

GRACE

WILL



# FROM AUGUSTINE. TO ARMINIUS

A HISTORY OF GRACE AND  
FREE WILL  
THROUGH CHURCH HISTORY

FREE

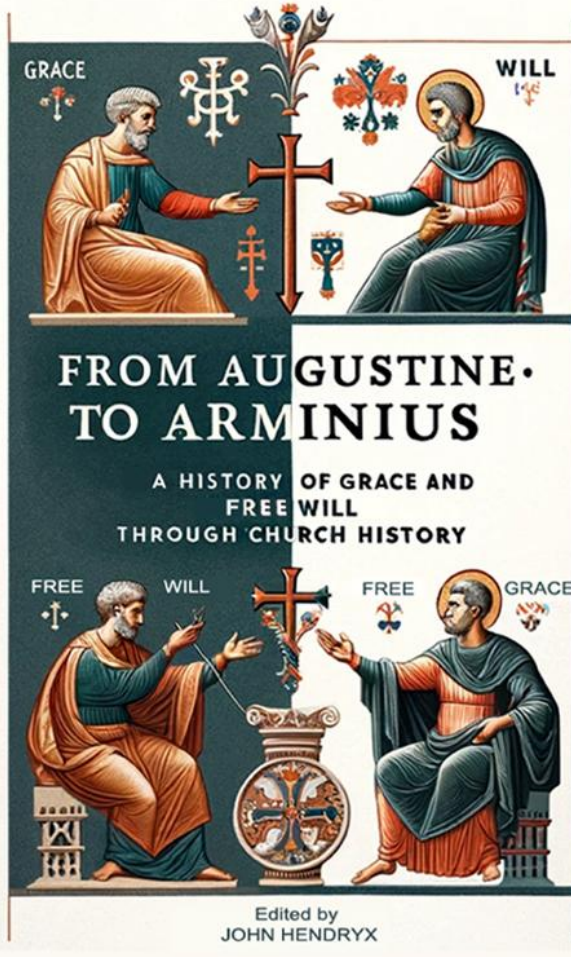
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Edited by  
JOHN HENDRYX



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# **From Augustine to Arminius: A History of Grace and Will Through Church History**

**Edited by John Hendryx**

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## **Preface**

B. B. Warfield once declared that there are "fundamentally only two doctrines of salvation: that salvation is from God, and that salvation is from ourselves. The former is the doctrine of common Christianity; the latter is the doctrine of universal heathenism." This statement frames the never-ending battle between Augustinians and Pelagians through church history over the extent to which the grace of Christ saves us. Augustine taught that because human beings are born in original sin and are utterly impotent to redeem themselves, salvation must, not in part, but wholly be from God. In other words, since man's will is in bondage to sin, only God's grace in Christ, which He most freely bestows on whom He wills, means that God alone deserves the glory for salvation. Pelagius, on the other hand, rejected original sin by asserting that Adam was merely a bad

example and that we could help ourselves through a moral improvement scheme. According to Pelagius, salvation comes about through choosing to become a Christ-follower, that is, by following Christ's moral example, rather than Adam's. On the other hand, Augustine taught the biblical doctrine that salvation is a free gift of mercy to those whom God joins to Christ, clothing them in His righteousness and making them alive by His grace.

Again, B. B. Warfield said, "Augustine [was one of the early founders] of Roman Catholicism and the author of that doctrine of grace which it has been the constantly pursued effort of Roman Catholicism to neutralize, and which in very fact either must be neutralized by, or will neutralize, Roman Catholicism. Two children were struggling in the womb of his mind. There can be no doubt which was the child of his heart. His doctrine of the Church he had received whole from his predecessors, and he gave it merely the precision and vitality which insured its persistence. His doctrine of grace was all his own: it represented the very core of his being... it was inevitable, had time been allowed, that his inherited doctrine of the Church, too, with all its implications, would have gone down before it, and Augustine would have bequeathed to the Church, not 'problems,' but a thoroughly worked out system of evangelical religion... The problem which Augustine bequeathed to the Church for solution, the Church required a thousand years to solve. But even so, it is Augustine who gave us the Reformation. For the Reformation, inwardly considered, was just the ultimate triumph of Augustine's doctrine of grace over Augustine's doctrine of the Church." (Warfield, Calvin and Augustine, 321-22)

The Bible is our authority in all matters of faith. But investigating how the church interpreted the Bible through its history gives us a great deal of understanding of who we are now. Pointing out the



various strains of Christianity, that is, which ones have remained faithful to Scripture and which have deviated, may help us to see more clearly where we may have gone astray.

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is the gift of God, so that no one can boast." - Eph 2:8-9

"...no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father." - John 6:65

"Grace does not destroy the will but rather restores it." - Augustine

"Let God give what He commands, and command what He wills." - Augustine

# Augustine's Doctrine of the Bondage of the Will

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Augustine argued that there are four states, which are derived from the Scripture, that correspond to the four states of man in relation to sin: (a) able to sin, able not to sin (posse peccare, posse non peccare); **(b) not able not to sin (non posse non peccare)**; (c) able not to sin (posse non peccare); and (d) unable to sin (non posse peccare). The first state corresponds to the state of man in innocency, before the Fall; **the second the state of the natural man after the Fall**; the third the state of the regenerate man; and the fourth the glorified man.

Augustine's description of the person after the fall "not able not to sin (non posse non peccare)" is what it means for humanity to have lost the liberty of the will. Fallen man's will is free from coercion yes, but not free from necessity... ie. he sins of necessity due to a corruption of nature.

With this in mind we better understand the following statements of Augustine:

"Without the Spirit man's will is not free, since it has been laid under by shackling and conquering desires." - Augustine, Letters cxlv 2 (MPL 33. 593; tr FC 20. 163f.)

"When the will was conquered by the vice into which it had fallen, human nature began to lose its freedom." -

Augustine, On Man's Perfection in Righteousness iv 9 (MLP 44. 296; tr. NPNF V. 161)

"Through freedom man came to be in sin, but the corruption which followed as punishment turned freedom into necessity." - **Augustine** On Man's Perfection In Righteousness

"Man, using free will badly, has lost both himself and his will"

"The free will has been so enslaved that it can have no power for righteousness."

"What God's grace has not freed will not be free."

"Nature is common to all, but not grace."

"The justice of God is not fulfilled when the law so commands, and man acts as if by his own strength; but when the Spirit helps, and man's will, not free, but freed by God, obeys."

"Man when he was created received great powers of free will, but lost them by sinning."

"We know that God's grace is not given to all men. To those to whom it is given it is given neither according to the merits of works, nor according to the merits of the will, but by free grace. To those to whom it is not given we know that it is because of God's righteous judgment that it is not given."

Augustine - On Rebuke and Grace

"How have you come? By believing. Fear lest while you are claiming for yourself that you have found the just way, you perish from the just way. I have come, you say, of my own free choice; I have come of my own will. Why are you puffed up? Do you wish to know that this also has been given you? Hear Him calling, 'No one comes to me unless my Father draws him' [John 6:44 p.]." - Augustine, Sermons xxvi. 3, 12, 4, 7 (MPL 28.172, 177, 172f., 174)

"Why then, do miserable men either dare to boast of free will before they have been freed, or of their powers, if they have already been freed? And they do not heed the fact that in the term 'free will' freedom seems to be implied. 'Now where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.' [II Cor 3:17]. If therefore, they are slaves of sin, why do they boast of free will? For a man becomes the slave of him who has overcome him. Now if they have been freed, why do they boast as if it had come about through their own effort? Of are they so free as not to wish to be slaves of him who says: 'Without me you can do nothing'" [John 15:5]

"...the human will does not obtain grace by freedom, but obtains freedom by grace; when the feeling of delight has been imparted through. the same grace, the human will is formed to endure; it is strengthened with unconquerable fortitude; controlled by grace, it never will perish, but, if grace forsake it, it will straightway fall; by the Lord's free mercy it is converted to good, and once converted it perseveres in good; the direction of the human will toward good, and after direction its continuation in good, depend solely upon God's will, not upon any merit of man. Thus there is left to man such free will, if we please so to call it, as

he elsewhere describes: that except through grace the will can neither be converted to God nor abide in God; and whatever it can do it is able to do only through grace. "

### **AUGUSTIN CONFESSES THAT HE HAD FORMERLY BEEN IN ERROR CONCERNING THE GRACE OF GOD.**

Augustin explains that at some point he changed his view from synergism to divine monergism in salvation. He argues that due to our fallen state, we are not only partly dependent upon Christ for our conversion but totally dependent upon Christ.

"It was not thus that pious and humble teacher thought--I speak of the most blessed Cyprian--when he said **"that we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own."** And in order to show the, he appealed to the apostle as a witness, where he said, **"For what hast thou that thou hast not received ? And if thou hast received it, why boastest thou as if thou hadst not received it?"** *And it was chiefly by this testimony that I myself also was convinced when I was in a similar error, thinking that faith whereby we believe on God is not God's gift, but that it is in us from ourselves, and that by it we obtain the gifts of God, whereby we may live temperately and righteously and piously in this world.* For I did not think that faith was preceded by God's grace, so that by its means would be given to us what we might profitably ask, except that we could not believe if the proclamation of the truth did not precede; but that we should consent when the gospel was preached to us I thought was our own doing, and came to us from ourselves. And this my error is sufficiently indicated in some small works of mine written before my episcopate. Among these is that which you have mentioned in your

letters wherein is an exposition of certain propositions from the Epistle to the Romans. Eventually, when I was retracting all my small works, and was committing that retraction to writing, of which task I had already completed two books before I had taken up your more lengthy letters,--when in the first volume I had reached the retraction of this book, I then spoke thus:--"Also discussing, I say, 'what God could have chosen in him who was as yet unborn, whom He said that the elder should serve; and what in the same elder, equally as yet unborn, He could have rejected; concerning whom, on this account, the prophetic testimony is recorded, although declared long subsequently, **"Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated,"**" I carried out my reasoning to the point of saying: ' God did not therefore choose the works of any one in foreknowledge of what He Himself would give them, but he chose the faith, in the foreknowledge that He would choose that very person whom He foreknew would believe on Him,--to whom He would give the Holy Spirit, so that by doing good works he might obtain eternal life also.' I had not yet very carefully sought, nor had I as yet found, what is the nature of the election of grace, of which the apostle says, ' A remnant are saved according to the election of grace.' Which assuredly is not grace if any merits precede it; lest what is now given, not according to grace, but according to debt, be rather paid to merits than freely given. And what I next subjoined: ' For the same apostle says, "The same God which worketh all in all;" but it was never said, God believeth all in all ;' and then added, ' Therefore what we believe is our own, but what good thing we do is of Him who giveth the Holy Spirit to them that believe: ' I certainly could not have said, had I already known that faith itself

also is found among those gifts of God which are given by the same Spirit. Both, therefore, are ours on account of the choice of the will, and yet both are given by the spirit of faith and love, For faith is not alone but as it is written, ' Love with faith, from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ.' And what I said a little after, ' For it is ours to believe and to will, but it is His to give to those who believe and will, the power of doing good works through the Holy Spirit, by whom love is shed abroad in our hearts,'--**is true indeed; but by the same rule both are also God's, because God prepares the will; and both are ours too, because they are only brought about with our good wills. And thus what I subsequently said also:** ' Because we are not able to Will unless we are called; and when, after our calling, we would will, our willing is not sufficiently nor our running, unless God gives strength to us that run, and leads us whither He calls us;' and thereupon added: ' It is plain, therefore, that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy, that we do good works'--this is absolutely most true. But I discovered little concerning the calling itself, which is according to God's purpose; for not such is the calling of all that are called, but **only of the elect.** Therefore what I said a little afterwards: ' For as in those whom God elects it is not works but faith that begins the merit so as to do good works by the gift of God, so in those whom He condemns, unbelief and impiety begin the merit of punishment, so that even by way of punishment itself they do evil works'--I spoke most truly. But that **even the merit itself of faith was God's gift,** I neither thought of inquiring into, nor did I say. And in

another place I say: 'For whom He has mercy upon, He makes to do good works, and whom He hardeneth He leaves to do evil works; but that mercy is bestowed upon the preceding merit of faith, and that hardening is applied to preceding iniquity.' And this indeed is true; but it should further have been asked, whether even the merit of faith does not come from God's mercy,--that is, **whether that mercy is manifested in man only because he is a believer, or whether it is also manifested that he may be a believer?** For we read in the apostles words: ' I obtained mercy to be a believer.' He does not say, ' Because I was a believer.' Therefore although it is given to the believer, yet it has been given also that he may be a believer. Therefore also, in another place in the same book I most truly said: ' Because, if it is of God's mercy, and not of works, that we are even called that we may believe and it is granted to us who believe to do good works, that mercy must not be grudged to the heathen; '-- although I there discoursed less carefully about that calling which is given according to God's purpose." - Augustine, A TREATISE ON THE PREDESTINATION OF THE SAINTS chapter 7 [III.]

Man's original capacities included both the power not to sin and the power to sin ( posse non peccare et posse peccare ). In Adam's original sin, man lost the posse non peccare (the power not to sin) and retained the posse peccare (the power to sin)--which he continues to exercise. In the fulfillment of grace, man will have the posse peccare taken away and receive the highest of all, the power not to be able to sin, non posse peccare . Cf. On Correction and Grace XXXIII.



**Augustine's ENCHIRIDION, CHAP. 118.--THE FOUR STAGES OF THE CHRISTAIN'S LIFE, AND THE FOUR CORRESPONDING STAGES OF THE CHURCH'S HISTORY.**

When, sunk in the darkest depths of ignorance, man lives according to the flesh undisturbed by any struggle of reason or conscience, this is his first state. Afterwards, when through the law has come the knowledge of sin, and the Spirit of God has not yet interposed His aid, man, striving to live according to the law, is thwarted in his efforts and falls into conscious sin, and so, **being overcome of sin, becomes its slave** ("for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage"(4)); and thus the effect produced by the knowledge of the commandment is this, that sin worketh in man all manner of concupiscence, and he is involved in the additional guilt of willful transgression, and that is fulfilled which is written: "The law entered that the Offense might abound."(5) **This is man's second state. But if God has regard to him**, and inspires him with faith in God's help, and the Spirit of God begins to work in him, then the mightier power of love strives against the power of the flesh; and although there is still in the man's own nature a power that fights against him (for his disease is not completely cured), yet he lives the life of the just by faith, and lives in righteousness so far as he does not yield to evil lust, but conquers it by the love of holiness. *This is the third state of a man of good hope*; and he who by steadfast piety advances in this course, shall attain at last to peace, that peace which, after this life is over, shall be perfected in the repose of the spirit, and finally in the resurrection of the body. Of these four different stages the first is before the law, the second is under the law, the third

is under grace, and the fourth is in full and perfect peace. Thus, too, has the history of God's people been ordered according to His pleasure who disposeth all things in number, and measure, and weight.(6) For the church existed at first before the law; then under the law, which was given by Moses; then under grace, which was first made manifest in the coming of the Mediator. Not, indeed, that this grace was absent previously, but, in harmony with the arrangements of the time, it was veiled and hidden. For none, even of the just men of old, could find salvation apart from the faith of Christ; nor unless He had been known to them could their ministry have been used to convey prophecies concerning Him to us, some more plain, and some more obscure.

