fear does not harm a person under the New Testament.
4. **Because the fear commanded to us is joined with spiritual joy (Psalm 2:11), and its object is the goodness of God (Hosea 3:5).** This certainly indicates that the fear in question is not properly about final destruction and apostasy but rather a pious caution and holy concern to use all the means by which we may persevere in the state of grace.

Chapter 15:

On the Church and Its Marks

Matthew 18:17

"If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the Church."

As explained by Chrysostom, this refers to the leaders of the Church. Pareus interprets "the Church" here as saying, "Tell it to the overseers and prominent leaders; tell it to the elders and pastors who represent the Church." There is no need for us to labor here against

the Papists, who twist these words to support their hierarchical structure. For example, Lyranus, in his delirium, asserts, "Tell it to the Church," meaning a public denunciation by the prelates. Likewise, Cajetan, in his commentary on this passage, unreasonably suggests that the Church must be assembled to correct a brother solely for a sin committed against me. Yet both reason and ancient custom dictate that it should be said to the head of the Church. These arguments are examined and refuted elsewhere by us. Our concern here is with the Remonstrants, who offer an interpretation of this passage that is distinct from ours and that of the Papists.

The question arises, then: Do the Remonstrants rightly define the visible Church, as they claim in *Apology*, Chapter 22, as "a congregation of believers who profess saving doctrine"? They concede (they say) that such people may not truly believe, yet they are still considered the Church before us, though not in the sight of God.

Response: Such a congregation, even in our view, cannot be considered the Church. This is because it is true that we cannot know for certain, with the certainty of faith, whether such individuals truly believe or not. For whether another person believes savingly is not the formal object of my faith. But from the external perspective, we can know the Church; we can and must know with certainty of faith whether that doctrine which this congregation professes is saving doctrine. However, no congregation or multitude can profess sound doctrine unless there necessarily exists there a true Church of the elect and the called, even though many hypocrites may also be present. Thus, even from our perspective, this is not the true Church.

For, according to the Remonstrants, to believe is firmly to establish that we can attain salvation by no other means than that which is

prescribed by Jesus Christ. Yet this is believed, and can be believed, by Anabaptists, Papists, Socinians, Anti-Trinitarians, Tritheists, Arians, etc.

22. This visible Church, as the very learned professors of Leyden have rightly noted, is always defined in Scripture both by its internal state and by its external state, which includes Christ as the head, the entirety of the sacred ministry, and the means of gathering the Church. A Church that is such has the power of ministry, that is, the power of the keys, conferred by Christ, to remove offenses. But this congregation is not such.

23. If such a congregation is a Church merely because it professes sound doctrine, even though it may include neither the elect nor those who are effectually called (since, as they admit, we ought to join ourselves only to a Church that, in our view, is true), then it follows that we ought to join ourselves to a congregation of hypocrites. Yet, if this congregation consists of none who are elect or effectually called, it is no more a Church than a painted man is a man.

Question: Is there a Church in the New Testament that is entirely without presbyters, to which the Lord and Savior committed the power of the keys, as the Remonstrants claim in *Apology*, Chapter 22, folio 233?

To solve this question, we first introduce these distinctions:

1. There is a certain ministry that is ordinary and another that is extraordinary.
2. There is a mystical Church, composed solely of the faithful who profess their faith, and there is also a ministerial Church, composed of the flock and its pastors.

3. The Church can be considered such by anticipation, as in Hosea 12:12: "Jacob served for a wife," that is, a future wife; or the Church can be said to be such formally because it already exists in its established form.

Assertion 1: There is sometimes a mystical Church prior to a ministerial one.

1. This is because there can be a household before it is furnished with stewards and servants.
2. Adam and Eve, by order of nature, first constituted the mystical Church before there was any ecclesiastical ministry within that assembly.

Assertion 2: The public, ordinary ministry precedes the mystical Church of believers.

Ephesians 4:11-12 states, "He gave some to be pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of ministry," πρὸς τὸν καταρτισμὸν τῶν ἁγίων εἰς ἔργον διακονίας. This is because through the ministry and preaching of the Word, people come to faith (Romans 10:14). Thus, the ministry precedes the congregation of believers.

2. By the order of nature, parents must exist before they can produce children, and the seed must exist before the plant grows. Similarly, pastors are like fathers, and the preached Word is the seed of the mystical Church.

To examine this more precisely, it must be understood that a mystical Church, which is devoid of pastors and presbyters, neither has the keys committed to it by Christ nor possesses any ordinary power to ordain presbyters. If these two points are demonstrated, the arguments of the Separatists and Socinians, along with the Arminians, who contend that a congregation of the faithful without

presbyters is the Church to which the Lord and Savior committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven, will also be refuted.

Assertion 1: Christ Jesus, immediately and without any intervening authority, instituted presbyters for the Church as He ascended into heaven. This is stated in Ephesians 4:11-12 and 1 Corinthians 12:18, although the designation of such persons to office is made through the presbytery, as seen in 1 Timothy 4:14 and 5:22.

Assertion 2: It cannot be denied that there exists in a congregation of the faithful a virtual power, though not a formal one, to supply the lack of ordination through a popular election in cases of necessity. This may occur if a congregation of the faithful is on an island remote from all pastors.

1. For if David, without any revelation from heaven, ate the showbread in extreme necessity (since all positive law yields to natural law), then the faithful deprived of pastors may choose pastors for themselves.
2. This is demonstrated by theologians, both Protestant and Papist, such as Voetius in his book "On the Desperate Cause of the Papacy," Book 2, Section 5, Chapter 5. Similarly, Flavian and Diodorus preached in Antioch without any formal priesthood, as Theodoret states in Book 2, Chapter 24. Indeed, sometimes God (as Gerson says in Part 2, Sermon 2, after Easter) chooses to make an immediate intervention when the ordinary vocation through pastors is interrupted. More can be read about this in Vigerius's *Institutes of Theology*, Chapter 15, Paragraph 1; Suárez, Volume 2, Chapter 2; Vasquez on *Prima Secundae*, Disputation 179, Chapter 2; and Soto in *De Iustificatione*, Book 2, Question 3, Article 8.

Assertion 3: The established and ordained order by Christ for calling pastors is through other pastors, and thus through the succession of pastors.

1. **1 Timothy 5:22:** "Lay hands suddenly on no man."

1 Timothy 4:14: "Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."

2. The apostolic practice in this matter is our most certain rule. Nowhere in the New Testament do we read of any presbyters being ordained by a mere congregation of the faithful, devoid of presbyters. Rather, ordination was always performed by pastors.

Acts 1:15,16; Acts 6:2,3,4; Acts 14:23; 1 Corinthians 3:6; 1 Timothy 4:14; Titus 1:5. This is even admitted by the Separatists, since the care of all the churches was committed to the Apostles.

3. If the ordination of pastors, according to the canons of the Apostle, is imposed upon presbyters, as presbyters, then that duty is not assigned to the congregation of the faithful, as such. But if the former is true, so is the latter. The major premise is certain, for nothing can be enjoined by virtue of office to those who hold no office in the Church. The assumption is proven. For in **2 Timothy 2:1,2**, the power was given to Timothy, and therefore also to other pastors and presbyters, to commit the ministry to faithful men who shall be able to teach others, with the same authority by which Timothy is forbidden to entangle himself in the affairs of this world (v. 5) and is commanded to admonish others not to strive about words and to rightly divide the Word, like a workman who does not need to be ashamed (v. 14,15). These commands are imposed upon Timothy as a pastor.

Similarly, in **1 Timothy 5:17**, the honor due to faithful elders is shown; it also forbids accepting any accusation against a presbyter without two or three witnesses (v. 19), and prohibits the sudden laying on of hands by any pastor (v. 22). Paul also desires that Titus, as a pastor, ordain presbyters in every city and rebuke the Cretans with pastoral authority.

It would be absurd to suggest that all and each among the laity are admonished that they owe honor to themselves as workmen; that it is up to them not to accept accusations against a presbyter, to lay hands either deliberately or rashly on pastors, and to ordain presbyters in every city with pastoral authority, as was the case with the Cretans.

4. The specific argument of the adversaries is weak; thus, their conclusion is also weak. The premise is proven as follows: They imagine that the ordination of pastors by pastors constitutes a papal succession. But they themselves are compelled to admit the perpetual succession of believers, even a local one, from the times of the Apostles. For they deny that anyone is legitimately ordained by pastors unless he has been ordained by believers. Furthermore, we do not defend an absolutely perpetual succession of pastors; we acknowledge that it can be interrupted and, with pastors lacking, that an election by the people in a case of necessity can supply the lack of ordination by pastors.
5. We do not advocate for a local, cathedral, and always eminently visible succession of pastors from the time of the Apostles. But they object, saying that Christ, in **Matthew 16** and **Matthew 18**, conferred the keys of the kingdom of heaven upon the congregation of believers. Therefore, they argue, the congregation also has the power to ordain pastors.

Response: Even if the premise were true, it would not necessarily follow that the congregation has the power to ordain, just as it does not necessarily follow that they have the power to preach and administer the Sacraments. What? Because the keys have been committed to the congregation, does it follow that they can exercise any act of jurisdiction and order? By no means.

2. There is nothing falser than the premise: neither expressly nor by any consequence found in Scripture are the keys conferred upon the congregation of believers. In **Matthew 16**, to Peter, by the giving of the keys, Christ conferred the authority to open the doors of the kingdom of heaven, to bind and to loose on earth, by administering the Word and Sacraments. Was this, then, given to the congregation of Christians?

Objection 2. It is argued that in Acts 1, one hundred and twenty people cast their votes in the ordination of the Apostle Matthias.

Response. This is not stated in the text; rather, it says that there were one hundred and twenty in that assembly. It does indeed say in verse 23, "They appointed two," but these words should be referred not to the whole congregation but to the apostles enumerated in verse 13 and to the words of verse 17: "He was numbered with us," that is, with the apostles. Nor does the context of the passage suggest that this ordination was conducted by the votes of all and each individual.

Regarding Acts 1, the adversaries object that confusion would follow as much from our Presbyterian governance as from the Democratic. For it is said in verse 23, "They appointed two," namely, those hundred and twenty; and in Acts 6:5, the entire multitude appointed seven deacons before the apostles. And the apostles spoke and prayed in verse 6. Therefore, when the hundred and twenty appointed two, they must have spoken. Did all of them, however,

speak together at the same time? Yet such confusion is forbidden in **1 Corinthians 14**. Did the women speak? But this is forbidden in verse 34. Did the children speak? This is impossible. Similarly, in Acts 6, did all twelve apostles speak together and offer vocal prayers to God simultaneously? This, too, would be confusion. Did the entire multitude, appointing seven deacons, also speak together? Certainly not. Such expressions exclude children and women entirely. Why should not all others, except the presbyters, be excluded as well? And since all the presbyters cannot speak together without the greatest confusion, why should not all be excluded except for one presiding officer? And he alone would be the Church, and thus the Pope!

Response:

1. This argument favors our position in the first place because the hundred and twenty in Acts 1 and the whole multitude in Acts 6 cannot lay hands together on deacons or pastors, especially if the visible Church consists of three thousand professing Christ, as in **Acts 2**. Therefore, for the sake of order, certain selected persons, i.e., the “προεστῶτες” (elders) and presbyters, must lay hands and ordain pastors, and thus manage all the public affairs of the Church. This is our representative Church, which the Separatists so vehemently attack as mere Judaism. For children and women are part of the Church of the redeemed, yet even the adversaries would have them excluded. Therefore, the keys have been entrusted by Christ, even according to their admission, to a representative assembly.
2. **Matthew 18**: "If he refuses to listen to the Church," that is, to the Church speaking and pronouncing judgment, "let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector." But the whole Church, that is, all and each—children and women—cannot all speak in the Church, nor can they speak together. Therefore, by the very

words, the voice of the Church does not signify a congregation of the redeemed coming together as one visible assembly to perform sacred acts unless they wish to exclude children and women from the number of the redeemed and those performing sacred acts in the holy synaxis. And this is to acknowledge the representative Church along with us.

They cite only one place in support of the exercise of ecclesiastical discipline by the entire people: **Colossians 4:11**—"And say to Archippus, 'See that you fulfill the ministry that you have received in the Lord.'"

Therefore, they argue, the whole people, namely, the saints of Colossae to whom he writes, exercise jurisdictional power over pastors by admonishing them; therefore, also by ordaining and excommunicating.

Response: "Εἶπατε Ἀρχίππῳ," Ergo, judicially and authoritatively say to Archippus: it does not follow from a general to a specific statement affirmatively. Thus, **Matthew 18:17**—"Εἶπέ τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ." Therefore, does every individual exercise authority over the whole Church?

John 8:48: "The Jews said to Jesus." Therefore, did they speak with authority?

John 1:8: "If we say we have no sin."

2. The Fathers—Augustine, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Jerome; the Scholastics—Aquinas, Suarez, Bannez, Gregory of Valencia—say that this admonition of Archippus is a fraternal correction, not an act of jurisdiction. Cajetan says the act of correction is elicited by prudence and commanded by mercy. André Duval says it is an act not only of divine law but also of natural law to rebuke and admonish a brother who errs, as in **Leviticus 19:17; Hosea 2:1**. But it is not thereby

proven that the entire assembly of the Colossians had jurisdictional power over Archippus.

Now we demonstrate by these arguments that the keys of the kingdom of heaven were not entrusted to the entire assembly of the faithful by Christ:

1. The keys were given to that Church which is built upon the rock, as a household of Wisdom (**Proverbs 9:1**), the house of God (**1 Timothy 3:15; Hebrews 3:4**), and that through the teaching of the prophets and apostles proclaimed by the teachers and pastors given to build up the Church (**Ephesians 4:11**). But this house is not a congregation of believers united in some way and devoid of presbyters; rather, it is the ministerial Church. Therefore, the argument follows. The minor premise is proven: A congregation lacking pastors and presbyters is not a house built through the ministry of pastors and presbyters, for the material of the house is not the house itself. If, indeed, they lack the power to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments, they lack the power of the keys. And where the power of the keys is lacking, according to the adversaries, there is no visible Church. If, therefore, the building upon the rock was promised to the visible Church in **Matthew 16**, no other building can be understood here except that which is carried out by pastors and teachers (**Ephesians 4:11**).

2. **The keys were promised to those who are stewards of the mysteries of God** (1 Corinthians 4:1), who are servants of the household by office (2 Corinthians 4:5), whose task it is to open and shut doors, to behave rightly in the house of God (1 Timothy 3:15), to distribute to each one in the household their portion at the proper time (Matthew 24:45), and to rightly divide the word of truth (2

Timothy 2:15). But a congregation professing the faith of Christ and united by any sort of covenant, yet lacking pastors and stewards, are not dispensers of the mysteries of God, etc. Therefore, the keys are not given to such a congregation that is devoid of pastors. The adversaries do not deny this assumption, nor does it need proof. The major premise is supported by the phraseology of Scripture: **Isaiah 22:22**, "I will place the key of the house of David on his shoulder; what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open." By the consensus of all interpreters, the giving of the keys is (as Musculus says in this place) a notable sign of power conferred. The keys are entrusted to the steward and overseer of the house so that he may exercise his authority with them. So Calvin in his Commentary, Gualther in Homily 114, affirms: "The keys are a symbol of power; they offer the keys to kings." Junius says, "It signifies full administration." Beza, in his great Annotations on Matthew 16, notes that it indicates the authority of the ministers. Pareus in his commentary says, "I will make you the steward of my house." Jerome, on Isaiah 22, notes, "The power of the keys is excellence." So also Augustine, Chrysostom, and Fulgentius teach that the authority of binding and loosing given to the apostles and ministers is signified by the name of the keys. In **Isaiah 9:6**, "The government will be upon his shoulder," which, by the consensus of all interpreters, means that the keys of David are given to him; **Revelation 3:7** says, "These are the words of him who holds the key of David, who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens." **Revelation 1:18**: "I have the keys of Hades and death." **Revelation 9:1**: "A key to the shaft of the abyss was given to the angel." In all these passages, by the consensus of all interpreters, the term signifies the administrative authority granted to kings, overseers, and rulers of churches, to those who are, by office, dispensers. Such persons, however, are not those believers who are devoid of pastors.

