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Reading Outline

TENTH TOPIC
THE FREE WILL OF MAN IN A STATE OF SIN

Question I. - Whether the term "free will" or self-determining power (*autexousiou*) should be retained in the Christian schools. And to what faculty of the soul does it properly belong - the intellect or the will?

Question II. - Whether every necessity is repugnant to freedom of will. We deny against the papist and Remonstrants.

Question III. - Whether the formal reason of free will consists in indifference or in rational spontaneity. The former we deny; the latter we affirm against papists, Socinians and Remonstrants.

Question IV. - Whether the free will in a state of sin is so a servant of and enslaved by sin that it can do nothing but sin; or whether it still has the power to incline itself to good, not only civil and externally moral, but internal and spiritual, answering accurately to the will of God prescribed in the law. The former we affirm; the latter we deny, against the papists, Socinians and Remonstrants.

Question V. - Whether the virtues of the heathen were good works from which the power of free will to good can be inferred. We deny against the papists.

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FIRST QUESTION - *Whether the term "free will" or self-determining power (autexousiou) should be retained in the Christian schools. And to what faculty of the soul does it properly belong - the intellect or the will?*

- I. Now more properly the miserable state of man and the most degrading servitude of free will under sin must be considered.
- II. A few remarks about "free will" must be premised.
 - A. the word "free will" (*autexousiou*) does not occur in Scripture
 - B. it was received by the Christian schools as more suited to designate that faculty of the rational soul by which it spontaneously does what it pleases, a judgment of reason going before
 - C. the origin of this word seems rather to be drawn from the Platonic school

- III. Because it has not been received in the church by a long usage, we do not think it should be dismissed to the philosophers from whom it seems to have been derived, but should be usefully retained, if its right sense is taught and its abuse avoided.
- IV. The subject of free will is neither the intellect, nor the will separately, but both faculties conjointly.
 - A. as it belongs to the intellect with regard to the decision of choice, so it belongs to the will with regard to freedom
 - B. the liberty of the will has its roots in the intellect
- V. This ought not to seem unusual since the intellect and will are mutually connected by so strict a necessity that they can never be separated from each other.
- VI. "The decisions" are a rational faculty, from which we are not indeed good or evil, but can be by its act and habit.

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SECOND QUESTION - *Whether every necessity is repugnant to freedom of will. We deny against the papist and Remonstrants.*

- I. The opponents doctrine about the essence of liberty is place in indifference, "necessity of every kind is opposed to the freedom of the will and necessity and freedom are diametrically opposed; nor can a free will be conceived or understood with a determination to one thing or with a necessity determining it antecedently." Their design is not other than to take away the will of man from the necessity of divine determination and government and to make it uncontrolled and the master of its own acts.
- II. The orthodox maintain that not every necessity is at variance with liberty.
- III. Some make liberty threefold:
 - A. from necessity
 - 1. of nature (which he bestows upon us in the condition of nature)
 - 2. by this we excel over animals
 - 3. so natural to man that it cannot be wrested from him
 - B. from sin
 - 1. of grace (because we are restored to it in grace)
 - 2. by this we subject the flesh
 - 3. lost by sin
 - C. from misery
 - 1. of glory (because it is reserved for us in glory)
 - 2. by this we subject death
 - 3. lost by sin

- IV. We distribute liberty and necessity into six heads:
 - A. the necessity of co-action arising from an external agent (he who is compelled contributes nothing)
 - B. physical and animal necessity occurring in inanimates and animals who act from a blind impulse of nature or an animal instinct, without the light of reason
 - C. the necessity of of the creature's dependence on God
 - D. rational necessity of the determination to one thing by a judgment of the practical intellect
 - E. moral necessity or of slavery arising from good or bad habits and the presentation of objects to their faculties
 - F. the necessity of existence of the thing or of the event, in virtue of which, when a thing is, it cannot but be