**From this we conclude, again with Augustine, that:**

- the children of God are actuated by His Spirit to do whatever is to be done
- they are drawn by Him, out of an unwilling state to be made willing
- since the fall it is owing only to the grace of God that man draws near to Him
- it is owing only to the same grace that God does not withdraw or recede from him
- we know that no good thing which is our own can be found in our will
- by the magnitude of the first sin, we lost the freedom of the will to believe in God and live holy lives
- therefore “it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs” — not because we ought not to will and to run, but

because **God effects both the willing and the running**  
(Reisinger)

**Note:** There are times when Augustine uses the term 'free will' in a positive sense, As R. C. Sproul explains, "Augustine did not deny that fallen man still has a will and that the will is capable of making choices. He argued that fallen man still has a free will (*liberium arbitrium*) but has lost his moral liberty (*libertas*). The state of original sin leaves us in the wretched condition of being unable to refrain from sinning. We still are able to choose what we desire, but our desires remain chained by our evil impulses. He argued that the freedom that remains in the will always leads to sin. Thus in the flesh we are free only to sin, a hollow freedom indeed. It is freedom without liberty, a real moral bondage. True liberty can only come from without, from the work of God on the soul. Therefore we are not only partly dependent upon grace for our conversion but totally dependent upon grace."

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The additional passages from Augustine quoted in the above sentences are *Enchiridion* ix. 30 (MPL 40. 246; tr LCC VII. 356 f.); *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* III. viii. 24 (MPL 44. 607; tr. NPNF V. 414); I. iii. 6 (MPL 44. 553; tr. NPNF V. 379); III. vii. 20: "*Hominis libera, sed Dei gratia liberata, voluntas*" (MPL 44. 607 tr. NPNF V. 412); *Sermons* cxxxi. 6 (MPL 38. 732).

Also see Augustine, *On the Spirit and the Letter* xxx. 52 (MPL 44. 234; CSEL 60. 208 f.; tr. LCC VIII. 236 f.); *On Rebuke and Grace* xiii. 42 (MPL 44. 942; tr. NPNF V. 489); *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* I. ii. 5 (MPL 44. 552; tr NPNF V 378).

# Contrasting Augustine and the Council of Orange (529 AD)

## with The Council of Trent (1563)

The purpose of this paper is to contrast the currently accepted Roman Catholic dogma with some of the early well-established beliefs and confessions in the church. It will reveal that the Roman Catholic Council of Trent of 1563 has affirmations and denials that are clearly at odds with their own church doctor, St. Augustine, as well as at least one important council of the early church (Orange). Please note the **text** below for Roman Catholic Counter-Reformation doctrine which embraces **a form of semi-pelagianism** and rejects, as an anathema, the Augustinian view of grace and the bondage of the will (as codified in the Council of Orange) and the Reformation teaching of **divine monergism in salvation**. There are 1000 years difference between these councils but you can see the strength of human nature asserting itself, ever gravitating back to the covenant of works - a never-ending battle throughout the history of the church. But before exploring Trent lets set the trend by offering a few key quotes from Augustine and Orange:

"In some places God requires newness of heart [Ezek 18:31]. But elsewhere he testifies that it is given by him [Ezek. 11:19; 36:26]. But what God promises we ourselves do not do through choice or nature; but he himself does through grace." - Augustine

"To will is of nature, but to will aright is of grace." - Augustine

"The nature of the Divine goodness is not only to open to those who knock. but also to cause them to knock and ask." - Augustine

"Without the Spirit man's will is not free, since it has been laid under by shackling and conquering desires." - Augustine

I would especially like to draw your attention to Canon 6 of the Council of Orange so you can compare it with declarations in Trent below

CANON 6. If anyone says that God has mercy upon us when, apart from his grace, we believe, will, desire, strive, labor, pray, watch, study, seek, ask, or knock, but does not confess that it is by the infusion and inspiration of the Holy Spirit within us that we have the faith, the will, or the strength to do all these things as we ought; **or if anyone makes the assistance of grace depend on the humility or obedience of man and does not agree that it is a gift of grace itself that we are obedient and humble, he contradicts the Apostle** who says, "What have you that you did not receive?" (1 Cor. 4:7), and, "But by the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor. 15:10).

In contrast, here is the currently accepted dogma of Rome:

The Council of Trent

The Sixth Session: Justification Canons

....

*CANON IV. If any one shall affirm, that **man's freewill**, moved and excited by God, does not, by consenting, **cooperate with God**, the mover and exciter, so as to **prepare and dispose itself** for the attainment of justification; if moreover, anyone shall say, that the human will cannot refuse complying, if it pleases, but that it is inactive, and merely passive; let such an one be accursed"! **[Note:***

**Compare with Orange CANON 5** > *If anyone says that **not only the increase of faith but also its beginning and the very desire for faith**, by which we believe in Him who justifies the ungodly ... **belongs to us by nature and not by a gift of grace**, that is, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit amending our will and turning it from unbelief to faith and from godlessness to godliness, it is proof that he is opposed to the teaching of the Apostles, for blessed Paul says, "And I am sure that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6). And again, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8)....]*

*CANON V.- If anyone shall affirm, that since the fall of Adam, man's freewill is lost and extinguished; or, that it is a thing titular, yea a name, without a thing, and a fiction introduced by Satan into the Church; let such an one be accursed"! [Note: **Compare with Orange CANON 8** > *If anyone maintains that some are able to come to the grace of baptism by mercy but others through **free will, which has manifestly been corrupted in all those who have been born after the transgression of the first man**, it is proof that he has no place in the true faith. For he denies that the free will of all men has been weakened through the sin of the first man, **or at least holds that it has been affected in such a way that they have still the ability to seek the mystery of eternal salvation by themselves without the revelation of God. The Lord himself shows how contradictory this is by declaring that no one is able to come to him "unless the Father who sent me draws him" (John 6:44), as he also says to Peter, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 16:17), and as the Apostle says, "No****

***one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3).***

....

*CANON XI.-If any one saith, that men are justified, either by the sole imputation of the justice of Christ, or by the sole remission of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and the charity which is poured forth in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, and is inherent in them; or even that the grace, whereby we are justified, is only the favour of God; let him be anathema. [Note: this says if the "the grace, whereby we are justified, is ONLY the favour of God; let him be anathema." In Other her words, RCC outright rejects SOLA GRATIA - salvation by grace alone in Christ alone, thereby anathematizing both Augustine and their own early church council.]*

## **PELAGIANISM, SEMI-PELAGIANISM & AUGUSTINIANISM**

**by A.A. Hodge (1823-1886)**

## **A COMPARISON OF SYSTEMS**

In this chapter will be presented a brief sketch of the main contrasting positions of the three rival systems of Pelagianism, Semipelagianism, and Augustinianism, or as they are denominated in their more completely developed forms, Socinianism, Arminianism, and Calvinism--together with an outline of the history of their rise and dissemination.

### **1. What, in general, was the state of theological thought during the first three centuries?**

During the first three hundred years which elapsed after the death of the apostle John the speculative minds of the church were principally engaged in defending the truth of Christianity against unbelievers--in combating the Gnostic heresies generated by the leaven of Oriental philosophy--and in settling definitely the questions which were evolved in the controversies concerning the Persons of the Trinity. It does not appear that any definite and consistent statements were made in that age, as to the origin, nature, and consequences of human sin; nor as to the nature and effects of divine grace; nor of the nature of the redemptive work of Christ, or of the method of its application by the Holy Spirit, or of its appropriation by faith. As a general fact it may be stated, that, as a result of the great influence of Origen, the Fathers of the Greek Church pretty unanimously settled down upon a loose Semipelagianism, denying the guilt of original sin, and maintaining the ability of the sinner to predispose himself for, and to cooperate with divine grace. And this has continued the character of the Greek Anthropology to the present



day. The same attributes characterized the speculations of the earliest writers of the Western Church also, but during the third and fourth centuries there appeared a marked tendency among the Latin Fathers to those more correct views afterwards triumphantly vindicated by the great Augustine. This tendency may be traced most clearly in the writings of Tertullian of Carthage, who died circum. 220, and Hilary of Poitiers (368) and Ambrose of Milan (397).

**2. By what means has the Church made advances in the clear discrimination of divine truth? And in what ages, and among what branches of the Church, have the great doctrines of the trinity and Person of Christ, of sin and grace, and of redemption and the application thereof been severally defined?**

The Church has always advanced toward clearer conceptions and more accurate definitions of divine truth through a process of active controversy. And it has pleased Providence that the several great departments of the system revealed in the inspired Scriptures should have been most thoroughly discussed, and clearly defined in different ages, and in the bosom of different nations.

Thus the profound questions involved in the departments of Theology proper and of Christology were investigated by men chiefly of Greek origin, and they were authoritatively defined in Synods held in the Eastern half of the General Church during the fourth and immediately following centuries. As concerns THEOLOGY the consubstantial divinity of Christ was defined in the Council of Nice, 325, and the Personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost in the first Council of Constantinople, 381; the Filioque clause being added by the Latins at the Council of Toledo, 589. As concerns Christology. The Council of Ephesus, 431, asserted the personal unity of the

Theanthropos. The Council of Chalcedon, 451, asserted that the two natures remain distinct. The sixth Council of Constantinople, 680, asserted that the Lord possessed a human as well as a divine will. These decisions have been accepted by the whole Church, Greek and Roman, Lutheran and Reformed.

The questions concerning sin and grace embraced under the general head of anthropology were in the first instance most thoroughly investigated by men of Latin origin, and definite conclusions were first reached in the controversy of Augustine with Pelagius in the first half of the Fifth century.

Questions concerning redemption, and the method of its application, embraced under the grand division of soteriology, were never thoroughly investigated until the time of the Reformation and subsequently by the great theologians of Germany and Switzerland.

Many questions falling under the grand division of Ecclesiology even yet await their complete solution in the future.

### **3. What are the three great systems of theology which have always continued to prevail in the church?**

Since the revelation given in the Scriptures embraces a complete system of truth, every single department must sustain many obvious relations, logical and otherwise, to every other as the several parts of one whole. The imperfect development, and the defective or exaggerated conception of any one doctrine, must inevitably lead to confusion and error throughout the entire system. For example, Pelagian views as to man's estate by nature always tend to coalesce with Socinian views as to the Person and work of Christ. And Semipelagian views as to sin and grace are also irresistibly attracted

by, and in turn attract Arminian views as to the divine attributes, the nature of the Atonement, and the work of the Spirit.

There are, in fact, as we might have anticipated, but two complete self-consistent systems of Christian theology possible.

1st. On the right hand, Augustinianism completed in Calvinism. 2nd. On the left hand, Pelagianism completed in Socinianism. And 3rd. Arminianism comes between these as the system of compromises and is developed Semipelagianism.

In the common usage of terms Socinianism is principally applied as the designation of those elements of the false system which relate to the Trinity of the Person of Christ; the terms Pelagianism and Semipelagianism are applied to the more extreme or the more moderate departures from the truth under the head of anthropology; and the term Arminianism is used to designate the less extreme errors concerned with the Department of soteriology.

#### **4. When, where, and by whom were the fundamental principles of the two great antagonistic schools of theology first clearly discriminated?**

The contrasted positions of the Augustinian and Pelagian systems were first taught out and defined through the controversies maintained by the eminent men whose name they bear, during the first third of the fifth century.

Augustine was bishop of Hippo in Northern Africa from A. D. 395 to A. D. 430. Pelagius, whose family name was Morgan, was a British monk. He was assisted in his controversies by his disciples Coelestius and Julian of Eclanum in Italy.

The positions maintained by Pelagius were generally condemned by the representatives of the whole Church, and have ever since been held by all denominations, except professed Socinians, to be fatal heresy. They were condemned by the two councils held at Carthage A. D. 407 and A. D. 416, by the Council held at Milevum in Numidia A. D. 416; by the popes Innocent and Zosimus, and by the Ecumenical Council held at Ephesus A. D. 431. This speedy and universal repudiation of Pelagianism proves that while the views of the early Fathers upon this class of questions were very imperfect, nevertheless the system taught by Augustine must have been in all essentials the same with the faith of the Church as a whole from the beginning.

## **5. State in contrast the main distinguishing positions of the Augustinian and Pelagian systems.**

"1st. As to ORIGINAL SIN. 1 [1 "Historical Presentation of Augustinianism and Pelagianism," by G. F. Wiggers, D.D., Translated by Rev. Ralph Emerson, pp. 268-270.] "

"Augustinianism. By the sin of Adam, in whom all men together sinned, sin and all the other positive punishments of Adam's sin came into the world. By it human nature has been both physically and morally corrupted. Every man brings into the world with him a nature already so corrupt, that it can do nothing but sin. The propagation of this quality of his nature is by concupiscence.

Pelagianism. By his transgression, Adam injured only himself, not his posterity. In respect to his moral nature, every man is born in precisely the same condition in which Adam was created. There is therefore no original sin."

"2nd. As to FREE WILL."

"Augustinianism. By Adam's transgression the Freedom of the human Will has been entirely lost. In his present corrupt state man can will and do only evil.

Pelagianism. Man's will is free. Every man has the power to will and to do good as well as the opposite. Hence it depends upon himself whether he be good or evil."

"3rd. As to GRACE."

"Augustinianism. If nevertheless man in his present state, wills and does good, it is merely the work of grace. It is an inward, secret, and wonderful operation of God upon man. It is a preceding as well as an accompanying work. By preceding grace, man attains faith, by which he comes to an insight of good, and by which power is given him to will the good. He needs cooperating grace for the performance of every individual good act. As man can do nothing without grace, so he can do nothing against it. It is irresistible. And as man by nature has no merit at all, no respect at all can be had to man's moral disposition, in imparting grace, but God acts according to his own free will.

Pelagianism. Although by free will, which is a gift of God, man has the capacity of willing and doing good without God's special aid, yet for the easier performance of it, God revealed the law; for the easier performance, the instruction and example of Christ aid him; and for the easier performance, even the supernatural operations of grace are imparted to him. Grace, in the most limited sense (gracious influence) is given to those"

only who deserve it by the faithful employment of their own powers. But man can resist it.

"4th. As to PREDESTINATION AND REDEMPTION."

"Augustinianism. From eternity, God made a free and unconditional decree to save a few 2 [2 The doctrine of Augustine does not by any means involve the conclusion that the elect are " few " or " a small number."] from the mass that was corrupted and subjected to damnation. To those whom he predestinated to this salvation, he gives the requisite means for the purpose. But on the rest, who do not belong to this small number of the elect, the merited ruin falls. Christ came into the world and died for the elect only.

Pelagianism. God's decree of election and reprobation is founded on prescience. Those of whom God foresaw that they would keep his commands, he predestinated to salvation; the others to damnation. Christ's redemption is general. But those only need his atoning death who have actually sinned. All, however, by his instruction and example, may be led to higher perfection and virtue."

## **6. What was the origin of the Middle or Semipelagian system?**

In the meantime, while the Pelagian controversy was at its height, John Cassian, of Syrian extraction and educated in the Eastern Church, having removed to Marseilles, in France, for the purpose of advancing the interests of monkery in that region, began to give publicity to a scheme of doctrine occupying a middle position between the systems of Augustine and Pelagius. This system, whose advocates were called Massilians from the residence of their chief, and afterward Semipelagians by the Schoolmen, is in its essential principles one with that system which is now denominated Arminianism, a statement of which will be given in a subsequent part of this chapter. Faustus, bishop of Priez, in France, from A. D. 427 to A. D. 480, was one of the most distinguished and successful

advocates of this doctrine, which was permanently accepted by the Eastern Church, and for a time was widely disseminated throughout the Western also, until it was condemned by the synods of Orange and Valence, A. D. 529.