3. The keys are given in this text of Matthew 16 to those to whom, by the command of Christ, the exercise of the keys is given, that is, to bind, to loose, to open, and to close the doors of the kingdom of heaven, i.e., to preach the Word and to administer the Sacraments. But this exercise, by the command of Christ, is given only to the apostles and ministers in the person of Peter, not to a congregation of believers lacking pastors. The major point is evident from the text: To the same person to whom the power of the keys is given, to that person, by a special mandate, is given the exercise of using the keys. Verse 19 states, "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Here, power is conferred. And then he says, "Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Here, the exercise of using the keys is conferred. Furthermore, if Christ is alluding to the place in **Isaiah 22:22**, which is clear in the text, then it is certain that by "keys" is meant official and administrative power. Furthermore, there is no clear testimony proving that the power of the keys is given to pastors as such if we are deprived of this passage. Therefore, this passage does not signify power conferred upon Peter in the person of the believers, and therefore, not to all believers. For what is conferred upon believers as believers cannot at the same time be conferred upon pastors, because often there is a contradiction between believers and pastors, just as between believers and unbelievers. Moreover, this passage is exactly the same as the passage in **Matthew 28:19** and the passage in **John 20:23**. But in those places, the power to administer the sacraments and to baptize is given. Furthermore, to bind and to loose are acts of jurisdiction and official authority in Scripture, which are communicated only with rulers, overseers, and pastors of the people and the Church of God. Therefore, they are not communicated with all believers. The proof of the argument is from **Isaiah 52** and **49:9**, where Christ is said to "release those in

prison." Likewise, in many other places in Scripture: **Psalm 105:27, Judges 15:10, Psalm 149:8, Matthew 22:13, Acts 21:11, Acts 22:4, Mark 3.** In these places, the term "to bind" signifies official authority proper to rulers. Similarly, "to loose" is found in **Leviticus 14:7, Psalm 102:20, Jeremiah 40:4, Psalm 105:20, Acts 2:24, Romans 7:2, 1 Corinthians 7:27, Revelation 20:7, Revelation 9:15, Job 12:18.**

4. If Christ, in neither Matthew 16 nor Matthew 18, says that He confers the keys, in both power and exercise, upon a congregation of believers devoid of rulers, then there are no testimonies in the New Testament that can prove this power was granted to the faithful. But the latter is true; therefore, the former must also be true. The major premise is evident because they contend that these two testimonies alone prove that the keys were entrusted to the congregation of believers. For in Matthew 16:18, speaking of the Church built upon the rock, with a shift in the persons being addressed, He turns His discourse from the Church itself to Peter in verse 19: "And I will give you (Peter, not the Church built upon Peter) the keys of the kingdom of heaven." As for their claim that the keys were given to Peter as a representative of the faithful, because he made that notable confession in the name of the faithful, and not as a representative of the college of rulers, this is of no value whatsoever.

1. Because the keys were not given to the faithful as such, or as the bride of Christ, but rather to those professing the faith of Peter, according to the adversaries, and those united in such a covenant. Therefore, it was not because of that confession, but because of the profession of that confession. But I ask regarding that profession, on account of which they wish to assert that the keys were given to the congregation of believers: is this

profession a sincere and true confession, or not? If the former, all those baptized by pastors who do not sincerely profess the faith were baptized by those who do not have the authority and must be rebaptized.

2. Whoever is excommunicated by a key that does not err, by ten who do not sincerely profess the faith, although united in the visible Church, is not bound in heaven; for he is bound on earth by those who do not possess the authority. This, however, is absurd—that someone justly bound on earth by the Church should not also be bound in heaven.
3. Because the adversaries claim that the power of the keys is a part of the liberty, a part of the redemption purchased by the blood of Christ. But those who do not sincerely profess the faith should not be numbered among the redeemed. If, however, an insincere profession creates a visible Church possessing the power of the keys, then the keys are not entrusted by Christ to the Church built upon Peter, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. For there is nothing more evident from Scripture than that a congregation of those who do not sincerely profess Christ can, and indeed in times of temptation, actually fall away from Christ, and against such a Church the gates of hell can prevail.

Similarly, in Matthew 18:19, Christ, with a change of persons, turns His discourse from the Church, mentioned in verse 17, to the apostles in verse 18: “Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven.” And this entire discourse, as is evident from the beginning of the chapter, was directed to the disciples or pastors.

But they argue further: The keys of the kingdom were promised to as many people as are built upon the rock, as the adversaries argue.

However, this major premise is neither explicitly stated nor implied in the text.

2. This major premise is also false because the invisible Church is built upon the rock and shall never fail from Christ. Yet, the adversaries deny that the keys were given to the invisible Church; indeed, they claim that they were given solely to the visible Church as such.

That Christ in Matthew 16 addresses Peter as representing the rulers, not the faithful, is evident.

1. Because the power of the keys, according to the adversaries, is denied to many, namely, women and children, who nonetheless make Peter's confession no less than the Apostle Peter himself.
2. If believers, insofar as they make this confession of Peter and are built upon the rock, constitute the Church that is to be listened to, and that possesses the official power of binding and loosing, then the ministerial Church would be as immune to defection and apostasy as the assembly of the elect and the truly faithful; which, however, is contrary to both experience and Scripture. For those seven Asian churches, as well as those of Rome, Corinth, Galatia, Thessalonica, and Philippi, which were all ministerial churches endowed with the power of the keys, fell away from Christ the Rock and lapsed into grave and capital errors and into horrendous idolatry.

But we accuse the Papists on this account, especially Gretser in "De Inauguratione Doctoratus Lutheri," page 29; Bellarmine in "De Autoritate Conciliorum," Book 2, Chapter 2; Suarez in "De Virtutibus Theologicis," disputation on the Church; Gregory of Valencia in his commentaries; Hosius in "Confessio Polonica"; and

John of Turrecremata in "De Ecclesia," Book 1, Chapters 24 and 25, because they seek to assert from this context in Matthew 16 the infallibility and dominion of the visible and ministerial Church. Indeed, their argument is valid in fundamental points: if those to whom the keys are given can never fall away from Christ, and if the ministerial Church possessing the power of the keys is such a body that can never fall away from Christ.

3. Those to whom the keys are given, according to these contexts, represent the person and office of Christ Himself, so that it is said of them, "He who despises you despises me; he who honors you honors me," which is expressly said of ministers in Matthew 10:40. And concerning this Church, it is said in Matthew 16:19, "Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." Thus, those who possess this power are co-workers with God and ambassadors of Christ. But nowhere in Scripture do we read that all believers are ambassadors of God, nor that all who despise any faithful believers who bind and loose in the name of Christ are themselves despisers of Christ.
4. Those to whom the keys are entrusted have the authority to remit and retain sins, and their acts are valid in heaven, just as men believe and repent, or do not believe and repent; as our theologians teach against the doctrine of sacramental absolution. But a congregation of believers without presbyters has no such authoritative power. Therefore, the point stands.

The adversaries respond that even believers who are neither pastors nor presbyters have the power to remit sins, citing Matthew 18:21, where Peter asks, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him?" and also Luke 17:3-4, and 2 Corinthians 2:10.

Response 1: Regarding the passage in 2 Corinthians 2:10, it pertains to the present question and is to be understood as referring to the authoritative remission of the Church, which had excommunicated the incestuous man (1 Corinthians 5:2). There is a vast difference between the private forgiveness of an offense between brother and brother, and the public and authoritative forgiveness of the Church. Our argument concerns the latter, the authoritative forgiveness; for the former is an act of charity, commanded by the law of nature, binding upon all—even those outside the visible Church, yes, even those excommunicated, from whom the power of the keys has been taken. For excommunication does not dissolve men from the bond of the law of nature, which binds all. Matthew 6:12, 14, 15; Matthew 5:44, 45. But public and authoritative forgiveness by the Church pertains to positive law.

2. Private forgiveness must also be extended to our enemies, and we should not take vengeance but leave it to God, whether the offending party repents or not. Private forgiveness is not valid in heaven, nor is anyone obligated to grant it in the case of manifest injury when the offending party does not repent, Luke 17:4, except so far as omitting vengeance is concerned, Romans 12:14, and in the exhibition of common charity, verse 20. Thus, the Church is by no means obligated to forgive the offending party who does not repent; indeed, it cannot fail to retain the sins of the unrepentant. Peter, however, as a private individual offended by a private brother, ought to forgive a hundred times if the offending brother repents; Luke 17:4. Yet Peter does this without any power of the keys; he may privately, insofar as he is concerned, forgive sins that are bound and retained by the excommunicating Church on earth and also by God in heaven.

6. The keys have been entrusted solely to those who possess the pastoral spirit of Paul for summoning, examining, passing judgment, and delivering to Satan. But believers deprived of pastors do not have Paul's pastoral spirit, for they cannot publicly preach or administer the sacraments with that spirit. Some Separatists concede, under the force of this argument, that certain individuals, even entirely without pastoral power, may administer the sacraments, which certainly follows from their doctrine. For if a congregation of believers deprived of pastors is a visible Church in its fully constituted being, there is no reason why any believer should not exercise all specific acts of the keys, among which the chief are preaching the Word and administering the sacraments. This opinion is held not only by the Anabaptists but also by the Arminians, as in their Confession, chapter 21, and also by the Socinians. Thus, Socinus in his treatise on the Church, chapter 1, folio 5146, and the Racovian Catechism, chapter 11, folio 140.

It is noteworthy that Christ, in Matthew 18:16-17, addresses the disciples in verse 1: "At that time, the disciples came to Jesus, saying, 'Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?'" To them, He says in verse 18, "Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth..." And this passage must be explained by Matthew 16, where the keys are given in a more restricted sense, to Peter alone, representing the College of Rulers. For the same keys which bind and loose in one place remit and retain sins in another, which are undoubtedly entrusted to the stewards of the Church. There is no reason, therefore, to interpret the Church spoken of in Matthew 18 as referring to a congregation devoid of rulers; it is such a congregation to which obedience is owed under penalty of excommunication, which is undoubtedly a ministerial assembly.

Nor do we greatly care for the argument that says the Church in Scripture always signifies a congregation of believing, redeemed people built upon Christ the Rock, for such a congregation is the invisible Church, which the adversaries perpetually confuse with the visible Church in this controversy.

Finally, all our theologians, together with the Fathers, argue against the Papists that in Matthew 16 the keys were given to Peter, not to him alone (for then the Papists would derive their papacy from him) but, in the person of Peter, to all other bishops, pastors, and presbyters. Thus, Nazianzenus, in Oration 21 on the praises of Basil, speaking on the words "I will give you the keys," says, "Peter became a partaker in the same throne with the other pastors, not with the other believers." Similarly, Cyprian, in his treatise *On the Unity of the Church*, on the words, "This was indeed what the other apostles were, that Peter was, endowed with equal fellowship of honor and power." Basil, in *On the Solitary Life*, chapter 21, likewise grants the same power to all pastors and rulers, as evidenced by the fact that all equally bind and loose. Theophylact, on Matthew 17, notes, "Though it was said to Peter alone, yet it was granted to all the apostles." Cyril, on John, states that "Christ sent His response to him who was the chief among the apostles." Euthymius, on Matthew 16, comments, "I will give you the keys," but this gift belonged to the other apostles as well. Jerome, in *Against Jovinianus*, Book 1, says, "All the apostles received the keys, not Peter alone." Anselm, on Matthew 16, asserts, "All the apostles have the same judicial authority." Hence, it is clear that there is no visible church in the New Testament deprived of pastors to whom the keys have been entrusted.

Question: Do the Remonstrants correctly teach, in their Confession 22, section 4, that the true Church is defined by agreement in the faith and profession of necessary truth?

We affirm that this teaching is false according to their principles.

1. Because, according to them, holding to necessary doctrine means adhering to only a very few dogmas approved by all Christians and scarcely called into question by any sect; hence, the Antitrinitarians, Arians, Socinians, Papists, and all other impure sects, which agree on some uncontroversial Christian doctrines, would constitute the true Church.
2. They explain that holding to necessary doctrine means adhering properly, without which neither the faith nor the obedience of Christ's commandments can be truly observed, and thus the remission of sins and eternal salvation cannot be obtained according to God's judgment. For the acts of the intellect cannot be subjected to God's command when people heretically think about God in their own minds, conceiving of God as an idol or a mere man worthy of honor; and thus, since an erroneous conscience, according to them, binds to action, those who worship idols (as the Papists), who believe Christ is a mere man (as the Arians and Socinians), who think three persons are three infinite gods (as the Tritheists), who believe the Socinian or Vorstian religion is true, as long as they possess faith as defined by the Arminians and rightly perform the commandments prescribed by Christ, are true members of the Church. So says James Arminius in *Disputation 20, Thesis*.
3. They consider all Reformed Churches to be those that disapprove of the rule of the Roman Pontiff in any form and profess to render faith and worship to God and Christ. Adolphus Venator, against the brothers of Dordrecht, pages 134-135, writes, "Why would I condemn those to whom doctrine has not been so clearly revealed as to the apostles, etc., yet who led a

pious life?" The Remonstrants, in their *Apology against the Censure of the Professors of Leiden*, in the dedication, oppose "disputes and conflicts over non-essential doctrines." Their theology is practical, placed in the reformation of morals and the correction and direction of the whole of life according to the prescription of Jesus Christ, commanding only the impious, profane, worldly, contentious, malicious, rebellious, and implacable to be excluded. The same is stated by Smalcus in *Disputation 8 on the Church*, page 5, and by Socinus in *On the Church*, chapter 2, page 20.

Question: Do the Remonstrants rightly teach, as stated in their *Apology* chapter 22, folio 257, that it is possible for there to be no Church of Christ on earth, and that all could totally and finally fall away? The Remonstrants teach there that if the discussion concerns a possibility that could actually occur, it is false to say that all could fall away; but if it indicates a mere and true possibility, not the general type (such as saying it is possible that all men could die at the same moment, or that all could hold the same opinion, or that letters thrown into the air could form a poem, etc.), then it is true.

We teach the contrary.

1. For if all could fall away, the Kingdom of Christ would not be eternal, but would have an end, contrary to the Scriptures: Isaiah 9:6, Luke 1:32-33, 1 Corinthians 15:25, Micah 4:7, Daniel 7:14. It is futile for them to say that Christ would not be deprived of His Kingdom but would remain fully endowed with royal rights, and thus be a king by right, even if all and every one of His subjects were to fall away, for His royal power in no way depends on His subjects. Indeed, the royal power of Christ depends on no mortal causatively. But if all and every one of His

subjects were to fall away totally and finally, such that His gracious influence of His Spirit, as a Spiritual King, did not actively flow into His subjects, and did not actively confer peace, righteousness, and joy in the Holy Spirit — which are the fruits of His Kingdom (Romans 14:17) — then His eternal kingdom would cease, and in this manner, it would have an end. However, the perpetuity of His Kingdom in this world consists of the act (I say) of reigning and actual governance, that He reigns over those who are in Mount Zion, that is, in the true and living Church (Micah 4:7). Indeed, eternal peace of conscience will exist in His Kingdom; this peace would necessarily fail if all His subjects could fall away. Isaiah 9:7: "Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His Kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever." Luke 1:33: "And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever." Now, the house of Jacob is the holy seed, the Church, the body of Christ. But if that house should fall away and become an apostate harlot, He would not actually reign over them but would cease to reign in the house of Jacob.

Furthermore, a mere royal power is not promised to Christ, but a willing people: "Your people shall be volunteers" (Psalm 110:3), and a seed shall serve Him, which shall be counted to the Lord for a generation; "They will come and declare His righteousness to a people that will be born" (Psalm 22:31-32). Indeed, more than a mere titular power is attributed to Him: the glory of His kingdom is promised to Him, such that the most devout service will be rendered to Him. Psalm 72:5: "They shall fear You as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations." Verse 6: "He shall come down like rain upon the mown grass, like showers that water the earth." Verse 7: "In His days the righteous shall flourish, and

abundance of peace, until the moon is no more." And what, I ask, does Isaiah chapter 11 say about Christ the King, that shoot from the stump of Jesse, and the branch from His roots that will bear fruit? Verse 4: "But with righteousness He shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth." Verse 6: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the young goat," etc. Verse 9: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

2. For God, by His faithful promise, has given to His Son, as King — whom He anointed as King on His holy mountain (Psalm 2:6) — the nations and the ends of the earth as His possession and inheritance (v. 8), a seed to serve Him (Psalm 22:31), a willing people (Psalm 110:3), and dominion from one sea to another, and from the river to the ends of the earth (Psalm 72:8, 10, 11, 12). But if it were possible that all and every mortal should fall into apostasy, and that there would be no Church, all these promises would be false and void.

3. It is blasphemous and absurd to assert that, given all of God's decrees concerning the salvation and glorification of the elect, and given the standing oath of God made to the seed of Abraham (Hebrews 6:16, 17, 18) and made to His Son, Christ, concerning His eternal priesthood and thus His eternal intercession for His Church (Psalm 110:4, Hebrews 10:11,12, Hebrews 8:1,2, 9:24-27), Christ incarnate, having died and with His death and blood having bought and redeemed the Church by the right of redemption, having been resurrected, glorified, ascended into heaven, made Intercessor at the right hand of the Father, appointed King and Judge of the living and the dead, and made Head of the Church — it is blasphemous, I say, to affirm that it could happen that there would be no Church that He

could bless with the oath of God, for whom He intercedes at the right hand of God the Father, of which He has been made King and Head.

4. It is as contingent, on God's part, that all should finally fall away and perish eternally, as that letters thrown into the air should form themselves into a poem, or that all men should think the same thing. For God does not determine men to persevere infallibly any more than He determines letters thrown thus to form a poem. According to the Arminians, it is contradictory for any cause to operate contingently and yet be determined by God infallibly; nor does the dominion of Providence have more place in one than in the other for securing infallible perseverance and preserving the Church of Christ on earth, for both are contradictory, as the Arminians hold.