- V. There are two principal characteristics of free will in which its formal nature consists:
 - A. the choice, so that what is done is done by a previous judgment of reason - belongs to the intellect
 - B. the willingness, so that what is done is done voluntarily and without compulsion - belongs to the will
 - C. two species of necessity also contend with it
 - 1. physical and brute necessity - this takes away choice
 - 2. the necessity of coaction - this takes away the willingness

- VI. If these two species of necessity mentioned by us contend against free will, it is not so with the others which can exist with it and by which it is not so much destroyed as preserved and perfected.
 - A. as the necessity of dependence upon God, free will does not exclude, but supposes it
- VII. B. as to rational necessity of determination to one thing by the practical intellect
- VIII. C. as to moral necessity arising from habits; a twofold servitude thence born
 - 1. one of righteousness in good
 - 2. the other in evil and misery
- IX. 3. the adversaries falsely charge us with saying the will is a slave in the stat of sin, as if liberty were destroyed by that very thing
- X. D. as to necessity of the event

- XI. Although the will is free, this does not prevent its being determined by God and being always under subjection to him. This is so because liberty is not absolute, independent, and uncontrolled (the characteristics of God alone), but limited and dependent.

- XII. The will is said to be the mistress of its own actions, not absolutely and simply (as if it depended upon it always to elicit or not elicit them - for in this way it cannot but be in subjection both to God and to the intellect); but relatively.

- XIII. The will can be viewed either in relation to the decree and concurrence of God or in contradistinction to the intellect.

- A. it is rightly said to be so determined by God as also to determine itself
 - B. it cannot be said to determine itself (because it is determined by the intellect)
- XIV. If the will is always determined by God, it can be called his instrument in a popular sense.
- XV. Although the will can oppose the theoretical judgment of the intellect or the absolute judgment and of simple practical intellect, yet it can never oppose the decided and last judgment.
- XVI. In the first sin, the will of Adam did not follow the first and absolute judgment of the intellect (by which it judged that the fruit must not be eaten), rather it followed the decided and last judgment by which it said that the woman saw the fruit of the tree to be good to her for food.
- XVII. In the sin against the Holy Spirit, the will indeed opposes the judgment of the practical intellect, even the first decided.

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THIRD QUESTION - *Whether the formal reason of free will consists in indifference or in rational spontaneity. The former we deny; the latter we affirm against papists, Socinians and Remonstrants.*

- I. Free will can be viewed either in the genus of being and absolutely, as belonging to the a rational being in every state (dealt with in this question); or in the genus of morals and in relation to various state, either of sin or righteousness (dealt with in the next question).
- II. Concerning the formal reason of free will, it can be disputed:
 - A. *κατ' ἄρσιν* and negatively that we may see in what it does not consist
 - B. *κατὰ θέσιν* and positively that it may be evident in what it does properly consist
- III. We contend against the Jesuits, Socinians, and Remonstrants who (following Pelagius) place the essence of free will in indifference and define it as "the faculty by which all things requisite for acting being posited, the will can act or not act."
- IV. It is not inquired here concerning indifference in the first act or in a divided sense, whether the will considered absolutely from its natural constitution, the requisites to action be withdrawn, is determinable to various objects and holds itself indifferently towards them.
 - A. we do not deny that the will of itself can either elicit or suspend an act or be carried to both of opposite things
 - B. we confess that the will is indifferent as long as the intellect remains doubtful and uncertain whither to turn itself
 - C. but concerning indifference in the compound sense - we deny that the will (all requisites to acting being posited; e.g., the decree of God and his concurrence; the judgment of the practical intellect, etc) is always so indifferent and undetermined that it can act or not act.