## **7. What is the relation of Augustinianism to Calvinism and of Semipelagianism to Arminianism?**

After this time Augustinianism became the recognized orthodoxy of the Western Church, and the name of no other uninspired man exerts such universal influence among Papists and Protestants alike. If any human name ought to be used to designate a system of divinely revealed truth, the phrase

Augustinianism as opposed to Pelagianism properly designates all those elements of faith which the whole world of Evangelical Christians hold in common. On the other hand Augustinianism as opposed to Semipelagianism properly designates that system commonly called Calvinism--while Cassianism would be the proper historical designation of that Middle or Semipelagian Scheme now commonly styled Arminianism.

## **8. How were parties divided with respect to these great systems among the Schoolmen, and how are they in the modern papal Church?**

After the lapse of the dark ages, during which all active speculation slumbered, the great Thomas Aquinas, an Italian by birth, A. D. 1224, and a monk of the order of St. Dominic, Doctor Angelicus, advocated with consummate ability the Augustinian system of theology in that cumbrous and artificial manner which characterized the Schoolmen. John Duns Scotus, a native of Britain, A. D. 1265, a monk of the order of St. Francis, Doctor Subtilis, was in that age the

ablest advocate of the system then styled Semipelagian. The controversies then revived were perpetuated for many ages, the Dominicans and the Thomists in general advocating unconditional election and efficacious grace, and the Franciscans and the Scotists in general advocating conditional election and the inalienable power of the human will to cooperate with or to resist divine grace. The same disputes under various party names continue to agitate the Romish Church since the Reformation, although the genius of her ritualistic system, and the predominance of the Jesuits in her councils, have secured within her bounds the almost universal prevalence of Semipelagianism.

The general Council, commenced at Trent, A. D. 1546, attempted to form a non-committal Creed that would satisfy the adherents of both systems. Accordingly the Dominicans and Franciscans have both claimed that their respective views were sanctioned by that Synod. The truth is that while the general and indefinite statements of doctrine to be found among its canons are often Augustinian in form, the more detailed and accurate explanations which follow these are uniformly Semipelagian.--Principal Cunningham's "Historical Theology" vol. 1, pp. 483-495.

The order of the Jesuits, founded by Ignatius Loyola, A. D. 1541, has always been identified with Semipelagian Theology. Lewis Molina, a Spanish Jesuit, A. D. 1588, the inventor of the distinction denoted by the term "Scientia Media," attained to such distinction as its advocate, that its adherents in the Papal Church have been for ages styled Molinists. In 1638 Jansenius, Bishop of Ypres in the Netherlands died leaving behind him his great work, Augustinus, wherein he clearly unfolded and established by copious extracts the true theological system of Augustine. This book occasioned very widespread contentions, was ferociously opposed by the Jesuits, and



condemned by the Bulls of popes Innocent X. and Alexander VII., A. D. 1653 and 1656--which last were followed in 1713 by the more celebrated Bull "imigenitus" of Clement XI., condemning the New Testament Commentary of Quesnel. The Augustinians in that Church were subsequently called Jansenists, and had their principal seat in Holland and Belgium and at Port Royal near Paris. They have numbered among them some very illustrious names, as Tillemont, Arnauld, Nicole Pascal, and Quesnel. These controversies between the Dominicans and Molinists, the Jansenists and Jesuits, have continued even to our own time, although at present Semipelagianism shares with Jesuitism in its almost unlimited sway in the Papal Church, which has definitely triumphed in the Vatican council, 1870.

**9. What is the position of the Lutheran church with relation to these great systems?**

Luther, a monk of the order of Augustine, and an earnest disciple of that father, taught a system of faith agreeing in spirit and in all essential points with that afterwards more systematically developed by Calvin. The only important point in which he differed from the common consensus of the Calvinistic Churches related to the literal physical presence of the entire person of Christ in, with, and under the elements in the Eucharist. With these opinions of Luther Melanchthon appears to have agreed at the time he published the first edition of his "Loci Communes." His opinions, however, as to the freedom of man and the sovereignty of divine grace were subsequently gradually modified. After the death of Luther, at the Leipsic Conference in 1548, he explicitly declared his agreement with the synergists, who maintain that in the regenerating act the human will cooperates with divine grace. Melanchthon, on the other hand, held a view of the relation of the sign to the grace signified thereby in

the Sacraments, much more nearly conforming to opinions of the disciples of ingli and Calvin than generally prevailed in his own Church. His position on both these points gave great offense to the Old Lutherans, and occasioned protracted and bitter controversies. finally, the Old or Strict Lutheran party prevailed over their antagonists, and their views received a complete scientific statement in the "Formula Concordiae" published 1580. Although this remarkable document never attained a position by the side of the Augsburg Confession and Apology as the universally recognized Confession of the Lutheran Churches, it may justly be taken as the best available witness as to what strictly Lutheran theology when developed into a complete system really is.

The Characteristics of Lutheran theology as contrasted with that of the Reformed Churches may be briefly stated under the following heads:

1st. As to THEOLOGY PROPER AND CHRISTOLOGY the only points in which it differs from Calvinism are the following:

(1.) As to the divine attributes of sovereign foreordination, they hold that as far as it is concerned with the actions of moral agents it is limited to those actions which see morally good, while it sustains no determining relation to those which are bad. God foreknows all events of whatever kind; he foreordains all the actions of necessary agents, and the good actions of free agents--but nothing else.

(2.) As to CHRISTOLOGY, they hold that in virtue of the hypostatical union the human element of Christ's person partakes with the divine in at least some of its peculiar attributes. Thus his human soul shares in the omniscience and omnipotence of his divinity, and his body in its omnipresence, and together they have the power of giving life to the truly believing recipient of the sacrament.

2nd. As to ANTHROPOLOGY, they hold views identical with those held by the staunchest advocates of the Reformed theology--for instance the antecedent and immediate imputation of Adam's public sin; the total moral depravity of all his descendants from birth and by nature, and their absolute inability to do aright in their own strength anything which pertains to their relation to God.

3rd. As to the Great central elements of SOTERIOLOGY, they agree with the Reformed with great exactness as to the nature and necessity of the expiatory work of Christ; as to forensic justification through the imputation to the believer of both the active and passive obedience of Christ; as to the nature and office of justifying faith; as to the sole agency of divine grace in the regeneration of the sinner, with which, in the first instance, the dead soul is unable to cooperate; as to God's eternal and sovereign election of believers in Christ, not because of anything foreseen in them, but because of his own gracious will--and consequently as to the fact that the salvation of every soul really saved is to be attributed purely and solely to the grace of God, and not in any degree to the cooperating will or merit of the man himself.

At the same time they teach, with obvious logical inconsistency, that the grace of the gospel is in divine intention absolutely universal. Christ died equally and in the same sense for all men. He gives grace alike to all men. Those who are lost are lost because they resist the grace. Those who are saved owe their salvation simply to the grace they have in common with the lost--to the very same grace--not to a greater degree of grace nor to a less degree of sin--not to their own improvement of grace, but simply to the grace itself. According to them God sovereignly elects all those who are saved, but he does not sovereignly pass over those who are lost. He gives the same grace to

all men, and the difference is determined persistent resistance of those who are lost.

The grand distinction of Lutheranism however relates to their doctrine of the EUCHARIST. They hold to the real physical presence of the Lord in the Eucharist, in, with, and under the elements, and that the grace signified and conveyed by the sacraments is necessary to salvation, and conveyed ordinarily by no other means. Hence the theology and church life of the strict Lutherans center in the sacraments. They differ from the high sacramental party in the Episcopal church chiefly in the fact that they ignore the dogma of apostolic succession, and the traditions of the early church.

#### **10. Into what two great parties has the Protestant world always been divided?**

The whole Protestant world from the time of the Reformation has been divided into two great families of churches classified severally as LUTHERAN, or those whose character was derived from Luther and Melancthon; and as reformed or those who have received the characteristic impress of Calvin. The LUTHERAN family of churches comprises all of those Protestants of Germany, of Hungary, and the Baltic provinces of Russia, who adhere to the Augsburg confession, together with the national churches of Denmark and of Norway and Sweden, and the large denomination of the name in America. These are estimated as amounting to a population of about twenty-five million pure Lutherans, while the Evangelical Church of Prussia, which was formed of a political union of the adherents of the two confessions, embraces probably eleven-and-a-half million. Their Symbolical Books are the Augsburg Confession and Apology, the Articles of Smalcald, Luther's Larger and Smaller Catechism, and, as received by the Stricter party, the Formula Concordiae. The

CALVINISTIC or REFORMED churches embrace, in the strict usage of the term, all those Protestant Churches which derive their Theology from Geneva; and among these, because of obvious qualifying conditions, the Episcopal Churches of England, Ireland, and America form a subdivision by themselves; and the Wesleyan Methodists, who are usually classed among the Reformed because they were historically developed from that stock, are even yet more distinctly than the parent church of England removed from the normal type of the general class. In a general sense, however, this class comprises all those churches of Germany which subscribe to the Heidelberg Catechism, the churches of Switzerland, France, Holland, England, and Scotland, the Independents and Baptists of England and America, and the various branches of the Presbyterian Church in England, Ireland, and America. These embrace about eight million German Reformed in the Reformed church of Hungary; twelve million and a half Episcopalians; Presbyterians six million; Methodists, three million and a half; Baptists, four million and a half; and independents' one million and a half;--in all about thirty-eight millions.

The principal confessions of the Reformed Church are the Gallic, Belgic, 2d Helvetic, and Scotch Confessions; the Heidelberg Catechism; the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England; the Canons of the Synod of Dort, and the Confession and Catechisms of the Westminster Assembly.

### **11. State the Origin of the Unitarian Heresy.**

In the early church the Ebionites, a Jewish-Gnostic Christian sect, were the only representatives of those in modern times called Socinians. A party among them were called Elkesaites. Their ideas, with special modifications, are found expressed in the Clementine

"Homilies," written about A. D. 150 in Oriental Syria. The most distinguished humanitarians in the early church were the two Theodotuses of Rome, both laymen, Artemon (t180) and Paul of Samosata, bishop of Antioch (260-270), deposed by a Council held 269. Most of these admitted the supernatural birth of Christ, but maintained that he was a mere man, honored by a special divine influence. They admitted an apotheosis or relative deification of Christ consequent upon his earthly achievements. (Dr. E. De Pressense, "Early Years of Christianity" Part 3, bk. 1, chs. 3 and 5).

Cerinthus, who lived during the last of the first and the first of the second century, held that Jesus was a mere man born of Mary and Joseph, that the Christ or Logos came down upon him in the shape of a dove at his baptism when he was raised to the dignity of the son of God, and wrought miracles, etc. The Logos left the man Jesus to suffer alone at his crucifixion. The resurrection also was denied.

They were succeeded by the Arians in the fourth century. During the Middle Ages there remained no party within the church that openly denied the supreme divinity of our Lord. In modern times Unitarianism revived at the period the Reformation through the agency of Laelius Socinus of Italy. It was carried by him into Switzerland and existed there as a doctrine professed by a few conspicuous heretics from 1525 to 1560. The most prominent of its professors were the Socini, Servetus, and Ochino. It existed as an organized church at Racow in Poland, where the exiled heretics found a refuge from 1539 to 1658, when the Socinians were driven out of Poland by the Jesuits, and passing into Holland became absorbed in the Remonstrant or Armenian Churches. In 1609 Schmetz drew up from materials afforded by the teaching of Faustus Socinus, the nephew of Laelius, and of J. Crellius, the Racovian Catechism, which is the standard of Socinianism (see Ree's

translation, 1818.) After their dispersion Andrew Y. Wissowatius and others collected the most important writings of their leading theologians under the title "Bibliotheca Fratrum Polonorum." Socinianism was developed by these writers with consummate ability, and crystallized into its most perfect form, as a logical system. It is purely Unitarian in its theology-- Humanitarian in its Christology, Pelagian in its Anthropology-- and its Soteriology was developed in perfect logical and ethical consistency with those elements. A statement of its characteristic positions will be found below.

It reappeared again as a doctrine held by a few isolated men in England in the seventeenth century. During the eighteenth century a number of degenerate Presbyterian (churches in England lapsed into Socinianism, and towards the end of the same century a larger number of Congregational Churches in Eastern Massachusetts followed their example and these together constitute the foundation of the modern Unitarian Denomination.

"Its last form is a modification of the old Socinianism formed under the pressure of evangelical religion on the one hand, and of rationalistic criticism on the other. Priestley, Channing, and J. Martineau are the examples of the successive phases of Modern Unitarianism. Priestley, of the old Socinian- building itself upon a sensational philosophy; Channing, of an attempt to gain a large development of the spiritual element; Martineau, of the elevation of view induced by the philosophy of Cousin, and the introduction of the idea of historical progress in religious ideas."-"Farrar's Crit. Hist. of Free Thought," Bampton Lecture, 1862.

**12. At what date and under what circumstances did modern Arminianism arise?**

James Arminius, professor of theology in the university of Leyden from 1602 until his death in 1609, although a minister of the Calvinistic Church of Holland, at first secretly, and afterwards more openly, advocated that scheme of theological opinion which has ever subsequently been designated by his name. These views were rapidly diffused, and at the same time strongly opposed by the principal men in the church. His disciples, consequently, about a year after his death formed themselves into an organized party. and in that capacity presented a Remonstrance to the States of Holland and West Friesland, praying to be allowed to hold their places in the church without being subjected by the ecclesiastical courts to vexatious examinations as to their orthodoxy. From the fact that the utterance of this Remonstrance was their first combined act as a party, they were afterwards known in history as Remonstrants.

Soon after this the Remonstrants, for the sake of defining their position, presented to the authorities five Articles expressing their belief on the subject of Predestination and Grace. This is the origin of the famous "five Points" in the controversy between Calvinism and Arminianism. Very soon however the controversy took a much wider range, and the Armenians were forced by logical consistency to teach radically erroneous views with respect to the nature of; sin, original sin, imputation, the nature of the Atonement, and Justification by faith. some of their later writers carried the rationalistic spirit inherent in their system to its legitimate results in a hardly qualified Plagiarism, and some were even suspected of Socinianism.

As all other means had failed to silence the innovators, the States General called together a General Synod at Dort in Holland, which held its sessions in the year 1618-1619. It consisted of pastors, elders, and theological professors from the churches of Holland, and deputies from the churches of England Scotland, Hesse, Bremen, the



Palatinate and Switzerland:the promised attendance of delegates from the French churches being prevented by an interdict of their king. The foreign delegates present were nineteen Presbyterians from Reformed churches on the Continent, and one from Scotland, and four Episcopalians from the church of England headed by the bishop of Llandaff. This Synod unanimously condemned the doctrines of the Armenians, and in their Articles confirmed the common Calvinistic faith of the Reformed churches. The most distinguished Remonstrant Theologians who succeeded Arminius were Episcopius, Curcellaeus, Limborch, Le Clerc, Wetstein, and the illustrious jurisconsult Grotius.

The denomination of Methodists in Great Britain and America is the only large Protestant body in the world it an avowedly Armenian Creed. Their Arminianism, however as presented by their standard writer, Richard Watson, an incomparably more competent theologian than Wesley, is far less removed from the Calvinism of the Westminster Assembly than the system of the later Remonstrants, and should always be designated by the qualified phrase "Evangelical Arminianism." In the hands of Watson the Anthropology and Soteriology of Arminianism are in a general sense nearly assimilated to the corresponding provinces of Lutheranism, and of the Calvinism of Baxter, and of the French School of the seventeenth century.

### **13. Give an outline of the main positions of the Socinian System.**

#### **THEOLOGY AND CHRISTOLOGY.**

1st. Divine Unity.

(a.) This unity inconsistent with any personal distinctions in the Godhead.

(b.) Christ is a mere man.

(c.) The Holy Ghost is an impersonal divine influence.