5. Believers honor Christ as King with royal honor, which cannot be denied. Psalm 45:12: "And the King will greatly desire your beauty; because He is your Lord, bow down to Him." 1 Timothy 1:17: "Now to the King eternal, be honor." Revelation 4:10: "And they cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 'You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power,' etc." But if it were possible that all and every one should fall away, and there would be no Church either on earth or in heaven, this royal honor to Christ would not exist; and so the honor of Christ as King would depend absolutely on the free will of man, as to whether it is or is not. And if the discussion is about royal authority as distinguished from actual honor, the Remonstrants make it dependent on the creatures in many ways. For first, it is in the freedom of parents to generate believers or not; it was free for Christ to be crucified or not; it was free for sinners to crucify Him or not. Thus, by the resurrection, it was entirely contingent and dependent on the liberty of the creature that Christ, as King, should be endowed with any royal authority, and constituted as Head of the Church.

6. The gates of hell would greatly prevail against the Church founded on the Rock if there could be no Church, and if it could be cast down from the Rock into hell, contrary to Matthew 16:18, Isaiah 49:15, 16, Jeremiah 31:35-37, and Jeremiah 32:40.

John 10:28: "My sheep hear my voice."

Question: Is the doctrine concerning the marks of the Church useless and harmful? The Remonstrants say so; Episcopius, in *Disputation 28, Thesis 1*, affirms it. We deny it.

1. Because we are expressly commanded to join ourselves to the true Church, in which the voice of Christ, the Shepherd, is heard. *Canticles 1:8*: "Go forth in the footsteps of the flock," etc.
2. Because the saints desire to join themselves to the Church. *Canticles 5:16*: "Whither is thy beloved gone, that we may seek him with thee?"
3. Because it is necessary for salvation that one associates himself with the true Church. Thus, the Apostles desire that those who repent and believe receive the sacraments of the Church as a sign of their union with it. *Acts 10:48*; *Acts 2:38-39*.
4. Communion with the saints in the external worship of God is necessary for all who profess Christ, and it is contained under the communion of saints, which all Christians believe.

Question: Are there no other marks of the Church than the profession of saving faith and the external observance of Christ's commandments? The Remonstrants affirm in their *Confession*, Chapter 22, *Thesis 78*. We deny it.

1. Because the profession of saving faith is compatible with all impure assemblies; therefore, a profession, unless it is sincere both in the act of professing and in the object (namely, the pure Word of God) which is professed, does not distinguish the Church from all other assemblies.
2. Because, according to the Remonstrants, the profession of saving faith is derived from the preaching of the Word, which is indeed a true mark of the Church.
3. Because the profession of saving faith and the observance of Christ's commandments are marks of an individual believer rather than of the Church. The marks of the Church should not be sought simply as it exists as a homogeneous body consisting only of believers, but as a heterogeneous body, the house of Jacob, the family of God, the flock, the city of the living God, consisting of pastors calling and people being called, and of the means of calling, such as the Word heard and the Sacraments. Therefore, the signs are rightly constituted as the sincere preaching of the divine Word and the administration of the Sacraments, as clearly expressed in Acts 2:41: "Those who gladly received his word were baptized, and that day about three thousand souls were added to the Church." Verse 42: "They continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers." Here is the pure preaching of Apostolic doctrine and the proper administration of the Sacraments; and in Acts 4:32: "The multitude of those who believed were of one heart and soul." Verse 33: "And with great power, the Apostles gave testimony of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all." There, sound doctrine and unity with mutual love in it are proposed as marks of the Church.

Question: Is it wrongly asserted by us that the true preaching of doctrine is a mark of the Church? The Remonstrants affirm this in their *Confession*, Chapter 22, Thesis 8.

The preaching of the Word has various relations.

1. As it is an instrument for gathering the Church. In this way, it belongs to the Church in becoming, but it is not in this way a mark of the Church.
2. As it accompanies the Church already gathered. In this manner, it can be referred either to believers or to unbelievers. If to believers, they know the Church to be the Church through the preaching of the Word: just as rationality is the specific form of man, so the act of using reason is a formal act deriving from that form and a mark flowing from the inner essence; thus, pure doctrine is as the essence of the Church, and the preaching of the Word is as the formal external act flowing from the essence of the Church, and it is easily recognizable to the believer; and although the preaching of the Word is a means for the Church in becoming, it is nonetheless a mark of the same in its actual being, a mark which the believer easily discerns, and by it recognizes the true Church. However, this mark, when related to unbelievers, does not make the Church known to them, for as the unbeliever does not have ears to hear, the preaching of the Word is equally unknown to the unbeliever as is the Church; but in its primary act and by its very nature, it is not equally unknown, but rather is more evident by nature and even to us; and in its secondary act, when it convinces, it also makes the Church known.

1 Corinthians 14:24: "But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an uninformed person comes in, he is convinced by all, he is judged by

all." Verse 25: "And thus, the secrets of his heart are revealed; and so, falling down on his face, he will worship God and declare that God is truly among you." However, as long as the unbeliever remains an unbeliever, there is no mark that in its secondary act makes the Church known to him.

It is not sufficient to say that the preaching of the Word is not a mark of the Church because it is the action of the pastor rather than of the Church. For, 1. In the same way, the profession of saving doctrine is rather the action of a single faithful person (since an action properly belongs to the individual) than of the Church; yet, according to the Remonstrants, it is still a mark. But the preaching of the Word is twofold: one kind is private or is in some way a mere proclamation; that kind is not a mark of the Church. However, there is also a public and relative proclamation in reference to a visible assembly called by the voice of a public herald. Nor do we say that the visible Church immediately ceases to exist when formal sermonizing is lacking and the assembly is not gathered to hear the Word and to administer the sacraments. Therefore, when we say that preaching is a mark of the Church, we mean the proclamation, whether by reading, preaching, or (if formal sermons are lacking) by the communication of the Word, according to the measure of the Spirit imparted to each believer. Even then, the integrity of the Church, which is a heterogeneous body, is violated. Certainly, there is not the same nature between a homogeneous and a heterogeneous whole. For charity, like obedience to the Word and hearing of the Word, is twofold: one kind is partial or private, the other is total and public. Charity and hearing of the Word, in the former manner, are marks of disciples rather than of the Church. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35). But another kind of charity and public obedience pertains to the Word publicly preached; and this is a mark of the Church.

Nor do the Apologists rightly frame the state of the question concerning the marks of the Church, Chapter 22, page 241, when they speak of a sign whereby one who is ignorant of what constitutes true doctrine may come to know the true Church. For there is a great difference between a sign that is by its nature apt and intended to make the Church known, and a sign by which someone actually comes to know the Church. In the former sense, we say that the preached Word is not the mark of the Church that makes it known with respect to an unbeliever, but it is nevertheless a mark that is inherently capable of making it known. One cannot know a school of grammarians unless he first knows what grammar is. If you wish to show a man who a courtier is by saying he is one clothed in gilded purple, but he does not know what gilded purple is, then gilded purple will not be a mark that makes anything known to one ignorant of it.

To more precisely set forth our doctrine on the marks of the Church against our adversaries — the Papists, Arminians, Socinians, and Separatists — the following distinctions must first be noted:

1. The marks of the Church as it is true, and the marks of the Church as it is visible, are different from one another. The mark of the Church as true is that the sheep of Christ hear His voice (John 10:27-28). The mark of the Church as visible is that it publicly professes and preaches the name of Christ, as God's family, and its faith in Him.
2. The mark of the Mystical Church is different from the mark of the Ministerial Church. The mark of the Mystical Church is not a mere profession of the Word but also a holy life: "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another," says the Savior. The mark of the Ministerial Church is

the pure preaching of the Word, as a banner distinguishes an army and sets it apart from all other armies.

3. There is a mark of the Church in its first act, which is inherently and by its nature capable of making the Church known. There is another mark in its second act, which actually makes the Church known. Or, to put it another way, there is a difference between a mark and a sign. The pure preaching of the Word, in its essence and nature, is inherently an essential mark of the Church, making it known because the preached Word reveals to all what the Church is and how it is distinguished from all other assemblies. For nothing is explained by something more unknown or equally unknown. But the pure preaching of the Word is not a mark of the Church in its second act, making it known to all persons alike; for to many who labor under blindness, the preaching of the Word is as unknown as the Church itself. For to a blind man, the dawn is not a sign that makes the rising of the Sun known; if you were to show the dawn to a blind man and tell him that the Sun is about to rise because the dawn has appeared, you would be demonstrating something unknown by something equally unknown. Yet, the dawn does not cease to be in itself, in its primary act, a sign of the Sun's rising, especially capable of making it known. In the same way, to an unbeliever, whose eyes the prince of this world has blinded and darkened, the preaching of the Word is not a mark that actually makes the Church known in its second act; for the preached Word is as unknown to him as the Church itself. But what then? Yet the preaching of the Word is a mark of the Church inherently capable of making it known.

And by these distinctions, we can easily dispel whatever objections are raised against this mark, whether by the Separatists, the Papists,

the Arminians, or the Socinians. Neither do we assert that any kind of preaching of the Word whatsoever is a mark of the Visible Church, but only that which is fixed.

1. Because, in Deuteronomy 4:6, to hear and do whatever the Lord commands makes the Jewish Church manifest and visibly wise in the sight of the nations.

2. Because the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments are so proper to the Visible Church that they distinguish it from all other assemblies. Psalm 147:19-20: "He declares his word to Jacob, his statutes and judgments to Israel; He has not dealt thus with any other nation." Deuteronomy 12:29-32; Isaiah 2:2-3; Isaiah 59:21.

3. Because the definition of the Visible Church is derived from Acts 2:42, where it is described as a congregation that professes the faith and continues in the Apostles' teaching, in fellowship, and in the breaking of bread. Such a congregation is thus distinguished from all other assemblies.

4. The planting and gathering of visible Churches is always set forth in the Word by the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments. Matthew 28:19-20.

5. The sheep of Christ hear His voice in the legitimately sent pastors. John 10:27-28.

6. Finally, the Church is a congregation built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Ephesians 2:20. And for no other reason is it called the "pillar and ground of the truth," 1 Timothy 3:15, than because it teaches, professes, and shows the Word of God to others.

Thus, Augustine in his book *On the Unity of the Church*, chapter 12, Tertullian in his work *Against Heretics*, Jerome in Psalm 133, and Chrysostom in his homily 49 on Matthew, all insist that we seek the true Church through the preaching of the Word of God, not through human traditions.

Chapter 16:

On the Ministers of the Word

Romans 10:15

“How shall they preach unless they are sent?”

The sending of ministers is twofold: one is immediate and extraordinary, as was the case with the Apostles; the other is mediated, conducted ordinarily through the Church. Regarding both types of sending, we are in dispute with the Remonstrants. The former was extraordinary because the Apostles were immediately acted upon and inspired by the Holy Spirit, so that they could not err.

Thus, we inquire whether the divine inspiration by which the Apostles were gifted by God was a norm and rule by which the Old Testament, as far as the content of that inspiration extended, was to be interpreted, or whether all such inspirations were to be tested by the Word. The Remonstrants assert that those inspirations did not need to be examined by the Word of God. We, however, hold otherwise and require distinctions in this matter.

1. There is a difference between those who are divinely inspired and their hearers.
2. There is a distinction in the authority of these inspirations with respect to themselves and in themselves versus their authority concerning us.
3. There is also a distinction between the inspirations in their act or exercise and in their habit.

Assertion 1: The Apostles themselves, in their act and exercise, while they were inspired by these inspirations, had no need to examine or test them by the Law of Nature or by other Scriptures, concerning the content contained in them.

Reason: Because when Abraham received a divinely inspired communication from God, he had no need to examine whether it was in accordance with the Law of Nature when commanded to sacrifice his son; for that divine command inherently included a revelation to Abraham that the command was lawful and divinely inspired. Thus, the angel's communication to Zacharias and the voice to Peter in Acts 10, to which both initially resisted, were not immediate inspirations but rather a simple communication of God's will through an angel or heavenly voice sent to them.

Assertion 2: But when the Prophets or Apostles were not in the actual exercise of their inspirations, they could doubt and therefore examine these inspirations by the Word of God. Thus, Jeremiah, questioning whether he should continue prophesying (Jer. 20:9: "I said, 'I will not mention Him, nor speak anymore in His name'"), needed to test this inspiration against the revealed Word of God in Jeremiah 1:7-10 to see whether it was right to say, "I will speak no more in His name," and even to examine through divine inspiration whether he was indeed called to prophesy. If the Apostles themselves

had doubted Christ's resurrection, they would have needed to examine their inspirations through the Scriptures by which they had once believed this article of faith.

Assertion 3: But the hearers of the Apostles and Prophets needed to examine, according to the rule of Sacred Scripture, the Law of Nature, and the Decalogue, whether what the Prophets and Apostles spoke was in conformity with the Scriptures. For though the immediate inspirations of the Apostles are, in themselves, no less authentic than the canon of Scripture—since they formally contain the very will of God and in every way the same as the Word of God, and the Word of God itself is God's Word and infallible—yet these inspirations concerning us are not, formally speaking, a rule of faith regulating us, but a rule regulated with respect to us. Therefore, the hearers needed to examine them, and indeed could and should test them by the Word of God to determine whether those inspirations were indeed the Word of God. This is contrary to the Remonstrants and is proved as follows:

1. *1 John 4:1*: “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God.” *1 Thessalonians 5:21*: “Test everything; hold fast what is good.”
2. Because the Bereans are praised as more noble-minded in *Acts 17:11* for examining the Scriptures daily to see whether what Paul, divinely inspired, proclaimed was so. Therefore, they were not bound to hold Paul's immediate inspirations, though divinely inspired in themselves, as a regulating and unchangeable rule, but to test them by the Word of God.
3. Because the Apostles, and indeed even Christ Himself, did not prove what they preached by divine inspirations but by the Scriptures of the Old Testament—by the Law and the Prophets (*1 Cor. 15:4; Acts 26:22*).

On the Necessity of Sending Ministers

Inquiry: Is the sending of ministers through the calling and ordination of the Church, now that the extraordinary Apostolic mission has ceased, necessary according to divine institution? The Remonstrants deny that it is precisely necessary except for the sake of order and decorum in an established Church (Apol. chap. 21, p. 227). Episcopius, in the second series of his private disputations, disp. 26, theses 4 and 5, argues that it is permissible for any Christian man to teach the divine Word at any time if he is competent to teach and if those who desire to be taught seriously and earnestly request it. Likewise, Andreas Radderius, a Socinian, in his "Refutation of the Gordian Knot," chap. 4, p. 8, asserts that just as in a republic it is lawful to choose anyone who is capable of performing a certain duty, so too in the Church of Christ, which is most free, it is lawful to choose anyone who is apt to teach others.

We, on the contrary, assert that not only *δύναμις* (gifts) but also *ἐξουσία* (authority) are necessary, according to God's institution, through the mission and calling of the Church, for someone to be a lawful pastor of the Church. We prove this as follows:

1. **From Scripture:** Romans 10:15, "And how shall they preach unless they are sent?" 1 Timothy 5:22, "Lay hands on no man hastily, nor be partaker of other men's sins." 1 Timothy 4:14, "Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." Acts 1:23-26, "So they appointed two... and when they had prayed... the lot fell on Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles." Acts 6:5, "The saying pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen..." Even when God immediately called and sent, it was necessary that the Church's mission preceded,

which was certainly set as an example for us; otherwise, the immediate call of God would have sufficed. Acts 13:2, "As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, 'Separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.'" Acts 14:23, "And when they had appointed elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed." Therefore, much more now is it necessary that ministers be called by the Church with prayers and fasting, and any calling would be profane unless preceded by such a mission of the Church.

2. It cannot be said that God, who is the author of order, would permit anyone, without any preceding call from the Church, who is competent to teach, to intrude into the pastor's office. It is required that a bishop not only possess spiritual gifts but also be "blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober-minded, orderly, hospitable, not given to wine, not violent," etc., "having a good testimony from those outside" (1 Timothy 3:2-3). To refer this testimony to the one aspiring to the pastor's office and not to the Church that calls is absurd. Whoever is thus qualified may desire the office of a bishop (v. 1), but he may not usurp it without the Church's calling.
3. Christ would not have rightly rebuked the church in Thyatira for permitting the false prophetess Jezebel to teach if it were not within the calling church's authority to test and expel false prophets. And the same culpability lay upon the church in Pergamum, which tolerated the supporters of the doctrine of Balaam. Nor would Christ rightly have praised the church in Ephesus for not being able to bear those who were evil and for testing those who claimed to be apostles but were not, and found them liars (Rev. 2:1-2, 14, 20). It is thus the Church's duty, by

divine institution, to approve and call true and approved teachers, and to eject and reject false ones.

Inquiry: Is the ministry of the Gospel and the preaching of the Word absolutely necessary for salvation? The Remonstrants deny this in their Apology, chap. 22, p. 233, and in "Script. Synod." art. 2, p. 233, as does Episcopius in disp. 28, thesis 11. Likewise, the Socinians, in the Racovian Catechism, chap. 11, p. 301-302, teach that after the Scriptures have been revealed and are given to all to read, the ministry is not so much necessary as useful. The Apologists claim it is necessary based on the hypothesis of the time—that is, if public ministry can be exercised—and based on the hypothesis of divine will. They state (in the Apology, *ibid.*) that God has not willed it to be maintained as precisely necessary always and forever, since one may believe through the Word read and heard. In "Script. Synod.," they teach that it is unknown to us whether God might bring many to Christ without the external ministry of the Gospel.