- V. Such an indifference to opposites is found in no free agent, whether created or uncreated.
 - A. not in God who is good most freely indeed, yet not indifferently (as if he could be evil), but necessarily and immutably
 - B. not in Christ who obeyed God most freely and yet most necessarily because he could not sin
 - C. not in angels and the blessed who worship God with the highest willingness and yet are necessarily determined to good
 - D. not in devils and reprobates who cannot help sinning, although they sin freely
- VI. E. what objection can be made here?
 - 1. is the divine liberty the same as ours? - just as in proportion to God's liberty being more perfect than ours, so ought it to be farther removed from indifference (which instead of being a virtue is a defect of liberty)
 - 2. that Christ, although he never sinned, still was not absolutely unable to sin; and that it is not repugnant to his nature, will, or office to be able to sin? - far be it from us either to think or say any such thing concerning the immaculate Son of God whom we know to have been holy, undefiled, separate from sinners
 - 3. that the liberty of the saints on earth and in heaven is different? - since the formal reason of liberty ought to be the same as to essential, if the latter have a most perfect liberty without indifference, it cannot be said to belong to its essence
- VII. The will can never be without determination as well extrinsic from the providence of God, as intrinsic from the judgment of the intellect.
 - A. when all the requisites for acting are posited, it cannot act or not act; otherwise it would neither be created (because it would not depend upon God); nor rational (because it would act against the judgment of reason)
 - B. nor is it an objection that it is said to be of the nature of free will to determine itself; it is indeed the nature of will to be determined by itself, but not by itself alone (thus the determination of the will does not exclude, but supposes the determination of God)
- VIII. The volition of the highest good and of the ultimate end cannot be without the highest willingness, and yet it is not without great and unavoidable necessity.
- IX. The indifference of the will being assumed:
 - A. the use of prayer is taken away because God is asked to convert and sanctify us in vain, and exhortations are employed in vain, if the will cannot be moved from a state of equilibrium and remains always in its power to convert itself or not
 - B. the promises of God concerning the production of holiness, and the efficacy of grace would be vain because he could not perform what he promised
 - C. all our consolation is gone because in whatever manner God acts in us, we can never be certain of grace if it depends always upon the will to admit or reject it and thus to frustrate every operation of God
 - D. the empire of God over the will is destroyed if, all the requisites for acting being furnished, it can act or not act - so man will be the author and principal cause of his own conversion, not God, because all the operations of grace being supplied, the will will always be in

equilibrium, nor be determined by any other than itself

- X. Since the formal reason of liberty is not placed in indifference, it cannot be sought elsewhere than in rational willingness, by which man does what he pleases by a previous judgment of reason. Thus two things must be joined together to its constitution:
 - A. the choice so that what is done is not done by a blind impulse and a certain brute instinct, but from choice and previous light of reason and the judgment of the practical intellect
 - B. the voluntariness so that what is done may be done spontaneously and freely and without compulsion

- XI. That this is the formal reason of free will is plainly gathered from this that it agrees with all, alone, and always.
 - A. thus there is no free agent in which these two characteristics are not found, so that this rational willingness being posited, liberty is posited; removed it is taken away
 - B. hence it follows that it is an inseparable adjunct of the rational agent, attending him in every state so that he cannot be rational without on that very account being free; nor can he be deprived of liberty without despoiled also of reason
 - C. this also proves that free will absolutely considered and in the genus of being can never be taken away from man in whatever state he may be
 - D. if this is denied by some to man in a state of sin, it ought to be understood not so much physically and absolutely as morally and relatively (not so much with regard to essence, as with regard to strength)

- XII. To be free, choice ought to enjoy an immunity from coercion and physical necessity; but not from the extrinsic necessity of dependence upon God and the intrinsic of determination by the intellect.
 - A. so far is the determination to one thing (made by reason) from taking away free choice, that it rather makes it perfect
 - B. it therefore chooses this or that because determined to it by a judgment of the intellect

- XIII. A place is granted for obedience or disobedience even without indifference and with a determination. The nature of obedience is not placed in this - that man can obey or not obey; but in this - that man obeys freely and without compulsion from previous reason.