2d. Divine Attributes.

(a.) There is no principle of vindictory justice in God. Nothing to prevent his acceptance of sinners on the simple ground of repentance.

(b.) Future contingent events are essentially unknowable. The foreknowledge of God does not extend to such events.

### **ANTHROPOLOGY.**

(a.) Man was created without positive moral character. The " image of God, " in which man was said to be created did not include holiness.

(b.) Adam in eating the forbidden fruit committed actual sin, and thereby incurred the divine displeasure, but he retained nevertheless the same moral nature and tendencies with which he was created, and he transmitted these intact to his posterity.

(c.) The guilt of Adam's sin is not imputed.

(d.) Man is now as able by nature to discharge all his obligations as he ever was. The circumstances under which man's character is now formed are more unfavorable than in Adam's case, and therefore man is weak. But God is infinitely merciful; and obligation is graded

by ability. Man was created naturally mortal and would have died had he sinned or not.

### **SOTERIOLOGY.**

The great object of Christ's mission was to teach and to give assurance with respect to those truths concerning which the conclusions of mere human reason are problematical. This he does both by doctrine and example.

1st. Christ did not execute the office of priest upon earth; but only in heaven, and there in a very indefinite sense.

2d. The main office of Christ was prophetic. He taught a new law. Gave an example of a holy life. Taught the personality of God. And illustrated the doctrine of a future life by his own resurrection.

3d. His death was necessary only as a condition unavoidably prerequisite to his resurrection. It was also designed to make a moral impression upon sinners, disposing them to repentance on account of sin, and assuring them of the clemency of God. No propitiation of divine justice was necessary, nor would it be possible by means of vicarious suffering.

### **ESCHATOLOGY.**

1st. In the intermediate period between death and the resurrection the soul remains unconscious.

2d. " For it is evident from the authorities cited, that they (the older Socinians), equally with others' constantly maintain that there will be a resurrection both of the just and of the unjust, and that the latter shall be consigned to everlasting punishment, but the former admitted to everlasting life."-B. Wissowatius.

"The doctrine of the proper eternity of hell torments is rejected by most Unitarians of the present day (1818) as in their opinion wholly irreconcilable with the divine goodness, and unwarranted by the Scriptures. In reference to the future fate of the wicked, some hold that after the resurrection they will be annihilated or consigned to 'everlasting destruction' in the literal sense of the words:but most have received the doctrine of universal restoration, which maintains that all men, however depraved their characters may have been in this life, will, by a corrective discipline, suited in the measure of its severity to the nature of each particular case, be brought ultimately to goodness and consequently to happiness." (--Rees's "Racovian Catechism," pp. 367, 368.)

### **ECCLESIOLOGY.**

1st. The church is simply a voluntary society. Its object mutual improvement. Its common bond similarity of sentiments and pursuits. Its rule is human reason.

2d. The Sacraments are simply commemorative and teaching ordinances.

14. Give an outline of the main features of the Arminian System.

### **DIVINE ATTRIBUTES.**

1st. They admit that vindictory justice is a divine attribute, but hold that it is relaxable, rather optional than essential, rather belonging to administrative policy than to necessary principle.

2d. They admit that God foreknows all events without exception. They invented the distinction expressed by the term *Scientia Media* to explain God's certain foreknowledge of future events, the

futurition of which remain undetermined by his will or any other antecedent cause.

3d. They deny that God's foreordination extends to the volitions of free agents and hold that the eternal election of men to salvation is not absolute, but conditioned upon foreseen faith and obedience.

### **ANTHROPOLOGY.**

1st. Moral character can not be created but is determined only by previous self-decision.

2d. Both liberty and responsibility necessarily involve possession of power to the contrary.

3d. They usually deny the imputation of the guilt of Adam's first sin.

4th. The strict Armenians deny total depravity, and admit only the moral enfeeblement of nature. Arminius and Wesley were more orthodox but less self-consistent.

5th. They deny that man has ability to originate holy action or to carry it on in his own unassisted strength--but affirm that every man has power to co-operate with, or to resist "common grace" That which alone distinguishes the saint from the sinner is his own use or abuse of grace.

6th. They regard gracious influence as rather moral and suasive than as a direct and effectual exertion of the new creative energy of God.

7th. They maintain the liability of the saint at every stage of his earthly career to fall from grace.

### **SOTERIOLOGY.**

1st. They admit that Christ made a vicarious offering of himself in place of sinful men, and yet deny that he suffered either the literal penalty of the law, or a full equivalent for it, and maintain that his sufferings were graciously accepted as a substitute for the penalty.

2d. They hold that not only with respect to its sufficiency and adaptation, but also in the intention of the Father in giving the Son, and of the Son in dying, Christ died in the same sense for all men alike.

3d. That the acceptance of Christ's satisfaction in the place of the infliction of the penalty on sinners in person involves a relaxation of the divine law.

4th. That Christ's satisfaction enables God in consistency with his character, and the interests of his general government, to offer salvation on easier terms. The gospel hence is a new law, demanding faith and evangelical obedience instead of the original demand of perfect obedience.

5th. Hence Christ's work does not actually save any, but makes the salvation of all men possible---removes legal obstacles out of the way, does not secure faith but makes salvation available on the condition of faith.

6th. sufficient influences of the Holy Spirit, and sufficient opportunities and means of grace are granted to all men.

7th. It is possible for and obligatory upon all men in this life to attain to evangelical perfection-which is explained as a being perfectly sincere-a being animated by perfect love --and doing all that is required of us under the gospel dispensation.

8th. With respect to the heathen some have held that in some way or other the gospel is virtually, if not in form, preached to all men. Others have held that in the future world there are three conditions corresponding to the three great classes of men as they stand related to the gospel in this world - the Status Credentium ; the Status Incredulorum ; the Status ignorantium.

15. Give a brief outline of the main features of the Calvinistic System.

### **THEOLOGY.**

1st. God is an absolute sovereign, infinitely wise, righteous, benevolent, and powerful, determining from eternity the certain futuration of all events of every class according to the counsel of his own will.

2d. Vindictory Justice is an essential and immutable perfection of the divine nature demanding the full punishment of all sin, the exercise of which cannot be relaxed or denied by the divine will.

### **CHRISTOLOGY.**

The Mediator is one single, eternal, divine person, at once very God, and very man. In the unity of the Theanthropic person the two natures remain pure and unmixed, and retain each its separate and incommunicable attributes distinct. The personality is that of the eternal and unchangeable Logos. The human nature is impersonal. All mediatorial actions involve the concurrent exercise of the energies of both natures according to their several properties in the unity of the single person.

### **ANTHROPOLOGY.**

1st. God created man by an immediate fiat of omnipotence and in a condition of physical, intellectual, and moral faultlessness, with a positively formed moral character.

2d. The guilt of Adam's public sin is by a judicial act of God immediately charged to the account of each of his descendants from the moment he begins to exist antecedently to any act of his own.

3d. Hence men come into existence in a condition of condemnation deprived of those influences of the Holy Spirit upon which their moral and spiritual life depends.

4th. Hence they come into moral agency deprived of that original righteousness which belonged to human nature as created in Adam, and with an antecedent prevailing tendency in their nature to sin which tendency in them is of the nature of sin, and worthy of punishment.

5th. Man's nature since the fall retains its constitutional faculties of reason, conscience, and free-will, and hence man continues a responsible moral agent, but he is nevertheless spiritually dead, and totally averse to spiritual good, and absolutely unable to change his own heart, or adequately to discharge any of those duties which spring out of his relation to God.

## **SOTERIOLOGY.**

1st. The salvation of man is absolutely of grace. God was free in consistency with the infinite perfections of his nature to save none, few, many, or all, according to his sovereign good pleasure.

2d. Christ acted as Mediator in pursuance of an eternal covenant formed between the Father and the Son, according to which he was



put in the law-place of his own elect people as their personal substitute, and as such by his obedience and suffering he discharged all the obligations growing out of their federal relations to law-by his sufferings vicariously enduring their penal debt by his obedience vicariously discharging those covenant demands, upon which their eternal well-being was suspended--thus fulfilling the requirements of the law, satisfying the justice of God, and securing the eternal salvation of those for whom he died.

3d. Hence, by his death he purchased the saving influences of the Holy Spirit for all for whom he died. And the infallibly applies the redemption purchased by Christ to all for whom he intended it, in the precise time and under the precise conditions predetermined in the eternal Covenant of Grace-and he does this by the immediate and intrinsically efficacious exercise of his power, operating directly within them, and in the exercises of their renewed nature bringing them to act faith and repentance and all gracious obedience.

4th. Justification is a Judicial act of God, whereby imputing to us the perfect righteousness of Christ, including his active and passive obedience, he proceeds to regard and treat us accordingly, pronouncing all the penal claims of law. to be satisfied, and us to be graciously entitled to all the immunities and rewards conditioned in the original Adamic covenant upon perfect obedience.

5th. Although absolute moral perfection is unattainable in this life, and assurance is not of the essence of faith, it is nevertheless possible and obligatory upon each believer to seek after and attain to a full assurance of his own personal salvation, and leaving the things that are behind to strive after perfection in all things.

6th. Although if left to himself every believer would fall in an instant, and although most believers do experience temporary seasons of

backsliding, yet God by the exercise of his grace in their hearts, in pursuance of the provisions of the eternal Covenant of Grace and of the purpose of Christ in dying, infallibly prevents even the weakest believer from final apostasy.

## **Augustine & The Pelagian Controversy**

**by B. B. Warfield**

**Part I: The Origin & Nature of Pelagianism**

It was inevitable that the energy of the Church in intellectually realizing and defining its doctrines in relation to one another, should first be directed towards the objective side of Christian truth. The chief controversies of the first four centuries and the resulting definitions of doctrine, concerned the nature of God and the person of Christ; and it was not until these theological and Christological questions were well upon their way to final settlement, that the Church could turn its attention to the more subjective side of truth. Meanwhile she bore in her bosom a full recognition, side by side, of the freedom of the will, the evil consequences of the fall, and the necessity of divine grace for salvation. Individual writers, or even the several sections of the Church, might exhibit a tendency to throw emphasis on one or another of the elements that made up this deposit of faith that was the common inheritance of all. The East, for instance, laid especial stress on free will: and the West dwelt more pointedly on the ruin of the human race and the absolute need of God's grace for salvation. But neither did the Eastern theologians forget the universal sinfulness and need of redemption, or the necessity, for the realization of that redemption, of God's gracious influences; nor did those of the West deny the self-determination or accountability of men. All the elements of the composite doctrine of man were everywhere confessed; but they were variously emphasized, according to the temper of the writers or the controversial demands of the times. Such a state of affairs, however, was an invitation to heresy, and a prophecy of controversy; just as the simultaneous confession of the unity of God and the Deity of

Christ, or of the Deity and the humanity of Christ, inevitably carried in its train a series of heresies and controversies, until the definitions of the doctrines of the Trinity and of the person of Christ were complete. In like manner, it was inevitable that sooner or later some one should arise who would so one-sidedly emphasize one element or the other of the Church's teaching as to salvation, as to throw himself into heresy, and drive the Church, through controversy with him, into a precise definition of the doctrines of free will and grace in their mutual relations.

This new heresiarch came, at the opening of the fifth century, in the person of the British monk, Pelagius. The novelty of the doctrine which he taught is repeatedly asserted by Augustine,<sup>2</sup> and is evident to the historian; but it consisted not in the emphasis that he laid on free will, but rather in the fact that, in emphasizing free will, he denied the ruin of the race and the necessity of grace. This was not only new in Christianity; it was even anti-Christian. Jerome, as well as Augustine, saw this at the time, and speaks of Pelagianism as the 'heresy of Pythagoras and Zeno';<sup>3</sup> and modern writers of the various schools have more or less fully recognized it. Thus Dean Milman thinks that 'the greater part' of Pelagius' letter to Demetrius 'might have been written by an ancient academic';<sup>4</sup> and Bishop Hefele openly declares that their fundamental doctrine, 'that man is virtuous entirely of his own merit, not of the gift of grace,' seems to him 'to be a rehabilitation of the general heathen view of the world,' and compares with it Cicero's words:<sup>5</sup> 'For gold, lands, and all the blessings of life, we have to return thanks to the Gods; but no one ever returned thanks to God for virtue.'<sup>6</sup> The struggle with Pelagianism was thus in reality a struggle for the very foundations of Christianity; and even more dangerously than in the previous theological and Christological controversies, here the practical substance of Christianity was in jeopardy. The real question at issue

was whether there was any need for Christianity at all; whether by his own power man might not attain eternal felicity; whether the function of Christianity was to save, or only to render an eternity of happiness more easily attainable by man.<sup>7</sup>

Genetically speaking, Pelagianism was the daughter of legalism; but when it itself conceived, it brought forth an essential deism. It is not without significance that its originators were 'a certain sort of monks;' that is, laymen of ascetic life. From this point of view the Divine law is looked upon as a collection of separate commandments, moral perfection as a simple complex of separate virtues, and a distinct value as a meritorious demand on Divine approbation is ascribed to each good work or attainment in the exercises of piety. It was because this was essentially his point of view that Pelagius could regard man's powers as sufficient to the attainment of sanctity — nay, that he could even assert it to be possible for a man to do more than was required of him. But this involved an essentially deistic conception of man's relations to his Maker. God had endowed His creature with a capacity (*possibilitas*) or ability (*posse*) for action, and it was for him to use it. Man was thus a machine, which, just because it was well made, needed no Divine interference for its right working; and the Creator, having once framed him, and endowed him with the *posse*, henceforth leaves the *velle* and the *esse* to him.

At this point we have touched the central and formative principle of Pelagianism. It lies in the assumption of the plenary ability of man; his ability to do all that righteousness can demand — to work out not only his own salvation, but also his own perfection. This is the core of the whole theory; and all the other postulates not only depend upon it, but arise out of it. Both chronologically and logically this is the root of the system.

When we first hear of Pelagius, he is already advanced in years, living in Rome in the odour of sanctity,<sup>8</sup> and enjoying a well-deserved reputation for zeal in exhorting others to a good life, which grew especially warm against those who endeavoured to shelter themselves, when charged with their sins, behind the weakness of nature.<sup>9</sup> He was outraged by the universal excuses on such occasions — 'It is hard!' 'it is difficult!' 'we are not able!' 'we are men!' — 'Oh, blind madness!' he cried: 'we accuse God of a twofold ignorance — that He does not seem to know what He has made, nor what He has commanded — as if forgetting the human weakness of which He is Himself the Author, He has imposed laws on man which He cannot endure.'<sup>10</sup> He himself tells us<sup>11</sup> to that it was his custom, therefore, whenever he had to speak on moral improvement and the conduct of a holy life, to begin by pointing out the power and quality of human nature, and by showing what it was capable of doing. For (he says) he esteemed it of small use to exhort men to what they deemed impossible: hope must rather be our companion, and all longing and effort die when we despair of attaining. So exceedingly ardent an advocate was he of man's unaided ability to do all that God commanded, that when Augustine's noble and entirely scriptural prayer — 'Give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou wilt' — was repeated in his hearing, he was unable to endure it; and somewhat inconsistently contradicted it with such violence as almost to become involved in a strife.<sup>12</sup> The powers of man, he held, were gifts of God; and it was, therefore, a reproach against Him as if He had made man ill or evil, to believe that they were insufficient for the keeping of His law. Nay, do what we will, we cannot rid ourselves of their sufficiency: 'whether we will, or whether we will not, we have the capacity of not sinning.'<sup>13</sup> 'I say,' he says, 'that man is able to be without sin, and that he is able to keep the commandments of God;' and this sufficiently direct statement of human ability is in reality the hinge of his whole system.