We affirm:

1. That the question regarding the absolute power of God to save, apart from Christ the Mediator and without the preaching of the Gospel, is a curious one and beyond the scope of Scripture.
2. That the notion that the matters of the Gospel, if not the words, are instilled by the ministry of angels or in any other way to those who have never heard, is an invention not found in Scripture.
3. That some may believe through the reading of the Word and understanding it in a manner equivalent to preaching, we do not deny. However, we teach that the preaching of the Word,

according to the order revealed and prescribed to us by God, is absolutely necessary for the salvation of all adults.

4. As it is written: "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10:14). And again, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel (namely, the preaching of it, which in verse 14 he acknowledges himself a debtor to both Greeks and barbarians), for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16). "For it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save those who believe" (1 Corinthians 1:21). "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom you believed?" (1 Corinthians 3:5).
5. Whoever does not believe cannot be saved. But without a preacher, no one believes, for "how shall they hear without a preacher?" (Romans 10:14). "The sheep of Christ hear his voice" (John 10:27-28).
6. Because God commanded it: "Go, therefore, and teach all nations" (Matthew 28:19). "Preach the Gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15).
7. From the office of ministers: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:19). "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God" (2 Corinthians 5:20). "He has made us competent ministers of the new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:6).

8. From the practice of the Church: "For Moses from ancient generations has in every city those who preach him, being read in the synagogues every Sabbath" (Acts 15:21). "The Levites read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading" (Nehemiah 8:9). And that this practice would be perpetual is indicated in Ephesians 4:11, where Christ, ascending on high, "gave gifts to men, for the edification of the Church."
9. From God's own practice: For He did not choose to teach Saul or Cornelius by Himself or by an angel, but rather entrusted the task to Peter's ministry for Cornelius and to Ananias for Saul (Acts 9 and 10). Justin Martyr in his "Second Apology," Tertullian, Chrysostom, and all the Fathers in their times proclaimed the necessity of preaching.

On the Distinction Between Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders

The question is raised whether the distinction between teaching elders (Presbyteros docentes) and ruling elders (Presbyteros regentes) is a recent innovation. The Remonstrants assert in their Apology, Chapter 21, p. 228, that it is.

We deny this claim.

1. **Scriptural Basis for Ruling Elders:** Scripture expressly acknowledges ruling elders. In Romans 12:7-8, the Apostle Paul distinguishes between Prophets, who are teachers and pastors, and ruling elders, who are distinct from both. Verse 7 states, "If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach" (that is, the teacher). Verse 8 continues, "If it is encouraging, let him encourage" (this is the pastor), "if it is giving, let him give generously; if it is to lead, let him govern diligently." This refers

to the ruling elder, distinguished from deacons and other ministers in the church treasury.

2. Further Scriptural Evidence: In 1 Corinthians 12:28, it is written, "And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues." If "administrations" (gubernationes) are distinguished from apostles, prophets, and teachers, that is, the overseers of church discipline or elders, then ruling elders are of divine institution. Similarly, in Acts 15:23, at the Jerusalem Council, the apostles, elders, and brethren decided and subscribed with these words: "The apostles, elders, and brethren, to the brethren who are of the Gentiles in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, greetings."

3. Necessity of Distinction in Roles: It is not possible for someone in a large assembly to simultaneously devote themselves to the Word of God and prayer (which pertains to pastors) and also give due attention to the governance of all matters (which is necessary). Acts 6:2-4 shows this clearly. And if every person receives a gift as God wills for edification (1 Corinthians 12:7), then those given the gift of administration are given it to govern. Many possess the gift of administration who cannot teach. And in 1 Timothy 5:17, "The elders who rule well are to be considered worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in preaching and teaching." From this, we conclude there are two kinds of elders: some who rule well only, and others who both rule and labor in teaching. These latter are especially worthy of greater honor.

Remonstrants' Objection:

The Remonstrants argue that Paul merely meant to commend

pastors endowed with the gift of governance as worthy of double honor, but even more so those who not only possess this gift but also labor diligently in teaching and preaching. They deny that this implies two kinds of elders.

Our Response:

- 1. Clear Distinction of Roles:** This interpretation might hold if Paul had spoken in general terms, saying that an elder is worthy of honor, but more so one who is diligent in preaching. However, Paul specifically identifies "those who rule well" as one type, and then enumerates another type, namely, "those who labor in preaching."
- 2. Common Duty vs. Specific Roles:** This is not a case of a "general duty" (καλῶς προεστῶτες) as some have suggested. As noted by the Professors of Leiden in their Censure (chapter 21, section 5), this is a distinct role. They are deemed worthy of double honor in comparison to widows (whom Paul also says should be honored) and other elderly men (or presbyters by age). (1 Timothy 5:1, 3).
- 3. Misinterpretation by Romanists:** According to the Roman Catholic view (as expressed by Cajetan in this passage), those who "rule well," even without laboring in the Word, are to be honored doubly, making them like mute dogs who would be deserving of double honor—which is absurd. However, "to rule well" includes the act of laboring in the Word, as Hebrews 13:17 says, "Obey your leaders," and Acts 20:28, "Be shepherds of the church of God." Governing the flock includes faithfully feeding the flock as a whole includes its parts. Therefore, Paul does not simply repeat himself by saying, "Those who labor well in the

Word are worthy of double honor," but distinguishes the roles clearly.

4. **Labor and Effort in Preaching:** The term κόπος (labor) does not necessarily imply weariness from effort but rather denotes the positive task of labor itself. For example, "according to his own labor" (1 Corinthians 3:8), "knowing that your labor in the Lord is not in vain" (1 Corinthians 15:58), "and the labor of love" (1 Thessalonians 1:3). Surely, if I were to say, "All scholars who study well are worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the study of theology," I would imply that not all engage in theology, or I would be speaking nonsensically.

Chapter 17:

On Synods

Acts 15:6

"The apostles and elders came together to consider this matter."

We have here a clear testimony for the authority of councils.

On the Authority of Councils: Errors and the Middle Way

In this discussion on the authority of councils, both the Papists and the Separatists err: the former by excessively exalting the authority

of councils, attributing to them ἀναμαρτησίαν (infallibility); the latter by depreciating that authority more than is proper. We, walking a middle way, inquire how much is to be attributed to councils, while the Arminians remove all necessity for councils. Therefore, we begin with these distinctions to guide our understanding:

1. The decrees of synods may be understood to bind either authoritatively, as if they were commands of God, or charitably, as if they were merely counsels and exhortations.
2. A friendly exhortation or counsel binds in two ways: first, because of the inherent goodness in its subject matter, as it aligns with the Word of God; and second, because of the authority of the friend giving the counsel or exhortation. For every counselor, as such, is in some way superior; and all superiors, according to the Fifth Commandment, are to be obeyed.
3. From this, a double form of superiority must be acknowledged in the Fifth Commandment: one of dominion and jurisdiction, and another of reverence and gifts. The former is the inadequate and narrower subject of the Fifth Commandment.
4. All friends, brothers, and equals, endowed with greater grace, experience, and light, insofar as they counsel us from God's Word concerning what is right and good, ought to be recognized as superiors. Indeed, if David had rejected the counsel and persuasion of Abigail, who urged him against unbridled vengeance, he would have rejected the counsel of God as well and violated the Fifth Commandment, just as if the High Priest or a Prophet of God had commanded the same thing with prophetic authority, which Abigail only suggested privately.

However, this comes with the distinction that private counselors are superiors in terms of reverence, not jurisdiction; nor do they have the power of ecclesiastical censures to exercise over those who despise or reject their counsel and exhortations. This power, however, belongs to the synod and the church.

5. A distinction must be made between the power of judgment (aptitude) and the right to pass ecclesiastical judgment. Some lower presbyteries have the right to judge many matters but cannot actually render a judgment due to a lack of gifts. For this reason, such cases must be committed to provincial or national synods.
6. Although the governance of the church by synods is of positive law, it is based on the fundamental principle that the Lord and Savior has committed the power of the keys to each particular church. Thus, the governance of united churches, whether in a province or in a nation, is by natural law.
7. Synods are necessary for the well-being of the church, and there are always synods in the visible church, whether consisting of fewer members, as in a parochial church, or of more members, as in a provincial or national church, or in a general and ecumenical council. The difference in size does not change the nature of the synod. The same argument that proves the legitimacy of a parochial synod also demonstrates the legitimacy of a general synod of the entire visible Catholic church.
8. Whoever concedes the association of the authorities of particular churches must necessarily acknowledge the authority of synods, both provincial and national, over individual churches.

Assertion One

A General Council, or Synod, is a gathering of pastors, teachers, and elders in the name and authority of Jesus Christ, convened from all visible churches to a single location, for the purpose of deliberating on matters concerning the faith, morals, and right administration of church discipline (*κυβέρνησις*). For further consideration of this definition, one may refer to James of Almain in his work "On Ecclesiastical and Lay Power," chapter 15, as well as John Gerson in his treatise "On the Power of the Church," both of whom provide the same definition of a council, except that they assert that a General Synod should consist only of those who are in a hierarchical state and must be convened by the name and authority of the Roman Pontiff. However, Almain concedes that a General Council can be convened without the authority of the Roman Pontiff in three cases:

1. When the Pope is naturally dead or, in a civil sense, excommunicated due to the crime of heresy — because it is known (he says) that the Apostolic See has been vacant for two years.
2. When the Pope is opposed and refuses reformation.
3. When the time and place have been designated by a prior General Synod, as was the case with the Council of Basel.

The Romanists admit from the passage in Matthew 18 ("Tell it to the Church") that a General Council is of divine right:

1. Because a council is a means of salvation and edification for all, both pastors and apostles.
2. Because, although the apostles were *ἀδιάψευστοι* (infallible) in prophesying and writing the canonical Scripture, they could still err in other respects. If Peter had persistently adhered to

- Judaism and not heeded the rebuke of Paul or the Church, he would undoubtedly have been excommunicated.
3. "By Church" in Matthew 18, we cannot understand only the prelates and bishops, says the School of Paris, in "On the Power of the Church," page 17, because Christ in those words addresses Peter, a prelate. However, Peter cannot, according to Almain and Gerson, be both the accuser, judge, and witness. Therefore, they believe that Peter himself was bound to obey the Church.
 4. The power of the keys was given immediately by Christ to all the rulers of the visible Catholic Church. Therefore, the exercise of this power, even if it becomes physically impossible due to the wars prevailing in the Christian world or other impediments, is still morally lawful. For there are many inconveniences which, due to the depravity of human nature, are morally lawful here and now, though they are inexpedient.

Assertion Two

Every particular pastor, even outside of a synod, has the power of jurisdiction in preaching and determining the truth according to the Word of God.

- **Jeremiah 1:10:** "See, I have set you this day over nations and kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant." Here, governance and power are granted to a specific pastor, apart from the Church.
- **1 Timothy 6:17:** "Charge those who are rich in this world not to be proud."
- **2 Timothy 4:1:** "I charge you in the presence of God... preach the Word," etc.

Therefore, Paul, as a pastor, could determine by preaching, even before any synodical determination was made in Acts 15, that circumcision was not necessary, and that abstention from things strangled, from blood, and from fornication was necessary.

However, an individual pastor does not have full jurisdictional power concerning his acts of preaching.

1. Because the Church can, for just cause, deprive him of such power.
2. Because he cannot use the censure of excommunication against those who despise the preached Word, unless by the intervening power of the jurisdiction of the whole Church.
3. Because he alone cannot synodically determine the same truth that he has already determined through his pastoral authority while preaching, for one individual pastor is not a synod.

Thus, the Apostle James in Acts 15:15 could only say, "This is my judgment," etc. Even though that judgment of James was the Word of God itself, which James, as an ordinary pastor, could have preached, it was not a synodical dogma nor an ecclesiastical constitution unless it was determined by the Church gathered in synod.

Similarly, Samuel, as a prophet, was instructed with immediate power to anoint David as king. However, Samuel, as a member of the kingdom of Israel, did not have the power, separately and apart from the whole kingdom, to anoint David in Hebron as king. That anointing and inauguration of David as king could not have been done except by all the orders of the kingdom, not by any one prophet alone.

Assertion Three

There exists an authoritative power in synods to bind all particular churches to the decisions made at the place where the synod was convened.

1. For if Matthias was chosen to the apostleship by the common votes of the church gathered synodically in Acts 1, then all particular churches are obligated to recognize Matthias as an apostle. This consequence cannot be dismissed as if this synod were merely apostolic and extraordinary.

1. Because our adversaries cite this very passage to establish the ordinary power of the whole assembly, whereby all Christians have the right to choose their pastors by free votes until the second coming of Christ.

2. James of Almain and other Romanists strongly conclude from this passage that Peter, and therefore the Pope, is subject to a General Council, for even Peter did not choose Matthias as an apostle without the consent of the other apostles and the whole church gathered synodically there.

3. If this synod were extraordinary and apostolic, why were the votes of the whole multitude required? For whatever is concluded by an extraordinary and apostolic power can and ought to be concluded without the consent and votes of the multitude.

2. Similarly, in Acts 6, if the apostles did not ordain the seven deacons by ordinary synodical authority but by apostolic and extraordinary authority, then why was the election of the deacons attributed to the whole multitude? Verse 5 states: "And

the saying pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, etc."

3. In Acts 15, a synod of multiple visible churches made synodical decrees (which are called *δόγματα τῶν Ἀποστόλων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων* in Acts 16:4), which are binding on other visible churches. Therefore, synods possess rights and authority over particular churches. Those who say this synod is not a rule or model for other synods are greatly mistaken. Their reasoning relies on three alleged privileges of this synod:

1. That it was an apostolic synod.
2. That the Holy Spirit was present at the synod.
3. That the matter determined by the synod became canonical Scripture.

However, we respond:

1. The synod should not be named "apostolic" merely because the apostles were members of it; no more than it should be called "presbyterial" or "ecclesiastical" because its members were not only apostles but also presbyters, brothers, and (if we believe our adversaries) the entire congregation.
2. This reasoning opens the way to eluding all the promises made to the pastors of the Word and the Church of Christ until the end of the world. For all these promises were primarily made to the apostles themselves. These promises—such as "Behold, I am with you always, even unto the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20), "I will send another Comforter, the Holy Spirit, who will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13), and "I will give you a mouth and wisdom which none of your adversaries will be able to resist" (Luke 21:14-15)—were fulfilled in Acts 2 and Acts 4:8-10 when

the apostles were filled with the Holy Spirit. But because these promises were made and fulfilled in the apostles, it follows, by the adversaries' hypothesis, that they were not made to us; for we are neither apostles, nor immediately inspired, nor gathered synodically in the name of Christ with the promise of the same apostolic presence of the Spirit, who was both promised and truly poured out on the apostles. But this is a great absurdity. For the same Holy Spirit, though not in the same measure, who was promised to the apostles, was also promised to the entire Catholic Church, to be synodically gathered until the end of the age.

3. Moreover, it is evident from the various circumstances in the text that the apostles, in this synod, gave us an example of an ecclesiastical and ordinary synod, not an apostolic and extraordinary one, as a model for our imitation until the end of the world. For in verse 2, Paul and Barnabas were sent as delegates of the church to the apostles and elders concerning this question. Now Paul, as an apostle, had already perfectly known the whole mystery of the Gospel through supernatural revelation (Galatians 1:12, 16-17; Ephesians 3:3, 4, 19). Therefore, he was not sent as an apostle to learn more through a synodical determination than he had already perfectly known. He was sent, then, to the synod as an ordinary pastor, and for our perpetual imitation in such cases.
2. For it is said that the apostles gathered in verse 6 to deliberate on this matter. But as apostles, they had no need of any synodical assistance; indeed, Paul, as he was taught the mystery of the Gospel, consulted neither with flesh and blood nor with any synod (Galatians 1:16, 17). Therefore, the apostles gathered not as apostles, but as ordinary pastors, for our example.

3. It is stated in verse 7 that there was much debate and discussion concerning this matter. Yet, as apostles, they did not need debate, discussion, or the counsel of others when conveying canonical Scripture. For in writing the Holy Scriptures, they were fully illuminated by the immediate radiance of the Spirit and were entirely infallible.
4. The opinions of the apostles were presented in an orderly manner at the synod. First, Peter spoke (verse 7), then Paul and Barnabas (verse 12), and lastly, James (verse 13), whose judgment was more precise and complete, to which the entire synod, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, assented (verse 22). But if they had offered their opinions solely as apostles, there would be no reason why the entire synod would acquiesce more to the judgment of James than to that of Peter, Paul, or Barnabas, if they all had been equally guided by apostolic enlightenment and infallibility.
5. Finally, the decision of the synod was such that the apostles, elders, brethren, and, in their own way, the whole church, after diligent debate and investigation of the truth, agreed equally, having conferred back and forth. But we do not read in any Scriptures that the brethren were immediately inspired and infallible, or were co-equal causes with the apostles in declaring or writing canonical Scripture. The apostles themselves, if they had employed the apostolic spirit, could have proposed this decree, regarding abstaining from blood, things strangled, and fornication, to all churches everywhere outside of the synod, just as they did with the articles of Christ's death and resurrection. Unless, indeed, it had been intended that they leave behind, for all posterity, a pattern of synods and what ought to be done in the Church until the end of the world whenever controversies

and conflicting opinions arise about articles of faith; that is, according to the practice of the apostles, to commit the question to a synodical determination by pastors, doctors, and elders.