- XIV. So far is the use of exhortations and commands from being taken away by our opinion, that it is the more strongly asserted.
 - A. for if it is certain that the will is determined by the intellect, the intellect must first be persuaded before it can influence the will; and yet how can it be persuaded except by reasons and exhortations
 - B. although a compliance with the exhortation is impossible by us without grace; still not the less properly can it be addressed to us because it is a duty owed by us

- XV. That a place may be granted for reward or punishment, it is not necessary that there should be indifference in the will to either of two opposites. It suffices that there be a spontaneity and

willingness depending upon a judgment of the reason (such as there is in all men).

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FOURTH QUESTION - *Whether the free will in a state of sin is so a servant of and enslaved by sin that it can do nothing but sin; or whether it still has the power to incline itself to good, not only civil and externally moral, but internal and spiritual, answering accurately to the will of God prescribed in the law. The former we affirm; the latter we deny, against the papists, Socinians and Remonstrants.*

- I. Now we treat of the question concerning the free will in the state of sin, its powers in the genus of morals, and what it can do in reference to good.
- II. The question is not about the essential freedom from coercion and physical necessity, but about the accidental freedom from the slavery of sin.
- III. The question is not about civil and externally moral good, but about spiritual and supernatural good, pleasing and acceptable to God
 - A. whether man in the state of sin is so corrupt that the powers of his free will as to the latter good, are not only weakened but wholly lost, so that he can neither know any saving truth, nor do any good thing
 - B. or, whether his will always wavering and indifferent to each of the opposites
 - C. the orthodox affirm the former; our opponents affirm the latter
- IV. The question does not concern the natural power or faculty of the will, but concerns its moral disposition to willing well.
- V. Therefore the question returns to this - whether unregenerate man still has such strength of free will as to be indifferent to good and evil and is able not to sin without the grace of regeneration. The adversaries affirm; we deny.
- VI. Here we have as opponents the old and new Pelagians who hold that the strength of free will even to good survives in fallen man.
- VII. As to the papists, although sometimes seeming to acknowledge the deprivation of nature and to press the necessity of grace, still they do not cease to extol beyond measure the strength of free will (cf. Council of Trent Session 6, Canons 4 and 5)
- VIII. As to the Remonstrants, so plausibly do they establish the corruption of man and the necessity of grace that it would appear that nothing beyond could be said when they confess that "man in the state of defection and sin can of himself think, will, or do nothing good, which indeed is truly good, such as saving faith, but that it is necessary for him to be regenerated, renewed in mind, affections, or will, and all his faculties by God in Christ through his Holy Spirit, to be able to know, will and perform any good thing" (*Collato scripto habita Hagae Comitum*, Art. 3 [1615]).
 - A. but if we search more deeply into their mind, it will plainly appear that they (no less than

the papists) contend for the idol of free will and again call back Pelagianism when they make freedom of will to consist in indifference and assert free will to be flexible in either direction even without grace, according to Arminius ("Iacobi Armini . . . Examen Modestium Libelli . . . Gulielmus Perkinsius . . . de Praedestinationis," in *Opera Theologica* [1631])

- B. they always make grace resistible, so that it is always in the power of man's will to receive or reject it
- C. they acknowledge that spiritual life in the animal man is not wholly separated from the mind, nor truly and properly from the will and that the will remains so free in itself that it can be excited to good before it is properly made alive or receives any new strength (*Collato scripto habita Hagae Comitibus*, [1615])
- D. they say with Grevinchovius that the grace of God and the free will are at the same time "partial causes" or "co-causes"; so that the free will can indeed do nothing by itself (that is alone), but still can do something with grace
- E. all these things sufficiently indicate that whatever they loudly proclaim about the corruption of nature is said for the purpose of raising smoke, to deceive the incautious reader and that their genuine opinion is that the free will has still sufficient strength to work its own salvation with grace
- F. on the other hand, the orthodox, although maintaining that the free will of man always remains as to essentials, still think that no power to good survives in it