There were three specially important corollaries which flowed from this assertion of human ability, and Augustine himself recognized these as the chief elements of the system.<sup>14</sup> It would be inexplicable on such an assumption, if no man had ever used his ability in keeping God's law; and Pelagius consistently asserted not only that all might be sinless if they chose, but also that many saints, even before Christ, had actually lived free from sin. Again, it follows from man's inalienable ability to be free from sin, that each man comes into the world without entailment of sin or moral weakness from the past acts of men; and Pelagius consistently denied the whole doctrine of original sin. And still again, it follows from the same assumption of ability that man has no need of supernatural assistance in his striving to obey righteousness; and Pelagius consistently denied both the need and reality of divine grace in the sense of an inward help (and especially of a prevenient help) to man's weakness.

It was upon this last point that the greatest stress was laid in the controversy, and Augustine was most of all disturbed that thus God's grace was denied and opposed. No doubt the Pelagians spoke constantly of 'grace,' but they meant by this the primal endowment of man with free will, and the subsequent aid given him in order to its proper use by the revelation of the law and the teaching of the gospel, and, above all, by the forgiveness of past sins in Christ and by Christ's holy example.<sup>15</sup> Anything further than this external help they utterly denied; and they denied that this external help itself was absolutely necessary, affirming that it only rendered it easier for man to do what otherwise he had plenary ability for doing. Chronologically, this contention seems to have preceded the assertion which must logically lie at its base, of the freedom of man from any taint, corruption, or weakness due to sin. It was in order that they might deny that man needed help, that they denied that Adam's sin had any further effect on his posterity than might arise

from his bad example. 'Before the action of his own proper will,' said Pelagius plainly, 'that only is in man which God made.'<sup>16</sup> 'As we are procreated without virtue,' he said, 'so also without vice.'<sup>17</sup> In a word, 'Nothing that is good and evil, on account of which we are either praiseworthy or blameworthy, is born with us — it is rather done by us; for we are born with capacity for either, but provided with neither.'<sup>18</sup> So his later follower, Julian, plainly asserts his 'faith that God creates men obnoxious to no sin, but full of natural innocence, and with capacity for voluntary virtues.'<sup>19</sup> So entrenched is free will in nature, that, according to Julian, it is 'just as complete after sins as it was before sins';<sup>20</sup> and what this means may be gathered from Pelagius' definition in the 'Confession of Faith,' that he sent to Innocent: 'We say that man is always able both to sin and not to sin, so as that we may confess that we have free will.' That sin in such circumstances was so common as to be well-nigh universal, was accounted for by the bad example of Adam and the power of habit, the latter being simply the result of imitation of the former. 'Nothing makes well-doing so hard,' writes Pelagius to Demetrias, 'as the long custom of sins which begins from childhood and gradually brings us more and more under its power until it seems to have in some degree the force of nature (*vim naturae*).' He is even ready to allow for the force of habit in a broad way, on the world at large; and so divides all history into progressive periods, marked by God's (external) grace. At first the light of nature was so strong that men by it alone could live in holiness. And it was only when men's manners became corrupt and tarnished nature began to be insufficient for holy living, that by God's grace the Law was given as an addition to mere nature; and by it 'the original lustre was restored to nature after its blush had been impaired.' And so again, after the habit of sinning once more prevailed among men, and 'the law became unequal to the task of curing it,'<sup>21</sup> Christ was given, furnishing men with forgiveness of sins, exhortations to imitation of the example and the



holy example itself.<sup>22</sup> But though thus a progressive deterioration was confessed, and such a deterioration as rendered desirable at least two supernatural interpositions (in the giving of the law and the coming of Christ), yet no corruption of nature, even by growing habit, is really allowed. It was only an ever-increasing facility in imitating vice which arose from so long a schooling in evil; and all that was needed to rescue men from it was a new explanation of what was right (in the law), or, at the most, the encouragement of forgiveness for what was already done, and a holy example (in Christ) for imitation. Pelagius still asserted our continuous possession of 'a free will which is unimpaired for sinning and for not sinning;' and Julian, that 'our free will is just as full after sins as it was before sins;' although Augustine does not fail to twit him with a charge of inconsistency.<sup>23</sup>

The peculiar individualism of the Pelagian view of the world comes out strongly in their failure to perceive the effect of habit on nature itself. Just as they conceived of virtue as a complex of virtuous acts, so they conceived of sin exclusively as an act, or series of disconnected acts. They appear not to have risen above the essentially heathen view which had no notion of holiness apart from a series of acts of holiness, or of sin apart from a like series of sinful acts.<sup>24</sup> Thus the will was isolated from its acts, and the acts from each other, and all organic connection or continuity of life was not only overlooked but denied.<sup>25</sup> After each act of the will, man stood exactly where he did before: indeed, this conception scarcely allows for the existence of a 'man' — only a willing machine is left, at each click of the action of which the spring regains its original position, and is equally ready as before to reperform its function. In such a conception there was no place for character: freedom of will was all. Thus it was not an unnatural mistake which they made, when they forgot the man altogether, and attributed to the faculty of free will,

under the name of 'possibilitas' or 'posse,' the ability that belonged rather to the man whose faculty it is, and who is properly responsible for the use he makes of it. Here lies the essential error of their doctrine of free will: they looked upon freedom in its form only, and not in its matter; and, keeping man in perpetual and hopeless equilibrium between good and evil, they permitted no growth of character and no advantage to himself to be gained by man in his successive choices of good. It need not surprise us that the type of thought which thus dissolved the organism of the man into a congeries of disconnected voluntary acts, failed to comprehend the solidarity of the race. To the Pelagian, Adam was a man, nothing more; and it was simply unthinkable that any act of his that left his own subsequent acts uncommitted, could entail sin and guilt upon other men. The same alembic that dissolved the individual into a succession of voluntary acts, could not fail to separate the race into a heap of unconnected units. If sin, as Julian declared, is nothing but will, and the will itself remained intact after each act, how could the individual act of an individual will condition the acts of men as yet unborn? By 'imitation' of his act alone could (under such a conception) other men be affected. And this carried with it the corresponding view of man's relation to Christ. He could forgive us the sins we had committed; He could teach us the true way; He could set us a holy example; and He could exhort us to its imitation. But He could not touch us to enable us to will the good, without destroying the absolute equilibrium of the will between good and evil; and to destroy this was to destroy its freedom, which was the crowning good of our divinely created nature. Surely the Pelagians forgot that man was not made for will, but will for man.

In defending their theory, as we are told by Augustine, there were five claims that they especially made for it.<sup>26</sup> It allowed them to praise as was their due, the creature that God had made, the

marriage that He had instituted, the law that He had given, the free will which was His greatest endowment to man, and the saints who had followed His counsels. By this they meant that they proclaimed the sinless perfection of human nature in every man as he was brought into the world, and opposed this to the doctrine of original sin; the purity and holiness of marriage and the sexual appetites, and opposed this to the doctrine of the transmission of sin; the ability of the law, as well as and apart from the gospel, to bring men into eternal life, and opposed this to the necessity of inner grace; the integrity of free will to choose the good, and opposed this to the necessity of divine aid; and the perfection of the lives of the saints, and opposed this to the doctrine of universal sinfulness. Other questions, concerning the origin of souls, the necessity of baptism for infants, the original immortality of Adam, lay more on the skirts of the controversy, and were rather consequences of their teaching than parts of it. As it was an obvious fact that all men died, they could not admit that Adam's death was a consequence of sin lest they should be forced to confess that his sin had injured all men; they therefore asserted that physical death belonged to the very nature of man, and that Adam would have died even had he not sinned.<sup>27</sup> So, as it was impossible to deny that the Church everywhere baptized infants, they could not refuse them baptism without confessing themselves innovators in doctrine; and therefore they contended that infants were not baptized for forgiveness of sins, but in order to attain a higher state of salvation. Finally, they conceived that if it was admitted that souls were directly created by God for each birth, it could not be asserted that they came into the world soiled by sin and under condemnation; and therefore they loudly championed this theory of the origin of souls.

The teachings of the Pelagians, it will be readily seen, easily welded themselves into a system, the essential and formative elements of

which were entirely new in the Christian Church; and this startlingly new reading of man's condition, powers, and dependence for salvation, it was, that broke like a thunderbolt upon the Western Church at the opening of the fifth century, and forced her to reconsider, from the foundations, her whole teaching as to man and his salvation.

## **Part II; The External History of the Pelagian Controversy**

Pelagius seems to have been already somewhat softened by increasing age when he came to Rome about the opening of the fifth century. He was also constitutionally averse to controversy; and although in his zeal for Christian morals, and in his conviction that no man would attempt to do what he was not persuaded he had natural power to perform, he diligently propagated his doctrines privately, he was careful to rouse no opposition, and was content to make what progress he could quietly and without open discussion. His methods of work sufficiently appear in the pages of his 'Commentary on the Epistles of Saint Paul,' which was written and published during these years, and which exhibits learning and a sober and correct but somewhat shallow exegetical skill. In this work, he manages to give expression to all the main elements of his system, but always introduces them indirectly, not as the true exegesis, but by way of objections to the ordinary teaching, which were in need of discussion. The most important fruit of his residence in Rome was the conversion to his views of the Advocate Coelestius, who brought the courage of youth and the argumentative training of a lawyer to the propagation of the new teaching. It was through him that it first broke out into public controversy, and received its first ecclesiastical examination and rejection. Fleeing from Alaric's second raid on Rome, the two friends landed together in Africa (A.D. 411), whence Pelagius soon afterwards departed for Palestine, leaving the bolder

and more contentious Coelestius behind at Carthage. Here Coelestius sought ordination as a presbyter. But the Milanese deacon Paulinus stood forward in accusation of him as a heretic, and the matter was brought before a synod under the presidency of Bishop Aurelius.

Paulinus' charge consisted of seven items, which asserted that Coelestius taught the following heresies: that Adam was made mortal, and would have died, whether he sinned or did not sin; that the sin of Adam injured himself alone, not the human race; that newborn children are in that state in which Adam was before his sin; that the whole human race does not, on the one hand, die on account of the death or the fall of Adam, nor, on the other, rise again on account of the resurrection of Christ; that infants, even though not baptized, have eternal life; that the law leads to the kingdom of heaven in the same way as the gospel; and that, even before the Lord's coming, there had been men without sin. Only two fragments of the proceedings of the synod in investigating this charge have come down to us; but it is easy to see that Coelestius was contumacious, and refused to reject any of the propositions charged against him, except the one which had reference to the salvation of infants that die unbaptized—the sole one that admitted of sound defence. As touching the transmission of sin, he would only say that it was an open question in the Church, and that he had heard both opinions from Church dignitaries; so that the subject needed investigation, and should not be made the ground for a charge of heresy. The natural result was, that, on refusing to condemn the propositions charged against him, he was himself condemned and excommunicated by the synod. Soon afterwards he sailed to Ephesus, where he obtained the ordination which he sought.

Meanwhile Pelagius was living quietly in Palestine, whither in the summer of 415 a young Spanish presbyter, Paulus Orosius by name,

came with letters from Augustine to Jerome, and was invited, near the end of July in that year, to a diocesan synod, presided over by John of Jerusalem. There he was asked about Pelagius and Coelestius, and proceeded to give an account of the condemnation of the latter at the synod of Carthage, and of Augustine's literary refutation of the former. Pelagius was sent for, and the proceedings became an examination into his teachings. The chief matter brought up was his assertion of the possibility of men living sinlessly in this world; but the favour of the bishop towards him, the intemperance of Orosius, and the difficulty of communication between the parties arising from difference of language, combined so to clog proceedings that nothing was done; and the whole matter, as Western in its origin, was referred to the Bishop of Rome for examination and decision.

Soon afterwards two Gallic bishops—Heros of Arles, and Lazarus of Aix—who were then in Palestine, lodged a formal accusation against Pelagius with the metropolitan, Eulogius of Caesarea; and he convened a synod of fourteen bishops which met at Lydda (Diospolis), in December of the same year (415), for the trial of the case. Perhaps no greater ecclesiastical farce was ever enacted than this synod exhibited. When the time arrived, the accusers were prevented from being present by illness, and Pelagius was confronted only by the written accusation. This was both unskillfully drawn, and was written in Latin which the synod did not understand. It was, therefore, not even consecutively read, and was only head by head rendered into Greek by an interpreter. Pelagius began by reading aloud several letters to himself from various men of reputation in the Episcopate—among them a friendly note from Augustine. Thoroughly acquainted with both Latin and Greek, he was enabled skillfully to thread every difficulty, and pass safely through the ordeal. Jerome called this a 'miserable synod,' and not unjustly: at

the same time it is sufficient to vindicate the honesty and earnestness of the bishops' intentions, that even in such circumstances, and despite the more undeveloped opinions of the East on the questions involved, Pelagius escaped condemnation only by a course of most ingenious disingenuousness, and only at the cost both of disowning Coelestius and his teachings, of which he had been the real father, and of leading the synod to believe that he was anathematizing the very doctrines which he was himself proclaiming. There is really no possibility of doubting, as any one will see who reads the proceedings of the synod, that Pelagius obtained his acquittal here either by a 'lying condemnation or a tricky interpretation' of his own teachings; and Augustine is perfectly justified in asserting that the 'heresy was not acquitted, but the man who denied the heresy,' and who would himself have been anathematized had he not anathematized the heresy.