Therefore, we argue first: If, according to the law of nature, no one can be a judge in his own cause, then an appeal may be made from the presbytery of a single particular congregation to the presbytery of multiple congregations assembled in a synodical manner. And if the former is true, then the latter must also be true.

For, 1. When there was a great dispute between Paul and Barnabas with false brothers about the necessity of circumcision (Acts 15:1, 2), and they could not serve as judges in their own case, in which the opposing side would not acquiesce in their judgment, they appealed to the Synod of Jerusalem. Likewise, when the churches of the Greeks and Hebrews were contending about alms, and neither party had any authority over the other, the matter was referred to a synod composed of the twelve apostles and particular churches, where it was judged and determined.

2. It is contrary to the wisdom and providence of Christ that He would not have instituted any remedy for supporting the weak and afflicted when they are oppressed by particular churches. This, however, is characteristic of Christ's care (Psalm 72:4). Experience also shows that at times Diotrophes rules and the evil servant excommunicates his fellow servants. Jerome lamented against the Luciferians that during the time of Constantius and Valentinian, the Arians held power. Athanasius, in his book on the solitary life, complained that the Church was oppressed by the Arians in a manner similar to the time when it was oppressed by the priests of Baal during the time of Elijah. Basil, in Epistle 17, states: "Now it may be said that in this time,

there is neither leader, nor prophet, nor prayers, nor offering, nor incense.” Therefore, the author of the book titled *Onus Ecclesiae*, whether it was Occam or another, in chapter 42, and Francis Pico della Mirandola, in his oration to Leo X, lament the calamities of the Church, stating that there is no faith, no truth, no religion, and no discipline; that ecclesiastical dignities, benefices, bishoprics, and even the papal dignity itself, are all up for sale. Hence, Occam and James of Almain loudly proclaim the necessity of an ecumenical synod because the Pope cannot be a judge in his own case. Hence, the Emperor Louis of Bavaria, as recorded in the *German Chronicle*, Book 4, page 297, appealed from Pope John XXI, who had been poorly informed, to a General Council to better inform the Pope. For the Emperor had been excommunicated on the grounds that he assumed the title of Emperor without the confirmation of the Pope. Sigismund, Duke of Austria, appealed from Pius II to the next succeeding Pope and a General Council. Likewise, Philip the Fair appealed from Boniface VIII to the apostolic see and a General Council, as Platina relates against the will of Boniface. The gloss of the Canon Law, canon 27, question 3, prohibits anyone from judging in their own case. The University of Paris appealed to Leo X, who impiously rejected the Council of Basel, and Luther also appealed from the same Leo to a General Council.

From all this, it is evident that it is in accordance with the law of nature that those who are wronged and oppressed by the particular presbyteries of churches may appeal to more general and superior synods.

2. When common enemies, such as heresiarchs and false teachers, corrupt and ravage many particular churches, it is necessary, by the very instinct of nature, that all the particular churches come

together into one general synod, uniting and joining their authorities to drive out the common enemy. Therefore, Jacobus de Almain holds that the power of convening a general synod, for purposes of charity and admonition, belongs to all private persons; although the authoritative power resides solely in the Pope, or, as we teach, in all the rulers. Hence, in his treatise *De Auctoritate Ecclesiae*, chapter last, thesis 4, he writes: “For if the right hand were paralyzed or stubbornly refused to act according to the direction of the imagination for the defense of the body, then all authority to defend the body would reside in the left hand; and if one part of the province, through the will of enemies who wish to destroy it, would refuse to act, who doubts that the remaining part, even if smaller in number, would for that time have the authority to defend the whole province? Certainly, this is highly agreeable to nature. If external enemies were to invade any kingdom or province thereof, all the inhabitants of the kingdom, uniting their forces, are by the law of nature bound to repel the common enemy.”

Similarly, when multiple particular churches are united and form one visible body, cultivating one external and visible communion among themselves, whether in the Word, in the participation of the sacraments, or in mutual admonitions and exhortations, all visibly united under one head, Christ, they ought, with combined efforts, to repel all errors, scandals, and heresiarchs, and to cast them out of this visible kingdom of Christ; and this, not only as Christians but also as churches, since every part, and all the parts together, are bound to look to and care for the safety and welfare of the whole.

The reason for this connection is that just as the communion of gifts among Christians ought to flourish, so too should there be a communion of authorities among sister churches, as such. This

argument is based on the necessity of synods. Indeed, the adversaries are compelled to admit the necessity of synods, in which sister churches assist one another through mutual advice, admonition, and exhortation. However, they deny the authority and jurisdictional power of synods over particular churches; but this, in truth, is to deny the necessity of synods altogether. For the Synod of Jerusalem, in Acts 15—which they acknowledge to be a lawful and necessary ecclesiastical assembly—imposed its decrees and decisions not merely as advice or fraternal counsel but as commands with authority and jurisdiction over the particular churches, as it is written: “It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to lay upon you any greater burden than these necessary things” (Acts 15:28). To impose a burden of command is not merely to counsel or persuade. And in Acts 16:4, “As they passed through the cities, they delivered to them the decrees to keep, that had been decided by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem.” This synod is not a fabrication of the Papists but an institution of Christ. Hence, it was decreed at the Council of Basel that a General Council should be convened within five years, then within seven years after the dissolution of the Council, and thereafter every ten years; nor is the Roman Pontiff permitted to disregard this prescribed time. Therefore, among the advocates of purer discipline within the Papacy, such as Gerson *De Ecclesia* and Francis Zabarella in his tract *De Schismate*, there have been serious complaints that, contrary to what was established at the Councils of Constance and Basel, there are now no General Councils. Even Bellarmine admits in *De Conciliis* (Book 1, Chapter 6) that the Council of Pisa was convened against Julius II, and that it was rejected by Julius in the Lateran Council. And since most General Councils have condemned the Roman pontiffs and deprived them of papal dignity, and have dared to condemn the heresies and errors of the Roman Church with censures, it follows that those who zealously contend for the dignity of the Papacy and the primacy of the Roman

See have dared to deny the necessity of General Councils. Therefore, Bellarmine writes in *De Conciliis* (Book 1, Chapter 10): "Just as in those three hundred years after Christ, the Church remained unharmed without General Councils, so it could also remain for another three hundred years, or five hundred, or a thousand." And Pererius, in his commentary on Exodus 19 (Disputation 2, Number 14), states: "It is useless to do with many things what can be conveniently done with fewer." Pighius, in *De Ecclesiastica Hierarchia* (Book 6, Chapter 10), calls the General Council an invention of Constantine the Great, unsupported by the authority of God's Word. And Clement VII said that General Councils are somewhat useful, but if the primacy of the Roman Pontiff and his power are called into question, they are dangerous.

Similarly, the Arminians also deny the necessity of councils, as do the Socinians. Hence, the Remonstrants in their *Apologia* (Chapter 15, Page 289) teach that a decision made in a synod should not be lightly regarded, and that it ought justly to incline our minds toward a more thorough consideration of the decision made. However, reason does not permit that it should prescribe anything to anyone or compel dissenters to assent or obey. Episcopius, in his private disputations (Disputation 33, Thesis 4), says: "We affirm that synods are useful only in this respect: to deliberate, examine, and persuade by arguments and reasons for the establishment of divine truth and the removal or extirpation of heresies and errors. To end disputes concerning the chief articles of religion in any other way than by persuasion is to introduce tyranny into the Church and, if not wholly to abolish the liberty of consciences, at least to bind them severely."

Thus, Theophilus Nicolaides, a Socinian in his refutation of the *Tractatus de Ecclesia*, states that errors or controversies are not

removed by this synodal means but only by force imposed upon our consciences.

Similarly, the Separatists, denying the authority of synods, say that synodical decrees have only as much value as the authority and reason they derive from the Word of God. These decrees, they assert, are persuasive rather than mandatory or imperative, unless force is applied to consciences. But if this reasoning were valid, it would follow that the preaching of the Word and all pastors commanding faith and obedience in the name of Christ would only persuade, rather than having the authority to command. For the Word preached has as much value, no less than a synodical decree, as it has authority and reason from the Word of God. Yet it is certain that pastors can command in the name of God (Galatians 1:9-10, 1 Thessalonians 2:13). Furthermore, no confessions of faith, symbols of orthodox doctrine, or declarations would have any authority, for all symbols of faith and confessions possess only as much authority as they have from the Word of God.

We deny, however, that the conclusions of synods are of absolute, unlimited, and peremptory authority; yet it does not follow that all authority of synods is abrogated.

But, setting aside other adversaries for now, let us engage more closely and directly with the Remonstrants.

On the Question: Are Synods neither useful nor suitable for resolving controversies?

The Remonstrants affirm this, and they argue that all Christian teachers should have much more prudently refrained from creating symbols, confessions, and rules. Thus, Episcopius (Disputation 26, Thesis 10) and the Preface to the Remonstrants' *Confession* (Page

10) speak likewise. So also does Smalcius, a Socinian, in his refutation of the book *De errore Arianorum* (Book 1, Chapter 1, Page 6).

We assert that the declarations of synods, insofar as they agree with the Word of God, must be adhered to.

1. If an erring brother must be brought before the Church, which decides against a heretic or pronounces judgment on a brother who has offended and should be excommunicated for not heeding the Church, then synods have decisive power. Therefore, they must not only deliberate, examine, consult, and investigate, as they teach, but also make binding decisions. The former is true according to Matthew 18:16.
2. If Christ promised that He would be with those gathered in His name when they judicially render a sentence, then their sentence must be upheld. This was previously stated in Matthew 18:20.
3. In Acts 15:29, the apostles, elders, and brothers, having gathered synodically, delivered decrees that are to be obeyed in the Lord and which are called in Acts 16:4, "τὰ δόγματα τὰ κεκριμένα ὑπὸ τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ πρεσβυτέρων" (the decrees that were decided by the apostles and elders), which any individual apostle could have determined infallibly without the synod, had it not been their intention to set forth the example of a synod.

They do indeed say that the synod was convened to convince the minds of wavering and false brothers; not that synods have any authority or jurisdiction over consciences—this was the reason for its establishment.

But this is to concede everything, for all synods are convened for the sake of men. Scripture itself condemns all heresies, and a private teacher can refute heresies from Scripture. But to convince men, the Lord willed that synods be gathered, whose decisions bind consciences only "κατὰ μέρος" (in part), and insofar as they agree with the Word of God. Moreover, this reasoning would argue against a parochial synod no less than against a national one; indeed, in the Church at Corinth, it would not have been necessary for the people to be compelled to excommunicate the incestuous man—Paul could have done this perfectly well himself. Yet God willed that excommunication should be done synodically, to convince stubborn men.

4. The authority of synods must be upheld if there is to be submission to a synodal sentence of excommunication commanded by the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 5:4)
5. If the teaching and decision of a synod have no authority, neither will the creed called the Apostles' Creed have any authority, even though it has gained such influence through the approval of synods and is acknowledged by the Remonstrants themselves. Faith, always resting on the articles of the creed and the principles of faith, will be doubtful, wavering, unstable, and ephemeral, not firm.
6. The Church of Thyatira and Pergamum would be rightly rebuked for not eliminating false teachers if there were no divine authority granted to synodically assembled churches to issue authoritative judgments from the Word of God against erroneous and heretical doctrines.
7. There would be no authority for presbyters and churches to choose their ministers against Acts 1:24-25, Acts 6:5, Acts 13:2,

Acts 14:25, and 1 Timothy 4:14 if there were no synodal authority and no authoritative synodal decision to which obedience is owed. Hence, it is erroneous for Episcopius in his disputation on synods to say, "It would be far better and more necessary for each church to endeavor to manage its own evils by tolerating, persuading, and counseling." Also, Thesis 4: "We affirm that synods are useful only in this respect: if they are convened for the purpose of deliberating, examining, and persuading by arguments and reasoning." But if so, then no church could remit sins, retain sins, or condemn heretics. Rather, all heresies and blasphemies should be tolerated, and the church should seek to remove and root out errors only through persuasion. Christ would have left no means for resolving disputes in the Church, no authority if everything were to be accomplished by mere persuasion, for heretics always have something to oppose. There would be no authority for ministers of the Word, when gathered together, to judicially impose silence on those who contradict through the Word of God.

8. From this, they deny that the Word of God in the synod can ultimately bind the consciences of men, because heretics do not see it as the Word of God, even though the Word of God truly declares it to be the Word of God. But if this were true, not only would the canon of the synod not bind consciences, but neither would the canon and the words of the Prophets, Christ, and the Apostles, for the Sadducees do not see as the Word of God what Christ says, that the dead will be raised; neither do Hymenaeus and Philetus see as the Word of God what Paul says, that the resurrection is not already past but is yet to come.

Question: Should those who have the right to vote in a synod be entirely neutral and committed to no party?

The Remonstrants say, *Confession*, Chapter 25, Section 2, where they explain: "Those delegated to synods should indeed be free; and while the case is being examined, they should be bound to no person, church, confession, etc., but simply to God, Christ, and His holy Word." The reason is given in the *Apologia*, Chapter 25, folio 287: "For a judge in a contentious matter ought not to be on either side of the dispute."

Response: A delegate casting a vote must indeed be free, that is, during the course of the dispute, bound by oath to no person, church, or confession, but only to the Word of God. He ought not to be bound by oath to any human confession, either during or after the examination of the matter. But if they mean that a delegate should not be bound to any party, even to that which agrees with the Word of God, they speak nonsense.

1. Because Peter, Paul, and James, before the Synod of Jerusalem was convened, had already in their minds condemned the necessity of circumcision and other ceremonies (Acts 15). Likewise, Elijah, before convening the Synod with the prophets of Baal, had already condemned the worship of Baal (1 Kings 18). Nicodemus and Joseph had also decided in their minds to stand with Christ before they went to the Council. And no one would call these men illegitimate members of the Council.
2. Because they desire that judges, regarding truth, be like a blank slate, indifferent in themselves, or a clean sheet of paper with nothing written on it, whose mind remains at a crossroads. Yet, those more practiced must have their senses rooted in truth and established in Christ through faith; for those who are entirely indifferent to any divine truth are like those who can be driven

by every wind of doctrine, whose light is up for sale in the marketplace.

3. Because they suggest that synods are useful for nothing. For if the subject of the Canons is a fundamental article, then the better the delegate is, the more faithless he is—which is absurd. For if he believes by divine faith that a fundamental article should be made into a Canon, then he is not free but bound to one party by faith. If he does not believe but is unfaithful in this matter, then the more faithless he is, the more proper and suitable he is as a delegate.
4. The Remonstrants did not approach the Synod of Dordt as free men, nor were they unbiased regarding the views of Arminius, which they had already taught in their writings, academies, and pulpits before the Synod was convened.
5. Right and truth are not within our power, as the Apologist says in the cited passage. Therefore, no one can or ought to come to the Synod unless they are bound to no party.

Chapter 18:

On the Sacraments and Ecclesiastical Discipline

The question is asked, whether the Remonstrants are correct in saying, in their *Apology* (chapter 23, fol. 244), that the sacraments

are signs which not only represent and foreshadow to us, but also in a certain way (namely, symbolically and as a mere memorial) exhibit and seal? Here they clearly align with Socinus, who, in his book *On the Duty of a Christian* (as the most learned Professors of Leyden observe in their *Censure of the Confession of the Remonstrants*, chapter 23), says, "When the Lord's Supper is celebrated, it does not truly seal the remission of sins; but rather, together with the death of Christ—of which that sealing is an effect—it is commemorated and proclaimed that such a sealing has been." Therefore, the sacraments are essentially signs that declare and commemorate, not seals that exhibit Christ and His benefits. We thus deny the Remonstrants' view in this sense and oppose it as follows:

1. If the sacraments were only commemorative signs of Christ and His benefits, then the bread in the Lord's Supper would not be more of a seal of the Lord's body to the one who partakes of it than to those who do not partake at that time; and baptism would not be more of a washing of regeneration to the one who is baptized than to the witnesses who stand by and observe the administration of baptism. For to those present, the water is a commemorative sign of the blood of Christ, and to those not partaking, the bread is a representative and declarative sign of the body of Christ.
2. Paul says in Romans 4:11 that a sacrament is a sign that is also an exhibited seal. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while uncircumcised, that he might be the father of all who believe without being circumcised, to whom righteousness might be credited as well (Romans 4:11). Likewise, in Romans 6:4, "We were therefore buried with Him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father,

we too may walk in newness of life." Now, this burial is not a mere shadowy representation but the true and real crucifixion of the old man. 1 Peter 3:21 speaks of baptism, which now saves us, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as a pledge of a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. But a mute and shadowy sign will operate as much to produce its effect as the dawn is said to bring about the day, which is neither the cause nor the instrument but a mere sign of the day.