IX. The reasons are:

A. man is called the "servant" of sin (John 8:43) and a servant so bound by the fetters of concupiscence as to yield his members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin; to be under the dominion of sin (Rom. 6:12, 14) who, bound by Satan, is brought into bondage to him (2 Pet. 2:19); under whom, as the prince of this world, he fulfills evil desires and does what pleases him whom nothing but evil pleases (John 8:44); and in whom he most efficaciously works (Eph. 2:2) who cannot be brought into liberty except by Christ, the deliverer (John 8:36)

- 1. who would say that this most miserable slavery in evil can consist with the golden liberty to good; that the sinner enslaved to the flesh can do anything to free himself from the yoke of tyranny to which he has voluntarily submitted
- 2. in order to express more strongly the severity of this servitude, the Scripture attributes to us all kinds of servitude (Eph. 2:3; Rom. 7:14; 2 Pet. 2:19; 1 Tim. 3:7; Heb. 2:14-15)

X.

3. the objection is vain:

- c. that the servitude of sin is not opposed to the liberty of the sinner because he serves not necessarily, but freely - we answer that although it is not opposed to the liberty of nature, yet it is opposed to liberty from sin because he is held so bound by conquering and enslaving desires that although he sins most freely, still he sins necessarily and cannot help sinning
- d. that believers are called the servants of righteousness who nevertheless are not free from all sin; so men can be the servants of sin although some liberty to good still remains in them - we answer that the nature of these two kinds of servitude is diverse; the servitude of righteousness is not perfect in this world on account of the

remaining sin, but the servitude of sin is full and entire

- e. that servitude does not prevent man from being able to shake off the yoke of sin by his own strength, but does not hinder him from being able to be freed from sin by free will with the assistance of grace - we answer that man is able to be freed by free will with the help of God is said ambiguously, for either it is understood of passive liberation, that the free will itself may be delivered by grace (which we grant); or of active liberation, by which the free will applies itself to the assisting grace of God and by its own powers cooperates with it (which we deny)
- XI. B. man is "dead in sin" (Eph. 2:1), not only on account of afflictions, not only on account of the mortality of the body, or on account of the guilt of eternal death, but especially on account of dissolution of union with God and the privation of holiness
- XII. 1. to escape and blunt the point of this dart, the adversaries make various objections here
- c. the similitude should not be pressed because there are various differences between a dead man and the sinner - we answer
 - 1) that as we do not deny that this simile is dissimilar in various points, so it is precise in the point that as the dead man is deprived of life of nature and so of all sense and motion, so the sinner is destitute of of all spiritual sense and motion
 - 2) so that he can neither know anything true nor do anything good, any more than a dead man can bring life to himself
 - d. this death does not hinder what little remains of spiritual life from surviving in sinful man sufficient to know God and to worship him in some measure - we answer that such remains do not kindle spiritual life or hinder the death of the soul because they are not of the same order and species with the spiritual life bestowed on us by Christ
 - e. they who are said to be dead are also termed "sleepers" and "sick" to intimate that strength survives in them - we answer
 - 1) that this ought not to seem a wonder since in Scripture the dead are said to sleep and their resurrection is rousing from sleep
 - 2) thus the same sinner compared in some to a sick man and a sleeper, in others is well represented by a dead man, in order that we may know that there is here not only a binding of the senses or feebleness of life, but a total extinction of life and privation of strength
 - f. death in sin designates rather the state of condemnation and the punishment of death with which they are to be visited, than the state of corruption in which they lie - we answer that to be dead in sin in the past differs from to be about to die in the future
 - g. believers are said to "be dead to sin" who nevertheless are not destitute of strength to sin; so they can be called dead in sins who still have some strength left for good - we answer
 - 1) that to "be dead to sin" differs from "being dead in sin"
 - a) the former is said of believers who so crucify the old man as to abolish the body of sin and have no more intercourse with it, nor are any longer under its dominion, since laws have no power over the dead