However obtained, the acquittal of Pelagius was yet an accomplished fact. Neither he nor his friends delayed to make the most widely extended use of their good fortune. Pelagius himself was jubilant. Accounts of the synodal proceedings were sent to the West, not altogether free from uncandid alterations; and Pelagius soon put forth a work *In Defence of Free-Will*, in which he triumphed in his acquittal and 'explained his explanations' at the synod. Nor were the champions of the opposite opinion idle. As soon as the news arrived in North Africa, and before the authentic records of the synod had reached that region, the condemnation of Pelagius and Coelestius was re-affirmed in two provincial synods—one, consisting of sixty-eight bishops, met at Carthage about midsummer of 416; and the other, consisting of about sixty bishops, met soon afterwards at Mileve (Mila). Thus Palestine and North Africa were arrayed against one another, and it became of great importance to obtain the support of the Patriarchal See of Rome. Both sides made the attempt, but

fortune favored the Africans. Each of the North-African synods sent a synodal letter to Innocent I., then Bishop of Rome, engaging his assent to their action: to these, five bishops, Aurelius of Carthage and Augustine among them, added a third 'familiar' letter of their own, in which they urged upon Innocent to examine into Pelagius' teaching, and provided him with the material on which he might base a decision. The letters reached Innocent in time for him to take advice of his clergy, and send favorable replies on Jan. 27, 417. In these he expressed his agreement with the African decisions, asserted the necessity of inward grace, rejected the Pelagian theory of infant baptism, and declared Pelagius and Coelestius excommunicated until they should return to orthodoxy. In about six weeks more he was dead: but Zosimus, his successor, was scarcely installed in his place before Coelestius appeared at Rome in person to plead his cause; while shortly afterwards letters arrived from Pelagius addressed to Innocent, and by an artful statement of his belief and a recommendation from Praylus, lately become bishop of Jerusalem in John's stead, attempting to enlist Rome in his favour. Zosimus, who appears to have been a Greek and therefore inclined to make little of the merits of this Western controversy, went over to Coelestius at once, upon his profession of willingness to anathematize all doctrines which the pontifical see had condemned or should condemn; and wrote a sharp and arrogant letter to Africa, proclaiming Coelestius 'catholic,' and requiring the Africans to appear within two months at Rome to prosecute their charges, or else to abandon them. On the arrival of Pelagius' papers, this letter was followed by another (September, 417), in which Zosimus, with the approbation of the clergy, declared both Pelagius and Coelestius to be orthodox, and severely rebuked the Africans for their hasty judgment. It is difficult to understand Zosimus' action in this matter: neither of the confessions presented by the accused teachers ought to have deceived him, and if he was seizing the occasion to magnify the



Roman see, his mistake was dreadful. Late in 417, or early in 418, the African bishops assembled at Carthage, in number more than two hundred, and replied to Zosimus that they had decided that the sentence pronounced against Pelagius and Coelestius should remain in force until they should unequivocally acknowledge that 'we are aided by the grace of God, through Christ, not only to know, but to do what is right, in each single act, so that without grace we are unable to have, think, speak, or do anything pertaining to piety.' This firmness made Zosimus waver. He answered swellingly but timidly, declaring that he had maturely examined the matter, but it had not been his intention finally to acquit Coelestius; and now he had left all things in the condition in which they were before, but he claimed the right of final judgment to himself. Matters were hastening to a conclusion, however, that would leave him no opportunity to escape from the mortification of an entire change of front. This letter was written on the 21st of March, 418; it was received in Africa on the 29th of April; and on the very next day an imperial decree was issued from Ravenna ordering Pelagius and Coelestius to be banished from Rome, with all who held their opinions; while on the next day, May 1, a plenary council of about two hundred bishops met at Carthage, and in nine canons condemned all the essential features of Pelagianism. Whether this simultaneous action was the result of skillful arrangement, can only be conjectured: its effect was in any case necessarily crushing. There could be no appeal from the civil decision, and it played directly into the hands of the African definition of the faith. The synod's nine canons part naturally into three triads. The first of these deals with the relation of mankind to original sin, and anathematizes in turn those who assert that physical death is a necessity of nature, and not a result of Adam's sin; those who assert that new-born children derive nothing of original sin from Adam to be expiated by the laver of regeneration; and those who assert a distinction between the kingdom of heaven and eternal

life, for entrance into the former of which alone baptism is necessary. The second triad deals with the nature of grace, and anathematizes those who assert that grace brings only remission of past sins, not aid in avoiding future ones; those who assert that grace aids us not to sin, only by teaching us what is sinful, not by enabling us to will and do what we know to be right; and those who assert that grace only enables us to do more easily what we should without it still be able to do. The third triad deals with the universal sinfulness of the race, and anathematizes those who assert that the apostles' (I John i. 8) confession of sin is due only to their humility; those who say that 'Forgive us our trespasses' in the Lord's Prayer, is pronounced by the saints, not for themselves, but for the sinners in their company; and those who say that the saints use these words of themselves only out of humility and not truly. Here we see a careful traversing of the whole ground of the controversy, with a conscious reference to the three chief contentions of the Pelagian teachers.

The appeal to the civil power, by whomsoever made, was, of course, indefensible, although it accorded with the opinions of the day, and was entirely approved by Augustine. But it was the ruin of the Pelagian cause. Zosimus found himself forced either to go into banishment with his wards, or to desert their cause. He appears never to have had any personal convictions on the dogmatic points involved in the controversy, and so, all the more readily, yielded to the necessity of the moment. He cited Coelestius to appear before a council for a new examination; but that heresiarch consulted prudence, and withdrew from the city. Zosimus, possibly in the effort to appear a leader in the cause he had opposed, not only condemned and excommunicated the men whom less than six months before he had pronounced 'orthodox' after a 'mature consideration of the matters involved,' but, in obedience to the imperial decree, issued a stringent paper which condemned Pelagius and the Pelagians, and

affirmed the African doctrines as to corruption of nature, true grace, and the necessity of baptism. To this he required subscription from all bishops as a test of orthodoxy. Eighteen Italian bishops refused their signature, with Julian of Eclanum, henceforth to be the champion of the Pelagian party, at their head, and were therefore deposed, although several of them afterwards recanted, and were restored. In Julian, the heresy obtained an advocate, who, if aught could have been done for its re-instatement, would surely have proved successful. He was the boldest, the strongest, at once the most acute and the most weighty, of all the disputants of his party. But the ecclesiastical standing of this heresy was already determined. The policy of Zosimus' test act was imposed by imperial authority on North Africa in 419. The exiled bishops were driven from Constantinople by Atticus in 424; and they are said to have been condemned at a Cilician synod in 423, and at an Antiochian one in 424. Thus the East itself was preparing for the final act in the drama. The exiled bishops were with Nestorius at Constantinople in 429; and that patriarch unsuccessfully interceded for them with Coelestine, then Bishop of Rome. The conjunction was ominous. And at the ecumenical synod at Ephesus in 431, we again find the 'Coelestians' side by side with Nestorius, sharers in his condemnation.

But Pelagianism did not so die as not to leave a legacy behind it. 'Remainders of Pelagianism' soon showed themselves in Southern Gaul, where a body of monastic leaders attempted to find a middle ground on which they could stand, by allowing the Augustinean doctrine of assisting grace, but retaining the Pelagian conception of our self-determination to good. We first hear of them in 428, through letters from two laymen, Prosper and Hilary, to Augustine, as men who accepted original sin and the necessity of grace, but asserted that men began their turning to God, and God helped their

beginning. They taught that all men are sinners, and that they derive their sin from Adam; that they can by no means save themselves, but need God's assisting grace; and that this grace is gratuitous in the sense that men cannot really deserve it, and yet that it is not irresistible, nor given always without the occasion of its gift having been determined by men's attitude towards God; so that, though not given on account of the merits of men, it is given according to those merits, actual or foreseen. The leader of this new movement was John Cassian, a pupil of Chrysostom (to whom he attributed all that was good in his life and will), and the fountain-head of Gallic monasticism; and its chief champion at a somewhat later day was Faustus of Rhegium (Riez).

The Augustineian opposition was at first led by the vigorous controversialist, Prosper of Aquitaine, and, in the next century, by the wise, moderate, and good Caesarius of Arles, who brought the contest to a conclusion in the victory of a softened Augustineianism. Already in 431 a letter was obtained from Pope Coelestine, designed to close the controversy in favor of Augustineianism, and in 496 Pope Gelasius condemned the writings of Faustus in the first index of forbidden books; while, near the end of the first quarter of the sixth century, Pope Hormisdas was appealed to for a renewed condemnation. The end was now in sight. The famous second Synod of Orange met under the presidency of Caesarius at that ancient town on the 3d of July, 529, and drew up a series of moderate articles which received the ratification of Boniface II. in the following year. In these articles there is affirmed an anxiously guarded Augustineianism, a somewhat weakened Augustineianism, but yet a distinctive Augustineianism; and, so far as a formal condemnation could reach, semi-Pelagianism was suppressed by them in the whole Western Church. But councils and popes can only decree; and Cassian and Vincent and Faustus, despite Caesarius and Boniface

and Gregory, retained an influence among their countrymen which never died away.

### **Part III: Augustine's Part in The Controversy**

Both by nature and by grace, Augustine was formed to be the champion of truth in this controversy. Of a naturally philosophical temperament, he saw into the springs of life with a vividness of mental perception to which most men are strangers; and his own experiences in his long life of resistance to, and then of yielding to, the drawings of God's grace, gave him a clear apprehension of the great evangelic principle that God seeks men, not men God, such as no sophistry could cloud. However much his philosophy or theology might undergo change in other particulars, there was one conviction too deeply imprinted upon his heart ever to fade or alter—the conviction of the ineffableness of God's grace. Grace—man's absolute dependence on God as the source of all good—this was the common, nay, the *formative* element, in all stages of his doctrinal development, which was marked only by the ever growing consistency with which he built his theology around this central principle. Already in 397—the year after he became bishop—we find him enunciating with admirable clearness all the essential elements of his teaching, as he afterwards opposed them to Pelagius. It was inevitable, therefore, that although he was rejoiced when he heard, some years later, of the zealous labours of this pious monk in Rome towards stemming the tide of luxury and sin, and esteemed him for his devout life, and loved him for his Christian activity, he yet was deeply troubled when subsequent rumours reached him that he was "disputing against the grace of God." He tells us over and over again, that this was a thing no pious heart could endure; and we perceive that, from this moment, Augustine was only biding his time, and awaiting a fitting opportunity to join issue with the denier of the

Holy of holies of his whole, I will not say theology merely, but life. "Although I was grieved by this," he says, "and it was told me by men whom I believed, I yet desired to have something of such sort from his own lips or in some book of his, so that, if I began to refute it, he would not be able to deny it." Thus he actually excuses himself for not entering into the controversy earlier. When Pelagius came to Africa, then, it was almost as if he had deliberately sought his fate. But circumstances secured a lull before the storm. He visited Hippo; but Augustine was absent, although he did not fail to inform himself on his return that Pelagius while there had not been heard to say "anything at all of this kind." The controversy against the Donatists was now occupying all the energies of the African Church, and Augustine himself was a ruling spirit in the great conference now holding at Carthage with them. While there, he was so immersed in this business, that, although he once or twice saw the face of Pelagius, he had no conversation with him; and although his ears were wounded by a casual remark which he heard, to the effect "that infants were not baptized for remission of sins, but for consecration to Christ," he allowed himself to pass over the matter, "because there was no opportunity to contradict it, and those who said it were not such men as could cause him solicitude for their influence."

It appears from these facts, given us by himself, that Augustine was not only ready for, but was looking for, the coming controversy. It can scarcely have been a surprise to him when Paulinus accused Coelestius (412); and, although he was not a member of the council which condemned him, it was inevitable that he should at once take the leading part in the consequent controversy. Coelestius and his friends did not silently submit to the judgment that had been passed upon their teaching: they could not openly propagate their heresy, but they were diligent in spreading their complaints privately and by subterranean whispers among the people. This was met by the

Catholics in public sermons and familiar colloquies held everywhere. But this wise rule was observed—to contend against the erroneous teachings, but to keep silence as to the teachers, that so (as Augustine explains ) "the men might rather be brought to see and acknowledge their error through fear of ecclesiastical judgment than be punished by the actual judgment." Augustine was abundant in these oral labours; and many of his sermons directed against Pelagian error have come down to us, although it is often impossible to be sure as to their date. For one of them (170) he took his text from Phil. iii. 6-16, "as touching the righteousness which is by the law blameless; howbeit what things were gain to me, those have I counted loss for Christ." He begins by asking how the apostle could count his blameless conversation according to the righteousness which is from the law as dung and loss, and then proceeds to explain the purpose for which the law was given, our state by nature and under law, and the kind of blamelessness that the law could produce, ending by showing that man can have no righteousness except from God, and no perfect righteousness except in heaven. Three others (174, 175, 176) had as their text I Tim. i. 15, 16, and developed its teaching, that the universal sin of the world and its helplessness in sin constituted the necessity of the incarnation; and especially that the necessity of Christ's grace for salvation was just as great for infants as for adults. Much is very forcibly said in these sermons which was afterwards incorporated in his treatises. "There was no reason," he insists, "for the coming of Christ the Lord except to save sinners. Take away diseases, take away wounds, and there is no reason for medicine. If the great Physician came from heaven, a great sick man was lying ill through the whole world. That sick man is the human race" (175, 1). "He who says, 'I am not a sinner,' or 'I was not,' is ungrateful to the Saviour. No one of men in that mass of mortals which flows down from Adam, no one at all of men is not sick: no one is healed without the grace of Christ. Why do you ask

whether infants are sick from Adam? For they, too, are brought to the church; and, if they cannot run thither on their own feet, they run on the feet of others that they may be healed. Mother Church accommodates others' feet to them so that they may come, others' heart so that they may believe, others' tongue so that they may confess; and, since they are sick by another's sin, so when they are healed they are saved by another's confession in their behalf. Let, then, no one buzz strange doctrines to you. *This* the Church has always had, has always held; this she has received from the faith of the elders; this she will perseveringly guard until the end. Since the whole have no need of a physician, but only the sick, what need, then, has the infant of Christ, if he is not sick? If he is well, why does he seek the physician through those who love him? If, when infants are brought, they are said to have no sin of inheritance ( *peccatum propaginis* ) at all, and yet come to Christ, why is it not said in the church to those that bring them, `take these innocents hence; the physician is not needed by the well, but by the sick; Christ came not to call the just, but sinners'? It never has been said, and it never will be said. Let each one therefore, brethren, speak for him who cannot speak for himself. It is much the custom to intrust the inheritance of orphans to the bishops; how much more the grace of infants! The bishop protects the orphan lest he should be oppressed by strangers, his parents being dead. Let him cry out more for the infant who, he fears, will be slain by his parents. Who comes to Christ has something in him to be healed; and he who has not, has no reason for seeking the physician. Let parents choose one of two things: let them either confess that there is sin to be healed in their infants, or let them cease bringing them to the physician. This is nothing else than to wish to bring a well person to the physician. Why do you bring him? To be baptized. Whom? The infant. To whom do you bring him? To Christ. To Him, of course, who came into the world? Certainly, he says. Why did He come into the world? To save sinners.



Then he whom you bring has in him that which needs saving?" So again: "He who says that the age of infancy does not need Jesus' salvation, says nothing else than that the Lord Christ is not *Jesus* to faithful infants; i.e., to infants baptized in Christ. For what is *Jesus*? *Jesus* means saviour. He is not Jesus to those whom He does not save, who do not need to be saved. Now, if your hearts can bear that Christ is not *Jesus* to any of the baptized, I do not know how you can be acknowledged to have sound faith. They are infants, but they are made members of Him. They are infants, but they receive His sacraments. They are infants, but they become partakers of His table, so that they may have life." The preveniency of grace is explicitly asserted in these sermons. In one he says, "Zaccheus was seen, and saw; but unless he had been seen, he would not have seen. For `whom He predestinated, them also He called.' In order that we may see, we are seen; that we may love, we are loved. `My God, may His pity prevent me!' " And in another, at more length: "His calling has preceded you, so that you may have a good will. Cry out, `My God, let Thy mercy prevent me' (Ps. lviii. 11.). That you may be, that you may feel, that you may hear, that you may consent, His mercy prevents you. It prevents you in all things; and do you too prevent His judgment in something. In what, do you say? In what? In confessing that you have all these things from God, whatever you have of good; and from yourself whatever you have of evil" (176, 5). "We owe therefore to Him that we are, that we are alive, that we understand: that we are men, that we live well, that we understand aright, we owe to Him. Nothing is ours except the sin that we have. For what have we that we did not receive?" (I Cor. ix. 7) (176, 6).