The Remonstrants say, indeed (*ibid.*, fol. 245), "Those who use the signs with true faith are deemed by God worthy of a singular grace, whereby they receive, as it were, a taste of divine grace in their souls, rendering them more ready and eager to love such a benevolent and merciful God, and to celebrate His benefits and praises in the Church." To call them seals and say they seal divine grace in another manner is incomprehensible. But by making the sacraments merely memorial signs, they detract from their dignity, efficacy, and right use. For in this way, he who keeps vigil through the entire night, seeing the morning star, is made more cheerful and greatly rejoices at the rising of the sun, even though the rising of the sun affects his mind only as a bare sign, with merely an objective action, not physical and real.

3. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10:16, "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a communion of the body of Christ?" If the bread is merely a communion of the body of Christ by mere signification, then the sacrament is no more an effective means of salvation than the twelve stones erected in the midst of the Jordan, which were commemorative signs, established by divine institution, of the miraculous entry of the people into the

Promised Land. Indeed, the bread which we eat in our private homes may arouse a literal remembrance of the heavenly bread, the body of Christ. But verse 21 clarifies what it means to take the cup of the Lord, namely, to be a participant in the Lord's table; as to drink the cup of demons is to be truly and really a participant in the table of demons. Thus, to the believer, the sacrament is a sign in a way that no other Scripture speaks of a sign by mere signification.

We are not troubled by their claim that it is inconceivable for a grace-exhibiting sacrament to be organic, which is neither physical nor merely moral and objective, nor both simultaneously, but rather something more, something relative and sacramental. For we acknowledge a third option, namely, something "hyperphysical," which is neither physical nor moral. Moreover, among men, there are signs that exhibit what they signify, which have both a physical and moral aspect, and are more than mere signs or memorials. For example, the delivery of the keys to the royal fortress to a general is not the physical transfer of the stones and timbers of the fortress into his hand, nor is it a mere memorial and moral signification that could be performed by mere words; rather, it is a real delivery of the fortress for the general to keep. And the seal of a diploma affixed to a document is not the physical delivery of lands, nor is it merely a sign that objectively and literally evokes the lord's intent regarding the estate; rather, it is a real confirmation of the transfer of the lands. The same is to be said of the delivery of a stone or clod of earth into the hand of the new legitimate proprietor or possessor of the land; it is neither the physical handing over of every acre of land nor a mere signification but a real transfer and conveyance of the estate into the possession or right of the new lord.

We do not concern ourselves, moreover, with their assertion that they cannot understand how these signs could function as instruments or means exhibiting grace, since the faithful who use them are already fully persuaded of the grace promised to them before they use them, and they have already apprehended by firm faith the reality signified by these signs; and since an immediate operation of grace upon the mind and will, and an instrumental operation, are incompatible. For if this reasoning were valid, then the Sacrament would scarcely be a bare memorial sign, for even before the eating of the bread in the Supper, the faithful have apprehended, by faith, the grace of Christ. But we assert that an increase of grace is given through the reception of the Sacrament; and although the organic action of the Sacrament is incomprehensible to us, should the matter therefore be denied merely because the Arminians cannot measure it by reason (and always try to measure the mysteries of God by the yardstick of reason)?

The Question is Raised: Can the sacraments be administered by any layperson? The Remonstrants, together with the Socinians, teach that it is possible (*Apology*, chapter 23, fol. 246). We restrict the administration of the sacraments, according to the Scriptures, to the ministers alone.

1. Because in Matthew 28:19, Acts 2:42, 1 Corinthians 1:14, 15, 16, 17, Acts 10:48, and 1 Corinthians 11:23, the administration of the sacraments is commanded and attributed only to the ministers.
2. Because there is no necessity for the sacraments (since they are not absolutely necessary for salvation) that compels us to depart from the practice received from Christ and the Apostles.

The Council of Carthage, in Canon 100, says, "A woman should not presume to baptize." Gratian, in *De Consecratione*, Distinction 4, perversely and corruptly adds the words, "unless necessity compels." Tertullian, in *On the Veiling of Virgins*, writes, "It is not permitted for a woman to speak in the Church, nor to teach, nor to baptize, nor to offer." Augustine speaks uncertainly, not with firm conviction, against *The Letter of Parmenian* (Book 2, Chapter 13): "If a layperson has administered baptism to someone on the verge of death, compelled by necessity, I do not know whether it should be repeated."

Matthew 28:19:

"Go therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

The Question is Raised: Are the Remonstrants correct in teaching (*Apology*, chapter 23, fol. 252) that Paedobaptism is merely an ancient rite, and not one having authority either from Christ's precept or Apostolic institution? We deny this.

1. Because here we have the argument of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38: "Let every one of you be baptized," etc., verse 39: "For the promise is unto you, and to your children." From this comes Peter's argument: "To whom the promise is made, to them also belongs baptism; but to Jews and their children the promise is made; therefore, etc."
2. This is the argument of God Himself: Genesis 17. To whom the promise of the Covenant belongs, to them also belongs the seal of the Covenant, even though many are unaware of the seal of the Covenant due to their age. But the promise of the Covenant belongs to all the children of believers. Therefore, etc. The major premise is from Genesis 17:7-13: "I will be your God and the God

of your seed; therefore, every male child shall be circumcised on the eighth day." This argument holds with us because baptism, in its substance, is the same sacrament as circumcision and the seal of the same Covenant, as is clear from Romans 6:4-5, Colossians 2:11-12.

3. It is no wonder that the Remonstrants call Paedobaptism into question when Scripture states that baptism is performed "for the remission of sins," and they deny that any sin can properly be said to exist in infants. According to their hypothesis, Paedobaptism would not be a holy or even an indifferent rite but plainly illicit and contrary to the Word of God.

The Question is Raised: Is baptism only a temporary rite, not to last until the end of the world according to Christ's institution? The Remonstrants affirm this. Episcopus, in *Private Disputation 29*, corollary 1, and the Socinians say the same.

We deny this:

1. Because it is a sacrament of the New Testament, joined to the preaching of the Word and the doctrine of the Gospel, and of the same institution and duration as that doctrine. Therefore, by Christ's institution and promise, it will endure to the end of the world. Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15-16.
2. Because baptism is commanded to all adults, as much as faith and repentance are, who wish to be saved. Mark 16:16, Acts 2:37-39.
3. Because it is commanded to all households professing faith. Acts 10:47: "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" The Holy Spirit is received until the consummation of the age, and remains with His people until the end of the world (John 14:16).

4. Because baptism is a means of regeneration appointed by God, and it is said to save us (Romans 6:2-4, Colossians 2:11-12, Titus 3:3-4, 1 Peter 3:21). And its effect is also the internal washing away of sins (Acts 2:38, 1 Peter 3:21). Therefore, it must endure in this world as long as regeneration and the remission of sins last—that is, until the end of the world.

Question: Is Baptism merely a solemn ritual by which we are distinguished from others and initiated into divine worship, or is it also a means by which grace is truly conferred?

The Remonstrants affirm, *Confession*, chapter 23, thesis 3; *Apology*, chapter 23, fol. 243; Episcopius, *Disputation*, 29, thesis 3; Socinus, *On the Office of the Christian Man*, chapter 4; Smalcius, *Disputation* 9, against Frantzius, p. 299. They claim it is a fable that there is any inward efficacy in Baptism.

Contrary:

1. Mark 1:4: John preached a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.
2. Romans 6:4: Therefore, we are buried with him by Baptism into death. And 1 Peter 3:21: Which in a like figure also saves us, namely Baptism (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. To say that remission of sins and regeneration are represented in Baptism merely by a naked signification is to make Baptism a mere empty symbol.
3. Because Christ's purpose and intention is to cleanse the Church with the washing of water by the Word (Ephesians 5:25, 26).
4. Because if Paedobaptism is a rite not necessary by divine institution, it cannot serve as a moral admonition to infants concerning the remission of sins; since they teach there is no

properly called sin in infants that requires remission (*Apology*, fol. 84, 85).

Question: Is it only in the Lord's Supper that the death of Christ is proclaimed and commemorated, without any spiritual benefits being sealed?

The Remonstrants affirm, *Confession*, chapter 23, thesis 4; *Apology*, chapter 23, fol. 249; Arminius, *On Considering the Articles*; likewise, the *Racovian Catechism* on the Prophetic Office of Jesus Christ, chapter 3, p. 186. We, on the contrary, teach that Christ and His benefits are truly sealed and conferred upon us, albeit spiritually.

1. 1 Corinthians 10:16: "The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?" Matthew 26:28: "This is my blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." Exodus 12:13: "And the blood shall be to you for a sign upon the houses where you are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you when I smite the land of Egypt." The liberation of Israel from the slaughter and destruction that night, when the firstborn of Egypt were slain, was real.
2. Although we deny any physical communion with the substance of Christ's body, yet we must acknowledge a real, albeit spiritual, communion (which is opposed to anything merely imaginary or symbolic); otherwise, Christ is not given to us as the true and real nourishment of our souls.

Objection: They object that we only partake of Christ's body in the Sacrament as we do through the Word, i.e., by faith alone.

Response: But the Arminians do not say that we partake of the

body of Christ through the Word in any other way than by mere signification and moral action.

2. Calvin in his *Institutes*, Book 4, Chapter 17, sections 7, 8, 9, calls it a high and admirable communion. And Beza, in his *Questions on the Sacraments*, calls it an incomprehensible mystery. Though it is a communion by faith, as if we spiritually eat Christ's body, it is not through faith alone accompanying the preaching of the Word; but as faith perceives the gracious exhibition of the things contained in the Sacrament, seeing that truly God offers grace through the presence and right use of the elements and rites.

Question: Do the Remonstrants correctly deny, *Apology*, chapter 24, fol. 256, that the Church in the exercise of Discipline can exert no force at all—neither external, as the Magistrate exercises, nor internal and ecclesiastical, which binds the conscience before God and excludes one from the kingdom of heaven for the crime of heresy?

We deny this.

1. Because the voice of the Church, when proceeding with the key of authority against a heretic, is the voice of Christ, according to this: "He who despises you despises Me; and he who hears you hears Me." And, "Whosoever sins you remit, they are remitted; and whosoever sins you retain, they are retained." Therefore, if Christ has coercive power over the one who errs concerning the Fundamentals and believes Christ to be an impostor, then the Church has the same coercive power under Christ. And if Christ binds authoritatively, the Church binds ministerially.
2. Because it is the same as what they teach elsewhere, *Apology*, chapter 24, fol. 277: "Any sect may exercise Discipline according to the dictate of its own conscience; and what is permissible for us towards others, is equally permissible for others towards us,

provided piety is observed on both sides, and the obedience due to magistrates is preserved." Hence, the Arians may lawfully, and according to the rules prescribed by Christ the King, excommunicate us; and the Anabaptist, Socinian, or Arian sects may lawfully excommunicate and condemn all other sects to damnation (since their conscience dictates this). And we may excommunicate and condemn Socinians, Anabaptists, and others. But to believe Christ is both true God and man, and to believe He is merely a man, so that these two contradictory objects become the subject of two lawful acts of Discipline, is utterly absurd.

3. Because they assume that the private judgment of conscience is the rule that binds the conscience in the exercise of Discipline. Thus, the Papist sect, if it does not resist the dictate of its conscience in its Discipline, rightly strikes us with the thunderbolt of excommunication. Why, then, do we renounce the infallibility of the Pope?
4. They deny, or at least call into question, the compelling power of ecclesiastical discipline upon the conscience, not only concerning those who err—i.e., those who err simply in the mind—but also concerning sinners. "If it seems to us," say the Apologists, "that this should be done in the case of sinners, how much more ought it to be done in the case of those who err?" And perhaps it would be safer to tolerate the one who errs, provided he is honest and godly, for as long as possible rather than ever exclude him from our congregations, especially if he rejoices in them and loves them. But if error is not a fault, as they teach, it deserves pardon and mercy; indeed, it is innocence and piety—indeed, as they themselves state, it is properly called innocence—then the one who errs should perhaps not merely not be excluded but never excluded from our congregations, i.e., never excommunicated. For excommunication is a punishment

instituted by Christ, and the Church ought not to punish someone who is not sinning, much less punish a man for what is properly called innocence. Therefore, if someone, purely out of error of the mind, were to believe that Christ is a false prophet, should he not be separated from our communion?

Chapter 19:

On the Magistrate

Romans 13:4

"For he is the servant of God for your good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain. For he is the minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath upon the one who practices evil."

Question: Is it permissible for the Magistrate to punish the wicked and murderers with capital punishment? Some of the Remonstrants deny this: for example, Henricus Welsing, in his book *On the Duty of a Christian Man*, Part 1; Henricus Slatius, in his *Open Declaration*, page 53; and Joan Geisteranus, in *On the Office of the Magistrate*. Likewise, the Socinians—Ostorod, in his *Institutes of Religion*, Chapter 28; and Smalcius, in *Disputation 6: On the Civil Magistrate*, against Frantzius—deny that the Magistrate has the right to shed blood; they deny that war is lawful for Christians. The Society of Remonstrants, in their *Confession*, does not explicitly deny it, but neither does it affirm it clearly, as the professors of Leiden have rightly noted. In their *Censure, Apology*, Chapter 12, page 141, they

speak more openly, but, knowing that some among their ranks had publicly denied this in their writings, they claim that such individuals should be tolerated who hold that it is not lawful for the Magistrate to exercise capital punishment or to shed blood.

We affirm that it is entirely lawful, and we openly condemn and reject the contrary opinion as erroneous.

1. Because Genesis 9:6 states, "Whoever sheds man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed." And Exodus 21:14, "But if a man willfully attacks another to kill him by treachery, you shall take him from my altar, that he may die." Numbers 35:31 says, "You shall not take a ransom for the life of a murderer who is guilty of death; but he shall surely be put to death." And this is not a judicial or temporary law but a law of nature, as is evident from the fact that innocent blood cannot otherwise be expiated—a statement never made about the ceremonial or judicial laws. Verse 33: "You shall not defile the land in which you live; for blood defiles the land, and no atonement can be made for the land, for the blood that is shed in it, except by the blood of the one who shed it." Matthew 26:52: "All who take the sword will perish by the sword." However, not all murderers perish by the sword in fact. Therefore, Christ speaks of the right that the magistrate holds.
2. The Remonstrants argue from Genesis 9:6, not only against killing but also against any shedding of blood. Yet, no distinctions can prevent the conclusion that under the New Testament, it is lawful for the magistrate to bear the sword, since by divine institution, Romans 13, he bears the sword as the minister of God, for vengeance. And the sword is an instrument not of pecuniary penalties but of the shedding of blood.

There are many passages in the New Testament which, if pressed to their literal meaning, as the Arminians do along with the Anabaptists, would plainly prove that no form of punishment—whether pecuniary or corporal—should be used against parricides, matricides, or the most heinous criminals and regicides. According to their interpretation, the magistrate would be required to compensate murder and regicide with good deeds and love, as expressly stated in Matthew 5:39, 43. Moreover, they would argue that no resistance should be offered against anyone who would wish, with sword and fire, to destroy the King, parents, or country. For such criminals, one should only pray for them and do good to them.

On the Role of the Magistrate: Thus, the magistrate would carry the sword only to soothe all the deadly plagues of the Church and state with prayers, gentle supplications, and soft words. This contradicts the actions of Christ Himself, who, with a whip made of cords, drove the sellers and buyers out of the temple. They will not find in the entire New Testament a single passage—unless they misinterpret the passage in Matthew 5 concerning private individuals seizing vengeance—that would suggest that the magistrate should be nothing more than a defenseless monitor, who may use neither sword nor force of any kind against criminals and the most loathsome evildoers. Let them provide such a passage!

By this logic, one would not deny food to a thief or an idle person, nor impose any penalty on anyone, but would wait for thunderbolts from heaven to fall upon all offenders. And thus, the magistrate and the king would only be names. For where, in the New Testament, are there any laws that prescribe death for incest, adultery, theft, sodomy, or bestiality?

3. We must be subject to kings and governors, who are sent to punish wrongdoers and to praise those who do good (1 Peter 2:13-14).
4. If the killing of men in war were unlawful, John the Baptist would have answered the soldiers asking about the way to eternal life incorrectly, allowing them to continue in that allegedly unlawful life without correction, only teaching them the manner and method by which they should live amidst heinous murders (Luke 3:14). Similarly, Peter would have been less concerned with the salvation of Cornelius (Acts 10). The faith of the centurion, greater than any in Israel (Matthew 8), and the righteousness and true conversion to God in Cornelius could not have been consistent with his daily engagement in warfare if war were indeed unlawful.
5. Many wars, led, directed, and approved by Christ—the Lamb—are fought in the Apocalypse against the Dragon and the Beast. Similarly, see 1 Corinthians 9:7, Luke 3:14, and Luke 14:31-32.
6. The adversaries themselves teach that the magistrate ought to impose punishments according to the gravity of the crime. Therefore, murder deserves punishment by death and the shedding of blood.
7. It is a law of nature to repel force with force and, in the defense of an innocent life, to kill rather than be killed.