- b) the latter is said of sinners who, being destitute of the life of God, walk in sins and lie entirely in them
 - 2) therefore the phrases are diametrically opposed to each other; "to die to sin" marks a total abolition of sin
 - a) its guilt is entirely taken away and there is now no condemnation to believers (Rom. 8:1)
 - b) as to duty as believers are said to be perfect and holy because they ought to be
 - c) as to event because this will certainly be the case
- XIII. C. man has no strength for heavenly things either in his intellect or will from which faculties the free will arises
- 1. as to the intellect, not only is he called "blind" and "darkened in mind" (Eph. 4:18), but also "darkness itself" (Eph. 5:8)
 - 2. as to will, not only is he said to have a "depraved" and "deceitful" heart to be corrected, "unclean" to be purged, "shut up" to be opened, "uncircumcised" to be circumcised, but "stony" (Ezek. 36:26), which ought to be broken and taken away, rather than what is able to be softened and admit life
 - 3. as therefore the blind man has no power to see, and he who has a stony heart is devoid of sense and motion, so the sinner can know nothing true, nor do anything good, no more than a blind man can see or a stone think or move itself
- XIV. 4. nor in passing must we omit the figure of the stony heart (Ezek. 36:26)
- c. as a stone neither is a subject receptive of life nor can feel or be moved or turned or softened, so the heart of the unregenerate hardened in sin neither possesses spiritual life nor can dispose itself to it
 - d. it not only does not receive grace, but resists and struggles against it
- XV. 5. to weaken the force of this argumen, it is vainly objected:
- c. that they are also called "blind" who believe the gospel (e.g., the Laodiceans, Rev. 3:17), not because they could not understand at all, but because they were too negligent in doing their duty - we answer that there is one blindness attributed to the angel of Laodicea, on account of the vain boasting in which he indulged, as if he was rich and could see, while he should have professed that he was by nature poor, naked, and blind
 - d. that believers are called "light in the Lord" (Eph. 5:8) who nevertheless are beclouded with their own darkness - we answer that the consequence does not hold good from the pious to the impious; they are called "light" not in themselves, but "in the Lord", but in the wicked there is not a double man, but only one nature - totally unregenerate and pure darkness
- XVI. 6. no more solid is the argument brought against the similitude of the stony heart, that it is a figurative expression not to be pressed
- c. we answer that figurative expressions have the force of common expressions when they are explained by Scripture itself, and when when it is clear in what sense and for what purpose they are used
 - d. the comparison is most apt in that just as a stone cannot soften itself, nor of itself become flesh, so neither can the unregenerate heart turn or dispose itself to

- regeneration; rather that can be done by the sole efficacy of God's Spirit
- XVII. D. Scripture everywhere attributes to sinners inability to good, when it is said that the imagination of the thoughts of man is evil continually from youth (Gen. 6:5)
1. specific passages
 - c. Christ says "without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5)
 - d. 1 Corinthians 2:14
 - e. 2 Corinthians 3:5
 - f. Romans 8:7
 - g. Matthew 7:18; 12:34
 - h. John 6:44
 2. now why should the Holy Spirit so often insist upon that impotence except to take away from man all power to good and ascribe to grace alone the entire work of regeneration and salvation?
- XVIII. 3. falsely it is said here:
- c. that "not to be able" does not always denote absolute inability, but only its unusualness - we answer that those passages prove that total impotence is meant and such that it is no more possible for man to overcome than for a dead man to raise himself
- XIX. b. nor do they make a better escape who pretend this impotence to be moral, not natural; and thus a thing not absolutely and simply impossible to man, but that man can do it if he wishes - we answer that whether this impotence be called natural or moral, it is certainly inextricable to man
- c. in vain is it said that man can do this or that if he will, since it is evident that he is not able to will; not because he is destitute of natural power to will, but because he is without the disposition to will what is good
- XX. E. man cannot separate himself from another and possesses nothing good which he has not received from another source (1 Cor. 4:7), but our adversaries contend:
1. that after the fall the free will has still some strength by which it can dispose itself to good and admit the offered grace, man will make himself to differ from another and will have what he had not received and of which he may boast because the admission of grace distinguishes him from another who rejects it
 2. the will always remains in equilibrium, so that it can use it or not; when, therefore, it makes a good use of it, it owes this to itself, not to the grace which is common
- XXI. F. the work of our conversion is a creation, resurrection, regeneration, and the production of a new heart by which God not only gently persuades but powerfully effects in us to will and to do; as, however, man can contribute nothing to his creation, resurrection, regeneration, so neither can the sinner contribute anything to his conversion
- XXII. When God sets before the Israelites the choice between life and death (Deut. 30:15) and wishes their conversion (Deut. 32:29), he addresses those already instructed and enlightened that they may work in accordance with the liberty given: he does not address unbelievers and those lying in native depravity and darkness.
- XXIII. God's commands are not the measure of strength, but a rule of duty.
- A. they do not teach what we are now able, but what we are bound to do; what we could