It was not long, however, before the controversy was driven out of the region of sermons into that of regular treatises. The occasion for Augustine's first appearance in a written document bearing on the controversy, was given by certain questions which were sent to him

for answer by "the tribune and notary" Marcellinus, with whom he had cemented his intimacy at Carthage, the previous year, when this notable official was presiding, by the emperor's orders, over the great conference of the catholics and Donatists. The mere fact that Marcellinus, still at Carthage, where Coelestius had been brought to trial, wrote to Augustine at Hippo for written answers to important questions connected with the Pelagian heresy, speaks volumes for the prominent position he had already assumed in the controversy. The questions that were sent, concerned the connection of death with sin, the transmission of sin, the possibility of a sinless life, and especially infants' need of baptism. Augustine was immersed in abundant labours when they reached him: but he could not resist this appeal, and that the less as the Pelagian controversy had already grown to a place of the first importance in his eyes. The result was his treatise, *On the Merits and Remission of Sins and on the Baptism of Infants*, consisting of two books, and written in 412. The first book of this work is an argument for original sin, drawn from the universal reign of death in the world (2-8), from the teaching of Rom. v. 12-21 (9-20), and chiefly from the baptism of infants (21-70). It opens by exploding the Pelagian contention that death is of nature, and Adam would have died even had he not sinned, by showing that the penalty threatened to Adam included physical death (Gen. iii. 19), and that it is due to him that we all die (Rom. viii. 10, 11; I Cor. xv. 21) (2-8). Then the Pelagian assertion that we are injured in Adam's sin only by its bad example, which we imitate, not by any propagation from it, is tested by an exposition of Rom. v. 12 sq. (9-20). And then the main subject of the book is reached, and the writer sharply presses the Pelagians with the universal and primeval fact of the baptism of infants, as a proof of original sin (21-70). He tracks out all their subterfuges—showing the absurdity of the assertions that infants are baptized for the remission of sins that they have themselves committed since birth (22), or in order to obtain a higher

stage of salvation (23-28), or because of sin committed in some previous state of existence (31-33). Then turning to the positive side, he shows at length that the Scriptures teach that Christ came to save sinners, that baptism is for the remission of sins, and that all that partake of it are confessedly sinners (34 sq.); then he points out that John ii. 7, 8, on which the Pelagians relied, cannot be held to distinguish between ordinary salvation and a higher form, under the name of "the kingdom of God" (58 sq.); and he closes by showing that the very manner in which baptism was administered, with its exorcism and exsufflation, implied the infant to be a sinner (63), and by suggesting that the peculiar helplessness of infancy, so different not only from the earliest age of Adam, but also from that of many young animals, may possibly be itself penal (64-69). The second book treats, with similar fulness, the question of the perfection of human righteousness in this life. After an exordium which speaks of the will and its limitations, and of the need of God's assisting grace (1-6), the writer raises four questions. First, whether it may be said to be possible, by God's grace, for a man to attain a condition of entire sinlessness in this life (7). This he answers in the affirmative. Secondly, he asks, whether any one has ever done this, or may ever be expected to do it, and answers in the negative on the testimony of Scripture (8-25). Thirdly, he asks why not, and replies briefly because men are unwilling, explaining at length what he means by this (26-33). Finally, he inquires whether any man has ever existed, exists now, or will ever exist, entirely without sin—this question differing from the second inasmuch as that asked after the attainment in this life of a state in which sinning should cease, while this seeks a man who has never been guilty of sin, implying the absence of original as well as of actual sin. After answering this in the negative (34), Augustine discusses anew the question of original sin. Here after expounding from the positive side (35-38) the condition of man in paradise, the nature of his probation, and of the fall and its

effects both on him and his posterity, and the kind of redemption that has been provided in the incarnation, he proceeds to answer certain cavils (39 sq.), such as, "Why should children of baptized people need baptism?"-"How can a sin be remitted to the father and held against the child?"-"If physical death comes from Adam, ought we not to be released from it on believing in Christ?"-and concludes with an exhortation to hold fast to the exact truth, turning neither to the right nor left—neither saying that we have no sin, nor surrendering ourselves to our sin (57 sq.).

After these books were completed, Augustine came into possession of Pelagius' *Commentary on Paul's Epistles*, which was written while he was living in Rome (before 410), and found it to contain some arguments that he had not treated—such arguments, he tells us, as he had not imagined could be held by any one. Unwilling to re-open his finished argument, he now began a long supplementary letter to Marcellinus, which he intended to serve as a third and concluding book to his work. He was some time in completing this letter. He had asked to have the former two books returned to him; and it is a curious indication of his overworked state of mind, that he forgot what he wanted with them: he visited Carthage while the letter was in hand, and saw Marcellinus personally; and even after his return to Hippo, it dragged along, amid many distractions, slowly towards completion. Meanwhile, a long letter was written to Honoratus, in which a section on the grace of the New Testament was incorporated. At length the promised supplement was completed. It was professedly a criticism of Pelagius' *Commentary*, and therefore naturally mentioned his name; but Augustine even goes out of his way to speak as highly of his opponent as he can, -although it is apparent that his esteem is not very high for his strength of mind, and is even less high for the moral quality that led to his odd, oblique way of expressing his opinions. There is even a half sarcasm in the

way he speaks of Pelagius' care and circumspection, which was certainly justified by the event. The letter opens by stating and criticising in a very acute and telling dialectic, the new arguments of Pelagius, which were such as the following: "If Adam's sin injured even those who do not sin, Christ's righteousness ought likewise to profit even those who do not believe" (2-4); "No man can transmit what he has not; and hence, if baptism cleanses from sin, the children of baptized parents ought to be free from sin;" "God remits one's own sins, and can scarcely, therefore, impute another's to us; and if the soul is created, it would certainly be unjust to impute Adam's alien sin to it" (5). The stress of the letter, however, is laid upon two contentions—1. That whatever else may be ambiguous in the Scriptures, they are perfectly clear that no man can have eternal life except in Christ, who came to call sinners to repentance (7); and 2. That original sin in infants has always been, in the Church, one of the fixed facts, to be used as a basis of argument, in order to reach the truth in other matters, and has never itself been called in question before (10-14). At this point, the writer returns to the second and third of the new arguments of Pelagius mentioned above, and discusses them more fully (15-20), closing with a recapitulation of the three great points that had been raised; viz., that both death and sin are derived from Adam's sin by all his posterity; that infants need salvation, and hence baptism; and that no man ever attains in this life such a state of holiness that he cannot truly pray, "Forgive us our trespasses."

Augustine was now to learn that one service often entails another. Marcellinus wrote to say that he was puzzled by what had been said in the second book of this work, as to the possibility of man's attaining to sinlessness in this life, while yet it was asserted that no man ever had attained, or ever would attain, it. How, he asked, can that be said to be possible which is, and which will remain,

unexampled? In reply, Augustine wrote, during this same year (412), and sent to his noble friend, another work, which he calls *On the Spirit and the Letter*, from the prominence which he gives in it to the words of 2 Cor. iii. 6. He did not content himself with a simple, direct answer to Marcellinus' question, but goes at length into a profound disquisition into the roots of the doctrine, and thus gives us, not a mere explanation of a former contention, but a new treatise on a new subject—the absolute necessity of the grace of God for any good living. He begins by explaining to Marcellinus that he has affirmed the possibility while denying the actuality of a sinless life, on the ground that all things are possible to God—even the passage of a camel through the eye of a needle, which nevertheless has never occurred (1, 2). For, in speaking of man's perfection, we are speaking really of a work of God—and one which is none the less His work because it is wrought through the instrumentality of man, and in the use of his free will. The Scriptures, indeed, teach that no man lives without sin, but this is only the proclamation of a matter of fact; and although it is thus contrary to fact and Scripture to assert that men may be found that live sinlessly, yet such an assertion would not be fatal heresy. What is unbearable, is that men should assert it to be possible for man, unaided by God, to attain this perfection. This is to speak against the grace of God: it is to put in man's power what is only possible to the almighty grace of God (3, 4). No doubt, even these men do not, in so many words, exclude the aid of grace in perfecting human life—they affirm God's help; but they make it consist in His gift to man of a perfectly free will, and in His addition to this of commandments and teachings which make known to him what he is to seek and what to avoid, and so enable him to direct his free will to what is good. What, however, does such a "grace" amount to? (5). Man needs something more than to know the right way: he needs to love it, or he will not walk in it; and all mere teaching, which can do nothing more than bring us knowledge of what we ought to

do, is but the letter that killeth. What we need is some inward, Spirit-given aid to the keeping of what by the law we know ought to be kept. Mere knowledge slays: while to lead a holy life is the gift of God—not only because He has given us will, nor only because He has taught us the right way, but because by the Holy Spirit He sheds love abroad in the hearts of all those whom He has predestinated, and will call and justify and glorify (Rom. viii. 29, 30). To prove this, he states to be the object of the present treatise; and after investigating the meaning of 2 Cor. iii. 6, and showing that "the letter" there means the law as a system of precepts, which reveals sin rather than takes it away, points out the way rather than gives strength to walk in it, and therefore slays the soul by shutting it up under sin—while "the Spirit" is God's Holy Ghost who is shed abroad in our hearts to give us strength to walk aright—he undertakes to prove this position from the teachings of the Epistle to the Romans at large. This contention, it will be seen, cut at the very roots of Pelagianism: if all mere teaching slays the soul, as Paul asserts, then all that what they called "grace" could, when alone, do, was to destroy; and the upshot of "helping" man by simply giving him free will, and pointing out the way to him, would be the loss of the whole race. Not that the law is sin: Augustine teaches that it is holy and good, and God's instrument in salvation. Not that free will is done away: it is by free will that men are led into holiness. But the purpose of the law (he teaches) is to make men so feel their lost estate as to seek the help by which alone they may be saved; and will is only then liberated to do good when grace has made it free. "What the law of works enjoins by menace, that the law of faith secures by faith. What the law of works does is to say, 'Do what I command thee;' but by the law of faith we say to God, 'Give me what thou commandest.'" (22). In the midst of this argument, Augustine is led to discuss the differentiating characteristics of the Old and New Testaments; and he expounds at length (33-42) the passage in Jer. xxxi. 31-34, showing that, in the

prophet's view, the difference between the two covenants is that in the Old, the law is an external thing written on stones; while in the New, it is written internally on the heart, so that men now wish to do what the law prescribes. This writing on the heart is nothing else, he explains, than the shedding abroad by the Holy Spirit of love in our hearts, so that we love God's will, and therefore freely do it. Towards the end of the treatise (50-61), he treats in an absorbingly interesting way of the mutual relations of free will, faith, and grace, contending that all co-exist without the voiding of any. It is by free will that we believe; but it is only as grace moves us, that we are able to use our free will for believing; and it is only after we are thus led by grace to believe, that we obtain all other goods. In prosecuting this analysis, Augustine is led to distinguish very sharply between the faculty and use of free will (58), as well as between ability and volition (53). Faith is an act of the man himself; but only as he is given the power from on high to will to believe, will he believe (57, 60).

By this work, Augustine completed, in his treatment of Pelagianism, the circle of that triad of doctrines which he himself looked upon as most endangered by this heresy, - original sin, the imperfection of human righteousness, the necessity of grace. In his mind, the last was the kernel of the whole controversy; and this was a subject which he could never approach without some heightened fervour. This accounts for the great attractiveness of the present work—through the whole fabric of which runs the golden thread of the praise of God's ineffable grace. In Canon Bright's opinion, it "perhaps, next to the 'Confessions,' tells us most of the thoughts of that 'rich, profound, and affectionate mind' on the soul's relations to its God."

After the publication of these treatises, the controversy certainly did not lull; but it relapsed for nearly three years again, into less public courses. Meanwhile, Augustine was busy, among other most



distracting cares (Ep. 145, 1), still defending the grace of God, by letters and sermons. A fair illustration of his state of mind at this time, may be obtained from his letter to Anastasius (145), which assuredly must have been written soon after the treatise *On the Spirit and the Letter*. Throughout this letter, there are adumbrations of the same train of thought that filled this treatise; and there is one passage which may almost be taken as a summary of it. Augustine is so weary of the vexatious cares that filled his life, that he is ready to long for the everlasting rest, and yet bewails the weakness which allowed the sweetness of external things still to insinuate itself into his heart. Victory over, and emancipation from, this, he asserts, "cannot, without God's grace, be achieved by the human will, which is by no means to be called free so long as it is subject to enslaving lusts." Then he proceeds: "The law, therefore, by teaching and commanding what cannot be fulfilled without grace, demonstrates to man his weakness, in order that the weakness, thus proved, may resort to the Saviour, by whose healing the will may be able to do what it found impossible in its weakness. So, then, the law brings us to faith, faith obtains the Spirit in fuller measure, the Spirit sheds love abroad in us, and love fulfils the law. For this reason the law is called a schoolmaster, under whose threatening and severity 'whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered.' But 'how shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?' Wherefore, that the letter without the Spirit may not kill, the life-giving Spirit is given to those that believe and call upon Him; but the love of God is poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us, so that the words of the same apostle, 'Love is the fulfilling of the law,' may be realized. Thus the law is good to him that uses it lawfully; and he uses it lawfully, who, understanding wherefore it was given, betakes himself, under the pressure of its threatening, to liberating grace. Whoever ungratefully despises this grace by which the ungodly is justified, and trusts in his own strength

for fulfilling the law, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish his own righteousness, is not submitting himself to the righteousness of God; and therefore the law is made to him not a help to pardon, but the bond of guilt; not because the law is evil, but because 'sin,' as it is written, 'works death to such persons by that which is good.' For by the commandment, he sins more grievously, who, by the commandment, knows how evil are the sins which he commits." Although Augustine states clearly that this letter is written against those "who arrogate too much to the human will, imagining that, the law being given, the will is, of its own strength, sufficient to fulfil the law, though not assisted by any grace imparted by the Holy Ghost, in addition to instruction in the law,"-he refrains still from mentioning the names of the authors of this teaching, evidently out of a lingering tenderness in his treatment of them. This will help us to explain the courtesy of a note which he sent to Pelagius himself at about this time, in reply to a letter he had received some time before from him; of which Pelagius afterwards (at the Synod of Diospolis) made, to say the least of it, an ungenerous use. This note, Augustine tells us, was written with "tempered praises" (wherewith we see his lessening respect for the man), and so as to admonish Pelagius to think rightly concerning grace—so far as could be done without raising the dregs of the controversy in a formal note. This he accomplished by praying from the Lord for him, those good things by which he might be good forever, and might live eternally with Him who is eternal; and by asking his prayers in return, that he, too, might be made by the Lord such as he seemed to suppose he already was. How Augustine could really intend these prayers to be understood as an admonition to Pelagius to look to God for what he was seeking to work out for himself, is fully illustrated by the closing words of this almost contemporary letter to Anastasius: "Pray, therefore, for us," he writes, "that we may be righteous—an attainment wholly beyond a man's reach, unless he know

righteousness, and be willing to practise it, but one which is immediately realized when he is perfectly willing; but this cannot be in him unless he is healed by the grace of the Spirit, and aided to be able." The point had already been made in the controversy, that, by the Pelagian doctrine, so much power was attributed to the human will, that no one ought to pray, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil."

If he was anxious to avoid personal controversy with Pelagius himself in the hope that he might even yet be reclaimed, Augustine was equally anxious to teach the truth on all possible occasions. Pelagius had been intimate, when at Rome, with the pious Paulinus, bishop of Nola; and it was understood that there was some tendency at Nola to follow the new teachings. It was, perhaps, as late as 414, when Augustine made reply in a long letter, to a request of Paulinus' for an exposition of certain difficult Scriptures, which had been sent him about 410. Among them was Rom. xi. 28; and, in explaining it, Augustine did not withhold a tolerably complete account of his doctrine of predestination, involving the essence of his whole teaching as to grace: "For when he had said, 'according to the election they are beloved for their father's sake,' he added, 'for the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.' You see that those are certainly meant who belong to the number of the predestinated.... 'Many indeed are called, but few chosen;' but those who are elect, these are called 'according to His purpose;' and it is beyond doubt that in them God's foreknowledge cannot be deceived. These He foreknew and predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that He might be the first born among many brethren. But 'whom He predestinated, them He also called.' This calling is 'according to His purpose,' this calling is 'without repentance,' "etc., quoting Rom. v. 28-31. Then continuing, he says, "Those are not in this vocation, who do not persevere unto the end in

the faith that worketh by love, although they walk in it a little while.... But the reason why some belong to it, and some do not, can easily be hidden, but cannot be unjust. For is there injustice with God? God forbid! For this belongs to those high judgments which, so to say, terrified the wondering apostle to look upon."