Question: Should the magistrate punish the heretic? Or is it in accordance with the laws of our most merciful Savior, Jesus Christ, that the magistrate should tolerate Jews, Turks, Papists, Arians, Socinians, Libertines, and all heretics who err only through the pure error of their minds?

In this question, certain distinctions must be observed:

1. We must distinguish, following Bullinger in Decade 2, Sermon 8, between a heresiarch and those who are merely led astray.
2. As Polyander notes in his *Disputationes Purioris Theologiae*, disputation 50, thesis 57, we should distinguish between a blasphemer and someone who is otherwise heterodox.
3. We must differentiate between someone who has universally apostatized from Christianity and someone who opposes or denies a fundamental article of the faith.
4. There is a difference between knowledge, conscience, and external profession.
5. There is a distinction between a positive profession and a negative one.
6. There is a difference between common punishment and capital punishment.
7. Some errors are curable, while others are incurable.
8. We must distinguish between cumulative authority and privative authority.

Assertion 1: The freedom of pure knowledge and opinion should be granted by the magistrate to all men to the extent that the magistrate cannot compel anyone to hold a particular opinion or belief in matters of religion. Since the actions of the mind are internal, they do not fall under the authority of the magistrate. The magistrate can order the instruction of the mind through teachers and pastors, but he cannot dictate the opinions of the mind.

Assertion 2: The magistrate has no direct or immediate power over conscience; however, he does possess an indirect and secondary cumulative authority over it. This is because he can command that all means be diligently and zealously employed to pursue orthodoxy.

But he has no privative authority; that is, he cannot deprive anyone of the liberty of having a correct understanding of God. No king, no tyrant, no created power can do this.

Assertion 3: The magistrate ought to compel a heretic to a negative profession of sound faith, that is, to ensure that a heretic does not openly profess, teach, or disseminate anything in the practice of religion that is contrary to sound faith. Hence, we maintain that all those who publicly and openly profess a false religion should be punished according to the nature of their offense.

1. Because the magistrate bears the sword to punish evildoers (Romans 13:4; 1 Peter 2:13-14). Such heretics are malefactors, and heresy is a work of the flesh (Galatians 5:20). The king is not a minister of God if he does not restrain those who hold and profess false beliefs concerning the Divine Majesty.
2. Those whom the Church ought to punish ecclesiastically as scandalous, the Christian magistrate, as the guardian, nurturer, protector, and defender of the Church, ought to punish with civil penalties. This is required by the duty of a guardian, nurturer, and protector. But the Church must convict those who contradict, excommunicate the contumacious, and treat them as heretics.
3. A public false religion against God is either a public sin or it is not. If not, then people can be saved in any sect or religion, which is absurd, since there is only one faith (Ephesians 4:5), and salvation is through the name of Jesus alone (Acts 4:12). If it is a public sin, the minister of God must punish and restrain it.
4. If the reasoning of the Remonstrants were valid—that heretics should not be restrained with the sword because religion is

persuaded only by reason, not by force, flame, or sword—then this reasoning would also imply that even blasphemers and heresiarchs (who, in their erroneous consciences, believe themselves obliged to the utmost wickedness if they do not teach their deadly heresies about Christ the false prophet, and that even in public places) should not be restrained. However, they do teach that it is lawful and necessary for the magistrate to forbid teachers of destructive errors from temples and public places. But if this is so, then the answer must be that it is reasonable to persuade by reason that such a heresiarch ought not to teach the doctrine he believes to be salvific and necessary for saving souls in public places, and not by force and the sword to keep him from public temples.

Assertion 4: The magistrate cannot directly compel a heretic to make a positive profession of sound faith and to affirm as salvific what he considers to be blasphemous, for such compulsion would only produce hypocrisy. However, the magistrate can compel a heretic to abandon his erroneous conscience by considering the causes, the means, the reasons, and the motives, by hearing, and by learning.

Assertion 5: The magistrate should subject to capital punishment blasphemers and those who blasphemously profess heretical doctrines about God, and those who, having departed from Christianity, turn to Judaism or any other false religion.

1. Because God commands this: "Whoever sacrifices to any god, except to the Lord only, shall be utterly destroyed" (Exodus 22:20). The law in Deuteronomy 13 states that a dreamer who entices others to serve strange gods should be killed without mercy. A worshiper of the sun and the moon is to be stoned to

death. "Whoever curses his God shall bear his sin; and whoever blasphemes the name of the Lord shall be put to death" (Leviticus 24:16).

These laws do not pertain to us as judicial laws (as noted by Beza on punishing heretics):

1. Because they were prescribed by Moses, not by our magistrate; they were for the Israelites, not for us.
2. Because they pertained to corporal sacrifices and ceremonies.
3. Because they were against soothsayers. These are no longer applicable among us.

But as for natural equity, it cannot be proven from Scripture that these laws are among those abolished by the death of Christ, unless it is claimed that by Christ's death, it has become lawful for us to blaspheme the name of God, which was formerly a sin among the Jews, or that, if it is still a sin, it is now a sin abolished by Christ's death—at least insofar as it should not be punished by the magistrate.

2. Because the decrees of King Nebuchadnezzar are commended, which did not pertain to the political and judicial law of the Jews. See Daniel 3:29, and the decrees of Artaxerxes in Ezra 6:11 and 7:25-26, which established death and eradication for those who blasphemed against Jehovah or refused to obey the law of God.
3. This is further confirmed by the examples of Jehu, who slew the priests of Baal; Josiah, who killed the priests of the high places; Elijah, who put to death the priests of Baal at the brook Kishon; Peter, who put Ananias and Sapphira to death; and Paul, who struck Elymas the sorcerer with blindness. All these examples

show, from the lesser to the greater, that it is much more permissible for a Christian magistrate to put blasphemers to death, since justice is natural in both instances and this sin is no less grave than parricide.

Assertion 6: When men are led astray by others, we must act with great patience and all gentleness; we should forgive those who repent, and we should restrain the erring with lighter penalties, as much as possible.

Question: Is it possible for someone to deliberately err, or to persuade himself to err, when the matter concerns his eternal salvation? The Remonstrants say yes, in *Apologia*, folio 278. We deny it.

1. Jeroboam, in order to stabilize his kingdom, deliberately set up golden calves; Solomon turned to strange gods knowingly. Both understood that this concerned their eternal salvation.
2. Otherwise, it would not be possible for someone to lie, to make God corporeal, to declare Him the author of sin, for the sake of filthy lucre or empty glory—which contradicts experience.

Question: Is that heretic not a blasphemer who attempts to prove some blasphemy from the Word of God and is so touched by reverence for the Divine Word that he would rather endure a thousand deaths than abandon it? The Remonstrants declare such a heretic to be innocent, upright, and pious (*Apologia*, cap. 24, fol. 263). We deny this.

1. Because those whose consciences are seared can be judicially hardened by God so that they believe their heresy to be in conformity with God's Word and are ready to die for it, as is

evident in the priests of Baal and the Jews who, from the Old Testament, contend that the Son of Mary is an impostor and are prepared to die for their religion.

2. Because, otherwise, there would never be found in all nature any blasphemer detestable to God who, with a hardened conscience, would believe that Christ is a deceiver, an enemy of God the Father, and that His religion is a fable; or who would think it lawful, even pious, to kill Christ and the apostles, which contradicts the Scriptures. What then shall we say about those who believe that sacrificing their children to Molech is a religious service pleasing to God, just as God commanded Abraham? (Jeremiah 7:31). Likewise, concerning the killers of Christ and the apostles (Matthew 26:65-66, 1 Corinthians 2:8, John 16:2-3).
3. Because the main reason why it is said that the magistrate should not punish a heretic with capital punishment is that no magistrate or mortal can judge the hidden heart to discern whether that blasphemy is held against the dictate of conscience. But, in that case, whoever maintains that God is a body to be worshipped as an idol, or that the Son of God is an impostor, or that there are three gods, cannot but be tolerated; indeed, he who spreads the gangrene of his false doctrine to others cannot be restrained by corporal force in public places (contrary to what they themselves teach, *Apologia*, cap. 24, fol. 257). For whether internal stubbornness is added to blasphemy, only the "καρδιογνώστης" (knower of hearts) knows. Thus, Moses, the kings of Israel, and the people could not stone those who enticed them to worship false gods because it could be that such heresy is itself piety and innocence. How could the people know the hidden heart? Nor could any heretic, whether Hymenaeus, who

made a shipwreck of faith, be excommunicated; indeed, he could not even be publicly rebuked by name as heterodox or marked with any censure, because whether he is stubborn or simply led into error by the mind, only the "καρδιογνώστης" knows, not the Church nor any mortal.

Question: Is the magistrate's authority in the external governance of the Church supreme, immediately subject only to God, and superior in power to the Church in general? The Remonstrants affirm this (*Apologia*, cap. 25, fol. 291-292). We deny this and determine the matter by the following assertions:

Assertion 1: The king, as a member of the Church, is subject to the royal authority of Christ reigning in His Word and ecclesiastical discipline.

1. Because it is said of all, without exception ("where the law does not distinguish, we must not distinguish"): "He who hears you hears me; he who rejects you rejects me."
2. Because to the prophets and pastors of God, ministerial authority is given by God over kings, in the name of God. "See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant" (Jeremiah 1:10).
3. Because all created power is subject to the royal authority of Christ in the Word and in the act of ecclesiastical discipline, which is an act of Christ's regal office. "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry" (Psalm 2:12). "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents; the kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Yes, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him" (Psalm 72:10-11). Christ is "King of Kings and Lord of Lords"

(Revelation 17:14, 19:16). Therefore, kings are his subjects and are accountable to his laws.

4. Everyone in the Church is either the supreme Pastor or a sheep. Christ alone is the supreme Pastor; therefore, the king is a sheep. He is bound, therefore, to hear the voice of Christ speaking and commanding through his servants. He is subject, therefore, to the power of binding and loosing granted to the Church. For what applies to Christians as Christians applies to all Christians, including the Christian king.

Assertion 2: The king, as king, is the guardian of both tables of the law and the supreme governor in all causes whatsoever, both ecclesiastical and spiritual, as well as civil and temporal, in political governance and civil influence. But he is not the true, proper, or supreme governor and judge of ecclesiastical causes, which are distinct from political ones. The reason is that in every ecclesiastical cause, there are two aspects: one is political, which pertains to the king and human law, and as a subject, he is under the king's authority in his own sphere; and to this extent, the king is the supreme judge. The other is spiritual and ecclesiastical, and this is subject to ecclesiastical judgment, not the king. For if the king were the judge of all causes, including ecclesiastical causes, he would be the judge of the translation of the Scriptures from the Hebrew and Greek sources into Latin or the vernacular, even if he did not know the Hebrew language; indeed, he would be the judge of all philosophical disputes, all questions of naval matters, military affairs, and agriculture, which would place the king beneath a king, while striving to honor him. Whatever is political in such questions, concerning civil rights and duties, pertains to the king in his own sphere (Romans 13:4). "He is the minister of God" (Isaiah 49:23). "Kings shall be your foster fathers, and their queens your nursing

mothers" (Psalm 101:8). "Every morning I will destroy all the wicked of the land; I will cut off all evildoers from the city of the Lord."

Assertion 3

Thus the Doctors rightly declare that a king, by his royal authority, exercises acts of command (*actus imperatos*) concerning ecclesiastical matters, but not acts of free volition (*actus elicitos*). Just as the will and the dominant faculty exercise royal and commanded acts concerning all faculties of both soul and body, so also does the will command the eye to see, the ear to hear, and the faculty of movement to walk; but the will itself does not perform acts of seeing, hearing, or moving.

1. Because the offices of the king and of ecclesiastical rulers are distinguished by their object, nature, and kind. Therefore, the king, as king, cannot preach, ordain pastors, establish synodical canons, or impose them upon the church.
2. What pertains to a king *quâ* (as a king) pertains to all kings, even those who are pagans. Yet our adversaries concede that it is not fitting for all kings to perform such acts.

Assertion 4

Nor is it true what they say, that the king, even if not as a king, but as a Christian — that is, as such a king, may properly direct and dispose matters in ecclesiastical government (as Camero says in *Praelectiones*, volume 2, page 50), while the ministry and exercise belong properly to ecclesiastical officers. This is a trifling nonsense!

Who could bear the idea that the king should have the power to preach the Word, to administer the Sacraments, to exercise ecclesiastical discipline, or to prescribe canons — while it is properly the role and function of pastors to preach and so forth?

1. For the authority to exercise pastoral acts resides in the pastors themselves; namely, the authority granted to them for the purpose of edification and for the exercise of discipline. As it is written: "Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" (Matt. 18:18-20); "Go into all the world and proclaim the gospel to the whole creation" (Mark 16:15-16); "And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:11-12); "This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. 4:1-2); and "Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive" (2 Cor. 2:10-11); "For even if I boast a little too much of our authority, which the Lord gave for building you up and not for destroying you, I will not be ashamed" (2 Cor. 10:8).
2. Otherwise, ministers would be merely the hands, instruments, and executors of the will of kings, and pastors would preach and exercise acts of discipline in the name and by the authority of the king. But they are the servants of God, fulfilling their office in the name of Christ, as it is said: "We are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us" (2 Cor. 5:20); "Paul, an apostle—not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father" (Gal. 1:1-2).
3. It is especially noteworthy that the Christian faith, when added externally to the office of a king, does not confer upon a

Christian king a new authority, which he did not have before, by which he could dispose of ecclesiastical matters. Rather, Christianity only extends and intensifies the pre-existing civil and political authority. For a pagan or Muslim king is equally, in essence, a king and, if the Gospel is revealed to him, he is equally obliged to use his royal authority to advance Christ and his kingdom, just as much as a Christian king. I speak here of the obligation of the law, not of any special obligation of gratitude, according to that saying: "To whom much was given, of him much will be required" (Luke 12:48). But the Christian king, not as king but as a Christian king, is obliged to contribute his authority more abundantly and earnestly to the good of the church than a king in general, or a pagan king who has heard nothing of Christ. Therefore, the king as a Christian is subject to a greater obligation than a pagan king, but he is not endowed with a greater royal authority in the primary sense. For it is said of all kings: "By me kings reign" (Prov. 8:15).

Hence, it is easy to judge the canon imposed by the false bishops of the Scottish Church in the Book of Canons of 1637, chapter 1, section 2. This canon declares that anyone who shall in the future affirm that the majesty of the king does not possess the same power in ecclesiastical matters that pious kings of Judah and Christian princes in the primitive Church possessed, or who would in any way diminish his royal prerogative, shall be excommunicated, etc.

But first, these canonists are guilty of *lèse-majesté*, for they wish to ascribe royal power to the king insofar as he is pious and devout, like the pious kings of Judah and Christian princes, and not simply as a king. From this, it follows that if the king should happen to be impious or heretical, he would possess no royal prerogative at all. This is manifestly a Jesuitical notion and the foundation of that

Jesuit doctrine which aims to depose an impious king and enemy of the Roman Catholic faith. This, indeed, is their intent when they declare that denying to the king the same royal authority that the pious kings once possessed is to diminish his royal authority. But the royal authority is thus diminished unless we say that it is the same authority which belongs to the king as king and which also belongs to him as a pious and devout king. These two, however, are distinct. They themselves have no word in this canon concerning the authority of the king as king.

2. The canonists leave undecided what constitutes the king's authority here, as they confuse the pious kings of Judah with Christian emperors. For the kings of Judah may be considered either as kings or as prophets, such as David and Solomon. If considered as prophets, they wrote the canonical Scriptures and prophesied. Shall those who deny the king the power to write canonical Scriptures and to prophesy, to preach, and to perform truly pastoral acts, be excommunicated? Is that so? If they are considered merely as kings, then the canon says nothing except that those should be excommunicated who deny that authority in ecclesiastical matters belongs to the king which belongs not only to all kings, whether pious or impious—Achab, Domitian, Nero, Julian—but also to Christian princes.

Moreover, it is certain that the pious princes in the primitive Church did not have the same authority as the pious kings of Judah, who were both kings and prophets. If what they usurped *de facto* in the primitive Church is attributed to our king, they argue deceptively and in bad faith for royal authority. If what rightly belongs to the emperors of the primitive Church is to be attributed to our king, then they say nothing, and it is an unjust argument, for they ought to have explained what authority in ecclesiastical matters rightfully belongs

to the king, lest the innocent should be struck in darkness by their excommunication.

Assertion 5

Certain spiritual acts are appropriate to the king as king. For as a king, and by the duty of his royal office, he can and must exhort and command in a royal manner that all slothful bellies and ecclesiastics eager for courtly honors direct themselves instead to the feeding of the Lord's flock. Indeed, he must command that everyone in his kingdom diligently perform what pertains to his duty. "And he said to them: 'Hear me, O Levites! Now consecrate yourselves, and consecrate the house of the Lord, the God of your fathers, and carry out the filth from the Holy Place'" (2 Chron. 24:5). For thus Jehovah commanded. "Take the Levites from among the children of Israel and cleanse them" (Num. 8:6, 11, 18:32).