- formerly do and from how great a height of righteousness we have been precipitated by Adam's fall
- B. man by his own fault has contracted an inability to obey God, not in vain nor unjustly does God demand from him the obedience which he owes
 - C. it is not just that sin should be an advantage to man and he be irresponsible because he has corrupted himself by his own crime
- XXIV. Although man cannot fulfill the commands enjoined upon him, still they cannot be called useless because they always obtain the end intended by God. For instance:
- A. representation of God's right and man's duty
 - B. a proposition of the rule of righteousness, that no one can offer ignorance as an excuse for his sins
 - C. a conviction of our impotence
- XXV. No one is bound to an impossibility:
- A. such absolutely and simply and in every state, for which man does not now have and never had power; but it does not hold good of that which is such relatively and in a certain state only (such as is the impotence of the sinner)
 - B. it holds good of an altogether involuntary and purely physical impossibility, but it does not hold good of an induced voluntary impossibility, arising from a deprivation of powers
- XXVI. From the words of God to Cain (Gen. 4:7), nothing can be drawn to favor the strength of free will.
- A. the connection between a good work and the reward, sin, and punishment does not imply that man has the power to do well
 - B. although the relative should be referred to sin, it would point out only the duty of Cain
 - C. it cannot be referred to sin, whether taken properly for the crime or improperly for its punishment
- XXVII. Common works are attributed to the wicked and the pious, such as "to love," "to do good," "to lend" (Luke 6:32-33), but only in external appearance before men, not however of internal goodness before God.
- XXVIII. It is one thing "to do the things contained in the law" as to preception, another to do them as to obedience, by fulfilling its commands.
- XXIX. The example of the midwives does not help our opponents (Exod. 1:15)
- XXX. No more to the purpose is the example of Rahab (Heb. 11:31), or of Cornelius (Acts 10:31)
- XXXI. All that is adduced concerning the virtues of the heathen shows indeed that there still remains in fallen man some strength for external and civil good, but this does not prove that he has any ability in reference to spiritual good.

XXXII. Man is called a "coworker" with God (1 Cor. 3:9), not as corrupt, but as renewed. Again, he is not speaking there properly about cooperation to repentance, but to ecclesiastical functions.

XXXIII. In 1 Corinthians 15:10 Paul does not wish to divide the cause of the good work between himself and grace.

XXXIV. From Revelation 3:20 it does not follow that man has the power to open it of himself.

XXXV. Nor if life and death, good and evil, should be said to be set before corrupt man (in order that he might obtain that which he himself chose) should the liberty of positive indifference to either opposite be ascribed to him.

XXXVI. Although the unrenewed can be unwilling to come and can resist the call of God, it does not follow that they can equally will to come and follow that call.

XXXVII. The evils of punishment are deservedly said to be inflicted upon sinners for their crimes (Jer. 32:23), not because they were able to act rightly in their state of natural corruption, but because this is the law of God - that they who do such things are worthy of death.