Now, this exhortation, regarding the substance of the command, does not differ from that of the minister. But as to the authority of the one who commands, and the penalty to be inflicted, it does differ. The king, by his royal authority and under the threat of civil punishment (would that kings would indeed chastise those pastors who are lazy, self-indulgent, and intent only on courtly honors!), commands the pastor by ecclesiastical authority and under the penalty of spiritual censure.

Assertion 6

In the case of a universal apostasy of the Church, when the pastors are heretical, neglecting their duty, and the people are deficient in the true worship of God, the king both can and ought to reform religion.

1. Because Josiah piously and commendably did so. In 2 Kings 23, he renewed the covenant between God and the people, purified the temple, demolished the altars of idols, and slew the priests of the high places.
2. Because it is according to the law of nature that every member — especially so distinguished a member as the political head — should, as much as possible, look to and consult for the well-being of the entire body. But in doing this, he is not to act from absolute and independent royal liberty, but must do all things according to the prescription of the divine Word.

Assertion 7

The king, as king, may justly refuse his royal sanction to impious statutes, even if they have been canonically determined by a synod.

1. Because the conscience of the magistrate is not absolutely, but conditionally, subject to the canons of the Church, insofar as they are in agreement with the Word of God.
2. What applies to all Christians also applies to the king as he is a Christian. But the private discernment of whether a law or canon is consistent with the Word of God pertains to all Christians. Thus, the king, both as king and as a Christian, has a public judgment, and as a Christian, a private judgment, so that he may not execute or approve by his authority anything contrary to the Word of God.

Nor should anyone object: "If the king, in his conscience, judges the canons to be impious and heterodox, and therefore refuses his royal sanction, while the rectors judge the canons of the Church to be pious and orthodox, who shall settle the dispute?" Indeed, this

controversy is the same as that which we have with the Papists, and that which can arise between any servant and his master, or between a flock and its pastor. Here, the Word of God alone, to which both parties in the dispute should refer, must be consulted, as it bears the judgment in the name of God. The determination of the Church is a condition of faith required according to the order prescribed by God, but it is not the formal reason of faith, nor does it bind the conscience of the king, or of the rectors of the Church, or of the people as such. It is the role of the Church's rectors to determine, and of the king to execute what has been determined (provided it is consistent with the Word of God), and the king, in this case, is to obey those acting as ambassadors for Christ.

The consequences drawn by the Remonstrants to the contrary are invalid. From this, they infer: "Therefore, ministers, or pastors, have power and authority immediately, that is, primarily and supremely, under and from Christ. The magistrate, then, either does not have this power, or has it immediately together with the ministers, from Christ, or he is the servant and subject of the ministers in this matter."

We say that the power in the external governance of the Church is granted immediately to the Church alone, not to the assembly, but to the college of rectors, who alone have power immediately from Christ to bind and loose (as proven by such passages as Matthew 18:16-18, John 20:21-23, Acts 1:24-26, Acts 15:22-24). Thus, the power in external governance is theirs. Nowhere does Scripture grant such power to the magistrate; nor is it the king's role, in all of Scripture, to excommunicate, to make canons for ceremonies or proper order in the Church; but this belongs to the Church alone.

- The magistrate, not as a magistrate, but as a distinguished political member of the Church and guardian of both Tables, possesses an authority collateral with the Church, directly under Christ, a power which is conferred upon him as a member of the Church.
- Nor does it follow that the king is a minister and subject of the Church simply because it is his duty to ensure that the laws and canons of the Church are executed. For he commands the execution of the Church's canons with full royal authority. Indeed, because the king, by his rightful authority, commands all legally, and it is his duty to ensure that pastors diligently preach the Word and maintain canons that conform to the Word of God, he is a minister of God in this regard, not of the Church.
- They infer: Either both, i.e., the magistrate and the ministers of the Church, have an immediate architectural authority under Christ, or only one of them does. It is absurd for both to have it simultaneously: otherwise, two collateral architectural powers, each independent of the other, would need to be established in the Church of Christ, which is contrary to the nature of good governance. Therefore, it belongs to the ministers alone, without the magistrate. Some respond by saying that it is by no means absurd for there to be two collateral architectural powers immediately under Christ, each not dependent on the other, because both powers, in their respective kinds, are supreme. As Barclay argues against Bellarmine (chapter 14, page 110), "Neither is subject to the other, and neither can invade the jurisdiction of the other without the greatest offense; but both are connected, like the shoulders of one body to the head, which is Christ." Meisner in *Sobria Philosophia* (part 3, section 2, chapter 2) states, "Civil power depends on the ministry in

spiritual matters, and spiritual power depends on the magistrate in temporal matters." But, strictly speaking, the architectural power of the Church resides only in Christ, the King, and Head of the Church; the ministers have only a ministerial power. The supreme power to punish and the real punishment of the disobedient rests and remains with Christ the King; to the ministers belongs only the ministerial power of pronouncing punishment according to the Word and excommunication. But the king and supreme magistrate truly have architectural power to enact laws in conformity with God's Word and sound reason, and to inflict, according to the gravity of the offense, not only lesser punishments but even the penalty of death. Thus, two powers in their respective kinds, supreme yet not subordinate to each other, are not only not absurd but necessary. For the king, politically, and by the rule of the kingdom, is the supreme guardian of both tables; his supreme power is cumulative, that is, he can and ought to add and accumulate his royal authority by convening a national synod, presiding over it politically, granting civil sanction to its canons, and punishing violators of these canons. However, his power is not privative, such that he could deprive the Church of its ecclesiastical power by authority granted from Christ or by exercising ecclesiastical authority. Thus, the power of Christ is both positive and privative; the king's power is permissive, cumulative, supplementary, and not privative. The Church's power, in another kind — in the nature of ecclesiastical, pastoral, and spiritual authority — is supreme in its own order and kind, and it is not subject to the king but immediately to Christ. Therefore, the king, as king, is inferior only to God, being His deputy, superior to the Church in civil authority; while the rectors of the Church, in spiritual authority, are superior to the king. For the king, as a member of the Church, is subject to the Church, as a son to his mother, as a

part to the whole, as a member to the body, as a sheep to the college of pastors. Nor is this a Papal doctrine, as the Remonstrants allege.

- For the Papists subject the king and his conscience to the decrees and canons of the Church as though they were the infallible Word of God. This view, however, subjects the king's conscience to no synod, to no decree of the Church, except insofar as they agree with the Word of God.
- The Papists assert that the virtual Church, i.e., the Roman Pope, so surpasses kings that the Pope may dispose of kings, depose them from their thrones, and strip them of their crowns by the plenitude of Papal power. We abhor such tyranny, and we teach that all souls, even those of pastors, are subject to the king in the Lord, and this for the sake of conscience. The Papists wish the Pope to be able to command kings imperiously, and that kings should submit their consciences to his word as though he were the living oracle of God on earth. We teach that kings are subject to the Church as sheep are to their shepherds; yet so, that they are not bound by their consciences to execute the decrees of the Church merely because they are decrees of the Church, but only insofar as they see them to be in agreement with the Word of God. Nor do British theologians believe that the king is the head of the Church, i.e., that he has the same authority as the Pope once usurped over England. (I do not concern myself with what courtiers and royal servants might teach.) And the controversy between the Anglican Church and the Jesuits is not whether the king is the head of the Church in the sense that the Pope boasts of being its head, but whether the king is not the political head of the Church, subject to no Pope as king. The English affirm this; the Jesuits deny it.

Chapter 20:

On the Soul and the Resurrection of the Flesh

ACTS 7:59

"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Question: Are souls immortal? The Remonstrants and Socinians doubt this. John Geisteranus, in his *Confession*, says he does not know whether the soul after death is living or dead, mortal or immortal. And Henry Slatius, in his *Open Declaration* (p. 53), states that he does not know whether souls remain alive after they have been separated from the body, and at the very least, he does not find it comprehensible. The Remonstrants, in their *Apology* (chapter 19) and *Confession* (chapter 19), teach that the faithful shall be resurrected and that they alone will be endowed with a glorious and incorruptible body. This is contrary to Ecclesiastes 3:21 and 12:7, Matthew 19:28, and Acts 7:59.

Question: Will the very same bodies rise again that have been dissolved into dust? The Remonstrants, in their *Apology* (chapter 19, folio 217), say that there are probable reasons on both sides, leaving the matter to be decided by God in the future. Slatius, in his *Open Declaration*, says that our bodies will not be resurrected. The Socinians claim that it is a Mohammedan belief to think that these

bodies will be resurrected for physical pleasures. But neither do we believe this.

Meanwhile, we are taught from Scripture that these very same bodies shall be resurrected, indeed to glory, to heavenly joys, and to eternal life. As it is written in Job 19:26, "I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in my flesh I shall see God." Verse 27: "Whom I shall see for myself, and my eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." And in 1 Corinthians 15:52, "The dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." Verse 53: "For this corruptible must put on incorruption." Verse 54: "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: 'Death is swallowed up in victory.'"

2. Because Scripture speaks of the body as something that remains the same in number but is changed in quality.

1 Corinthians 15:42: "It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption." Verse 43: "It is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." The Holy Spirit would be speaking in vain if He said that the body is buried and committed to the earth with these qualities, and rises again with others, unless it is the same in number that is raised which was buried.

3. We argue from the redemption of the body. If the body has been purchased with the price of Christ's blood, no less than the soul, then the body, no less than the soul, is to be restored on that day which is the "day of redemption" of our body (Romans 8:23), and our humble body will be transformed to be conformed to the body of His glory, by the power whereby He is

able even to subject all things to Himself (Philippians 3:21). But the former is true; therefore, the latter. The major premise is clear from 1 Corinthians 6:14, where the Apostle proves that we should not defile this body which we carry, for God, who raised the Lord, will also raise us up by His power, that is, our very bodies.

4. **Because our bodies are members of Christ**, as it is said in verse 15: "Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? God forbid." If the bodies of the saints are members of Christ, they must be glorified with Him. But they cannot be glorified with Him unless they are resurrected in the same number. Verse 19: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?" Verse 20: "For you were bought at a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." What is purchased by the blood of Christ and is under God's right of redemption cannot utterly perish but must be raised with Christ. But these very mortal bodies that we carry are not ours but God's by right of redemption. Therefore, these same bodies must be raised. The reason for the major premise is that what is not redeemed by Christ from destruction is not glorified with Christ; that which utterly perishes and for which another numerically different body is substituted does not partake in glory.

5. **From the Justice and Equity of God.** Just as it would violate the justice of God if a different soul, not the same one that sinned in this life, were punished with eternal death, so also, if the body—which was presented as a living sacrifice to God (Romans 12:1) and served as an instrument of righteousness (Romans 6:12-13)—were not rewarded with any

recompense or reward, we cannot understand how anyone would receive back in the body what he has done, whether good or evil, as the Holy Spirit declares (2 Corinthians 5:10).

6. The Omnipotence of God would be obscured in the resurrection of the dead, as proclaimed by Scripture.

For the omnipotence of God is made manifest in this: that the very same bodies which are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of God and come forth—some to the resurrection of life, others to the resurrection of condemnation (John 5:28-29). Yet souls are not in the graves. It is said that those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake (Daniel 12:2), and that the sea will give up the dead who are in it, and death and Hades will give up their dead (Revelation 20:13). If bodies different in number from those which we now carry are to be given to us at the resurrection, created anew, then they are no more being raised from the graves or the sea than from any other matter. Such a limitation of Jehovah's omnipotence would be arbitrary and unscriptural, as if to determine it by one material rather than another—by the sea rather than the burial dust of the earth—when He could form or create new bodies from any material or even from none. And those whose bodies will never be resurrected do not sleep in the dust any more than those who were never born of parents.

7. Since Christ is truly man, like us in all things except sin (Hebrews 2:16-17, 4:15),

and since Christ presented His very same body, bearing the same marks and imprints of the nails that wounded Him on the cross, to be seen, touched, and handled by Thomas and His disciples (John 20:20-29), it is necessary that our bodies, being the same bodies subject to death and dissolved into dust, should be raised again.

8. Finally, the nature of the resurrection itself suggests this. For that which is newly created from the dust and the graves cannot be said to be resurrected any more than a son newly born and coming into the light could be said to be resurrected from the dead; a body newly created, different in number, was never dead nor buried in the graves. Therefore, it is not to be resurrected.

Moreover, this is not a curious or useless question but one full of consolation for us who, in this earthly house of clay, groan, longing for our heavenly dwelling and for a glorious body (2 Corinthians 5:1-3). Calvin did not call this a curious question, as the Remonstrants claim in their *Apology* (folio 219), because he confirms the orthodox position there carefully and clearly refutes the contrary error. Rather, he called it curious due to the manifest contradiction to Scripture caused by vain speculations concerning the numerical identity of the resurrected body and the impossible or incredible manner of the resurrection, which were raised by Laelius Socinus. If he had known the character of that man, who falsely posed as a brother and lived with Pellican, the theologian of Zurich, he might have even called it impious.

MATTHEW 25:41

"Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

Question: Are the torments of the damned in hell eternal, or will they eventually come to an end, so that the wicked will finally perish completely and be reduced to nothing? The Remonstrants do not shy away from this Epicurean view. They state, though not in the explicit words of Scripture but in terms favorable to the Socinian interpretation, that God will inflict the torments of hell and the

eternal punishments upon the unbelieving — as He will cast them into eternal fire along with the devil and his angels — so that they may endure the eternal punishment of destruction, expelled from the presence of God and His glorious power. But Socinus interprets this, in his commentary on the First Epistle of John, chapter 2, page 204, to mean total cessation and reduction to nothingness. And when the most learned Professors of Leyden, in their Censure of the Remonstrant Confession, chapter 20, section 5, page 264, objected that the Remonstrants did not clearly express whether they agreed that these infernal torments would endure forever and that the wicked and those afflicted by these punishments would remain in eternal torment, their ambiguous words, consistent with the views of Socinus, were rightly criticized.

To this serious objection, in their Apology (where they discuss this Censure), the Remonstrants neither respond with a word nor a syllable in chapter 20 or elsewhere. Instead, they hold the opinion that the doctrine of the substantial destruction of the world is far more probable (Apology, chapter 19, folio 219). Furthermore, they say nothing about the eternal state of the damned. In Confession, chapter 19, section 2, they state, "For then he shall raise his faithful and holy ones, who indeed have died, from the dust of the earth to eternal life, and only they shall be endowed with a glorious and incorruptible body." Henry Slatius, one of their adherents in all things, in his *Open Declaration*, page 53, says that the wicked are either not to be resurrected or to be reduced to nothing.

We, on the contrary, judge this opinion to be Epicurean and atheistic.

Because if the passages of Scripture that speak of the eternity of infernal torments can be eluded,

then those that speak of the eternity of eternal life can be eluded in like manner. It might be replied to both that "eternal life" and "eternal death" are spoken of in the same sense as circumcision and the ceremonies, which are called "eternal," i.e., in a Hebraism, meaning that they are to last for a certain time and then cease. But if this were so, then the soul would not live forever but would utterly perish; nor would the kingdom of Christ be eternal but would eventually come to an end. And what prevents us from saying that the humanity of Christ might eventually be reduced to nothing?

Because Scripture says the contrary. In Isaiah 66:24, it is written, "Their worm shall not die, nor their fire be quenched." In Matthew 25:41, "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.'" According to our adversaries, who reject our opinion, it follows from this that: (1) Eternal life (v. 46) is not eternal, and that even the good angels and glorified men will eventually perish and be reduced to nothing or be deprived of their blessedness and thus become miserable; (2) Even the devils and their angels would be freed from eternal torments and either reduced to nothing or attain eternal life or a state free from misery. Mark 9:43, "It is better for thee to enter into life maimed (rather) than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that shall never be quenched." Verse 44, "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Jude v. 6, "The angels who did not keep their positions of authority but abandoned their proper dwelling—these he has kept in darkness, bound with everlasting chains for judgment on the great Day." Verse 7, "Even as

Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them... are suffering the vengeance of eternal fire." Now, it is never said of circumcision that it would not cease, as it is said of that fire that it shall not be quenched. Revelation 20:10, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever."

Because there is no release from hell forever: as Luke 16:26 states, "And besides all this, between us and you a great gulf is fixed, so that those who would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence."

Because the soul of every man is immortal, Matthew 10:28, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul." Therefore, the souls are either to live eternally in joy or eternally in torments; this is what is decreed. Or they are to live eternally in some intermediate state, which is not written; or the souls are to be annihilated by God, which cannot be affirmed by Scripture.

What they say, that Scripture asserts that the dead do not exist, should be understood not as non-existence in an absolute sense but in a certain respect; and it means they are not present among the living in bodily flesh. But if this is extended to absolute non-existence, it could be proved that Christ as man died and was reduced to nothing and that all who have died, whether saints or infidels, whether in soul or body, have utterly perished and are nothing.

The End.

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