A. nor in the punishment of crimes ought attention to be paid to what men could do, but what they are in duty bound to do

B. it suffices for their conviction that they commit evil deliberately, willingly, and of their own accord, against what they knew perfectly well should be done by them

XXXVIII. The cause of the difference between good and bad men, better and worse, is not to be sought in their natural indifference and inclination to good equally with evil without grace.

XXXIX. Our inability is in the highest degree voluntary; or as that is called natural which arises from a defect of natural faculty or power. Our inability does not exclude, but always supposes in man a natural power to understand and will. Still it is best said to be both natural and moral in a different respect.

A. moral

1. objectively because it is conversant with moral duties

2. originally because it is induced, arising from moral corruption and voluntary brought on by the sin of man

3. formally because it is voluntary and culpable, reflected upon the habit of corrupt will

B. natural

1. originally because it is born with us and from nature; not created by God, but corrupted by man

2. subjectively because it taints our whole nature and implies a privation of that faculty of doing well

3. eventually because it is unconquerable and insuperable, no less than the purely natural inability of the blind man to see and of the dead man to rise

XL. Therefore a man laboring under such an inability is falsely said to be able to believe if he wishes, as if faith belonged to the things in our powers.

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FIFTH QUESTION - *Whether the virtues of the heathen were good works from which the power of free will to good can be inferred. We deny against the papists. he papists.*

- I. In order to show that strength for good survives to the free will in a state of sin, the papists use the common example of the heathen who strove after virtue above others or were distinguished for illustrious deeds (cf. Council of Trent, Session 6, Canon 7).
- II. However we say two things:
 - A. although we confess that some good can be found i these action, still we deny that they can be called properly and univocally good works as to the truth of the thing and mode of operation
 - B. whatever good or less evil they performed, was not owing to their own strength, but to God's special help
- III. The inability of the sinner to good is total and Scripture ascribes it to all without exception, it is evident that not works truly good can be performed by the unrenewed man.
- IV. This is still further strengthened by the conditions of a good work. Three things are altogether required for a good work.
 - A. on the part of the principle, that it proceed from a heart purified by faith (Acts 15:9), because whatever is not of faith is sin (Rom. 14:23) and is displeasing to God (Heb. 11:6); for "unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled" (Tit. 1:15)
 - B. on the part of the form or mode, that it be done according to the law of God, not only in the external works, but especially with the internal obedience of the heart which the spiritual law of God requires from sinners (Rom. 7:14)
 - C. on the part of the end, that it be done to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31)
- V. The Athenians are said to "worship the unknown God" (Acts 17:23); not as if with a true and saving worship they adored the true God.
- VI. As the moral actions of the heathen are not sins per se (and as to substance of the work), but by accident (and as to the mode of operation) in the essential conditions; not on that account is it better to omit than to perform them. What are of themselves sins forbidden of God should be omitted; but what are only accidentally such from some defect of circumstances should not be omitted, but corrected.
- VII. Earthly reward does not prove true virtue and a good work because it is only of perishable things which God bestows promiscuously upon the reprobate and the elect.

- VIII. Since the humiliation of Ahab (1 Kings 21:27-28) was dissembled and hypocritical (from fear of punishment rather than from love of virtue), it could not per se be pleasing to God. The repentance of the Ninevites cannot be reckoned among the works of the heathen, since they are said to have repented at the word of God and from the operation of faith in God (John 3:5; Matt. 12:41).
- IX. Whatever, moreover, was done by the Gentiles in reference to this subject does not prove remaining strength for good in their free will because not even this could be done without God's special help.
- X. Whatever knowledge of God is found in the heathen cannot be considered a good work because if they confess with the mouth, they deny him in their works.
- XI. This was the constant opinion of Augustine which he often established against the Pelagians (*Against Julian* 4.3 and *On the Proceedings of Pelagius* 34).
- XII. Now this is the nature of free will in a state of sin. But how it is constituted in the moment of calling and in the progress of sanctification will be treated of in the proper place.

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