Among the most remarkable of the controversial sermons that were preached about this time, especial mention is due to two that were delivered at Carthage, midsummer of 413. The former of these was preached on the festival of John the Baptist's birth (June 24), and naturally took the forerunner for its subject. The nativity of John suggesting the nativity of Christ, the preacher spoke of the marvel of the incarnation. He who was in the beginning, and was the Word of God, and was Himself God, and who made all things, and in whom was life, even this one "came to us. To whom? To the worthy? Nay, but to the unworthy! For Christ died for the ungodly, and for the unworthy, though He was worthy. We indeed were unworthy whom He pitied; but He was worthy who pitied us, to whom we say, 'For Thy pity's sake, Lord, free us!' Not for the sake of our preceding merits, but 'for Thy pity's sake, Lord, free us;' and 'for Thy name's sake be propitious to our sins,' not for our merit's sake.... For the merit of sins is, of course, not reward, but punishment." He then dwelt upon the necessity of the incarnation, and the necessity of a mediator between God and "the whole mass of the human race alienated from Him by Adam." Then quoting I Cor. iv. 7, he asserts that it is not our varying merits, but God's grace alone, that makes us differ, and that we are all alike, great and small, old and young, saved by one and the same Saviour. "What then, some one says," he continues, "even the infant needs a liberator? Certainly he needs one. And the witness to it is the mother that faithfully runs to church with the child to be baptized. The witness is Mother Church herself, who receives the child for washing, and either for dismissing him [from

this life] freed, or nurturing him in piety.... Last of all, the tears of his own misery are witness in the child himself.... Recognize the misery, extend the help. Let all put on bowels of mercy. By as much as they cannot speak for themselves, by so much more pityingly let us speak for the little ones,"-and then follows a passage calling on the Church to take the grace of infants in their charge as orphans committed to their care, which is in substance repeated from a former sermon. The speaker proceeded to quote Matt. i. 21, and apply it. If Jesus came to save from sins, and infants are brought to Him, it is to confess that they, too, are sinners. Then, shall they be withheld from baptism? "Certainly, if the child could speak for himself, he would repel the voice of opposition, and cry out, `Give me Christ's life! In Adam I died: give me Christ's life; in whose sight I am not clean, even if I am an infant whose life has been but one day in the earth.' ""No way can be found," adds the preacher, "of coming into the life of this world except by Adam; no way can be found of escaping punishment in the next world except by Christ. Why do you shut up the one door?" Even John the Baptist himself was born in sin; and absolutely no one can be found who was born apart from sin, until you find one who was born apart from Adam. "`By one man sin entered into the world, and by sin, death; and so it passed through upon all men.' If these were my words, could this sentiment be expressed more expressly, more clearly, more fully?"

Three days afterwards, on the invitation of the Bishop of Carthage, Augustine preached a sermon professedly directed against the Pelagians, which takes up the threads hinted at in the former discourse, and develops a full polemic with reference to the baptism of infants. He began, formally enough, with the determination of the question in dispute. The Pelagians concede that infants should be baptized. The only question is, for what are they baptized? We say that they would not otherwise have salvation and eternal life; but

they say it is not for salvation, not for eternal life, but for the kingdom of God.... "The child, they say, although not baptized, by the desert of his innocence, in that he has no sin at all, either actual or original, either from him self or contracted from Adam, necessarily has salvation and eternal life even if not baptized; but is to be baptized for this reason—that he may enter into the kingdom of God, i.e., into the kingdom of heaven." He then shows that there is no eternal life outside the kingdom of heaven, no middle place between the right and left hand of the judge at the last day, and that, therefore, to exclude one from the kingdom of God is to consign him to the pains of eternal fire; while, on the other side, no one ascends into heaven unless he has been made a member of Christ, and this can only be by faith—which, in an infant's case, is professed by another in his stead. He then treats, at length, some of the puzzling questions with which the Pelagians were wont to try the catholics; and then breaking off suddenly, he took a volume in his hands. "I ask you," he said, "to bear with me a little: I will read somewhat. It is St. Cyprian whom I hold in my hand, the ancient bishop of this see. What he thought of the baptism of infants—nay, what he has shown that the Church always thought—learn in brief. For it is not enough for them to dispute and argue, I know not what impious novelties: they even try to charge us with asserting something novel. It is on this account that I read here St. Cyprian, in order that you may perceive that the orthodox understanding and catholic sense reside in the words which I have been just now speaking to you. He was asked whether an infant ought to be baptized before he was eight days old, seeing that by the ancient law no infant was allowed to be circumcised unless he was eight days old. A question arose from this as to the day of baptism—for concerning the origin of sin there was no question; and therefore from this thing of which there was no question, that question that had arisen was settled." And then he read to them the passage out of Cyprian's letter to Fidus, which

declared that he, and all the council with him, unanimously thought that infants should be baptized at the earliest possible age, lest they should die in their inherited sin, and so pass into eternal punishment. The sermon closed with a tender warning to the teachers of these strange doctrines: he might call them heretics with truth, but he will not; let the Church seek still their salvation, and not mourn them as dead; let them be exhorted as friends, not striven with as enemies. "They disparage us," he says, "we will bear it; let them not disparage the rule [of faith], let them not disparage the truth; let them not contradict the Church, which labours every day for the remission of infants' original sin. This thing is settled. The errant disputer may be borne with in other questions that have not been thoroughly canvassed, that are not yet settled by the full authority of the Church—their error should be borne with: it ought not to extend so far, that they endeavour to shake even the very foundation of the Church!" He hints that although the patience hitherto exhibited towards them is "perhaps not blameworthy," yet patience may cease to be a virtue, and become culpable negligence: in the mean time, however, he begs that the catholics should continue amicable, fraternal, placid, loving, long suffering.

Augustine himself gives us a view of the progress of the controversy at this time in a letter written in 414. The Pelagians had everywhere scattered the seeds of their new error; and although some, by his ministry and that of his brother workers, had, "by God's mercy," been cured of their pest, yet they still existed in Africa, especially about Carthage, and were everywhere propagating their opinions in subterraneous whispers, for fear of the judgment of the Church. Wherever they were not refuted, they were seducing others to their following; and they were so spread abroad that he did not know where they would break out next. Nevertheless, he was still unwilling to brand them as heretics, and was more desirous of healing them as

sick members of the Church than of cutting them off finally as too diseased for cure. Jerome also tells us that the poison was spreading in both the East and the West, and mentions particularly as seats where it showed itself the islands of Rhodes and Sicily. Of Rhodes we know nothing further; but from Sicily an appeal came to Augustine in 414 from one Hilary, setting forth that there were certain Christians about Syracuse who taught strange doctrines, and beseeching Augustine to help him in dealing with them. The doctrines were enumerated as follows: "They say (1) that man can be without sin, (2) and can easily keep the commandments of God if he will; (3) that an unbaptized infant, if he is cut off by death, cannot justly perish, since he is born without sin; (4) that a rich man that remains in his riches cannot enter the kingdom of God, except he sell all that he has;... (5 ) that we ought not to swear at all;" (6) and, apparently, that the Church is to be in this world without spot or blemish. Augustine suspected that these Sicilian disturbances were in some way the work of Coelestius, and therefore in his answer informs his correspondent of what had been done at the Synod of Carthage (412) against him. The long letter that he sent back follows the inquiries in the order they were put by Hilary. To the first he replies, in substance, as he had treated the same matter in the second book of the treatise, *On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins* , that it was opposed to Scripture, but was less a heresy than the wholly unbearable opinion that this state of sinlessness could be attained without God's help. "But when they say that free will suffices to man for fulfilling the precepts of the Lord, even though unaided to good works by God's grace and the gift of the Holy Spirit, it is to be altogether anathematized and detested with all execrations. For those who assert this are inwardly alien from God's grace, because being ignorant of God's righteousness, like the Jews of whom the apostle speaks, and wishing to establish their own, they are not subject to God's righteousness, since there is no fulfilment of the law



except love; and of course the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, not by ourselves, nor by the force of our own will, but by the Holy Ghost who is given to us." Dealing next with the second point, he drifts into the matter he had more fully developed in his work *On the Spirit and the Letter*. "Free will avails for God's works," he says, "if it be divinely aided, and this comes by humble seeking and doing; but when deserted by divine aid, no matter how excellent may be its knowledge of the law, it will by no means possess solidity of righteousness, but only the inflation of ungodly pride and deadly arrogance. This is taught us by that same Lord's Prayer; for it would be an empty thing for us to ask God 'Lead us not into temptation,' if the matter was so placed in our power that we would avail for fulfilling it without any aid from Him. For this free will is free in proportion as it is sound, but it is sound in proportion as it is subject to divine pity and grace. For it faithfully prays, saying, 'Direct my ways according to Thy word, and let no iniquity reign over me.' For how is that free over which iniquity reigns? But see who it is that is invoked by it, in order that it may not reign over it. For it says not, 'Direct my ways according to free will because no iniquity shall rule over me,' but 'Direct my ways according to Thy *word*, and let no iniquity rule over me .' It is a prayer, not a promise; it is a confession, not a profession; it is a wish for full freedom, not a boast of personal power. For it is not every one 'who confides in his own power,' but 'every one who calls on the name of God, that shall be saved.' 'But how shall they call upon Him,' he says, 'in whom they have not believed?' Accordingly, then, they who rightly believe, believe in order to call on Him in whom they have believed, and to avail for doing what they receive in the precepts of the law; since what the law commands, faith prays for." "God, therefore, commands continence, and gives continence; He commands by the law, He gives by grace; He commands by the letter, He gives by the spirit: for the law without grace makes the transgression to abound, and the letter

without the spirit kills. He commands for this reason—that we who have endeavoured to do what He commands, and are worn out in our weakness under the law, may know how to ask for the aid of grace; and if we have been able to do any good work, that we may not be ungrateful to Him who aids us." The answer to the third point traverses the ground that was fully covered in the first book of the treatise *On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins* , beginning by opposing the Pelagians to Paul in Rom. v. 12-19: "But when they say that an infant, cut off by death, unbaptized, cannot perish since he is born without sin—it is not this that the apostle says; and I think that it is better to believe the apostle than them." The fourth and fifth questions were new in this controversy; and it is not certain that they belong properly to it, though the legalistic asceticism of the Pelagian leaders may well have given rise to a demand on all Christians to sell what they had, and give to the poor. This one of the points, Augustine treats at length, pointing out that many of the saints of old were rich, and that the Lord and His apostles always so speak that their counsels avail to the right use, not the destruction, of wealth. Christians ought so to hold their wealth that they are not held by it, and by no means prefer it to Christ. Equal good sense and mildness are shown in his treatment of the question concerning oaths, which he points out were used by the Lord and His apostles, but advises to be used as little as possible lest by the custom of frequent oaths we learn to swear lightly. The question as to the Church, he passes over as having been sufficiently treated in the course of his previous remarks.

To the number of those who had been rescued from Pelagianism by his efforts, Augustine was now to have the pleasure of adding two others, in whom he seems to have taken much delight. Timasius and James were two young men of honorable birth and liberal education, who had, by the exhortation of Pelagius, been moved to give up the

hope that they had in this world, and enter upon the service of God in an ascetic life. Naturally, they had turned to him for instruction, and had received a book to which they had given their study. They met somewhere with some of Augustine's writings, however, and were deeply affected by what he said as to grace, and now began to see that the teaching of Pelagius opposed the grace of God by which man becomes a Christian. They gave their book, therefore, to Augustine, saying that it was Pelagius', and asking him for Pelagius' sake, and for the sake of the truth, to answer it. This was done, and the resulting book, *On Nature and Grace*, sent to the young men, who returned a letter of thanks in which they professed their conversion from their error. In this book, too, which was written in 415, Augustine refrained from mentioning Pelagius by name, feeling it better to spare the man while not sparing his writings. But he tells us, that, on reading the book of Pelagius to which it was an answer, it became clear to him beyond any doubt that his teaching was distinctly anti-Christian; and when speaking of his own book privately to a friend, he allows himself to call it "a considerable book against *the heresy* of Pelagius, which he had been constrained to write by some brethren whom he had persuaded to adopt his fatal error, denying the grace of Christ." Thus his attitude towards the persons of the new teachers was becoming ever more and more strained, in despite of his full recognition of the excellent motives that might lie behind their "zeal not according to knowledge." This treatise opens with a recognition of the zeal of Pelagius, which, as it burns most ardently against those who, when reproved for sin, take refuge in censuring their nature, Augustine compares with the heathen view as expressed in Sallust's saying, "the human race falsely complains of its own nature," and which he charges with not being according to knowledge, and proposes to oppose by an equal zeal against all attempts to render the cross of Christ of none effect. He then gives a brief but excellent summary of the more important

features of the catholic doctrine concerning nature and grace (2-7). Opening the work of Pelagius, which had been placed in his hands, he examines his doctrine of sin, its nature and effects. Pelagius, he points out, draws a distinction, sound enough in itself, between what is "possible" and what is "actual," but applies it unsoundly to sin, when he says that every man has the *possibility* of being without sin (8-9), and therefore without condemnation. Not so, says Augustine; an infant who dies unbaptized has no possibility of salvation open to him; and the man who has lived and died in a land where it was impossible for him to hear the name of Christ, has had no possibility open to him of becoming righteous by nature and free will. If this be not so, Christ is dead in vain, since all men then might have accomplished their salvation, even if Christ had never died (10). Pelagius, moreover, he shows, exhibits a tendency to deny the sinful character of all sins that are impossible to avoid, and so treats of sins of ignorance as to show that he excuses them (13-19). When he argues that no sin, because it is not a substance, can change nature, which is a substance, Augustine replies that this destroys the Saviour's work—for how can He save from sins if sins do not corrupt? And, again, if an act cannot injure a substance, how can abstention from food, which is a mere act, kill the body? In the same way sin is not a substance; but God is a substance—yea, the height of substance, and only true sustenance of the reasonable creature; and the consequence of departure from Him is to the soul what refusal of food is to the body (22). To Pelagius' assertion that sin cannot be punished by more sin, Augustine replies that the apostle thinks differently (Rom. i. 21-31). Then putting his finger on the main point in controversy, he quotes the Scriptures as declaring the present condition of man to be that of spiritual death. "The truth then designates as *dead* those whom this man declares to be unable to be damaged or corrupted by sin—because, forsooth, he has discovered sin to be no substance!" (25). It was by free will that man passed into

this state of death; but a dead man needs something else to revive him—he needs nothing less than a Vivifier. But of vivifying grace, Pelagius knew nothing; and by knowing nothing of a Vivifier, he knows nothing of a Saviour; but rather by making nature of itself able to be sinless, he glorifies the Creator at the expense of the Saviour (39). Next is examined Pelagius' contention that many saints are enumerated in the Scriptures as having lived sinlessly in this world. While declining to discuss the question of fact as to the Virgin Mary (42), Augustine opposes to the rest the declaration of John in I John i. 8, as final, but still pauses to explain why the Scriptures do not mention the sins of all, and to contend that all who ever were saved under the Old Testament or the New, were saved by the sacrificial death of Christ, and by faith in Him (40-50). Thus we are brought, as Augustine says, to the core of the question, which concerns, not the fact of sinlessness in any man, but man's ability to be sinless. This ability Pelagius affirms of all men, and Augustine denies of all "unless they are justified by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (51). Thus, the whole discussion is about grace, which Pelagius does not admit in any true sense, but places only in the nature that God has made (52). We are next invited to attend to another distinction of Pelagius', in which he discriminates sharply between the nature that God has made, the crown of which is free will, and the use that man makes of this free will. The endowment of free will is a "capacity;" it is, because given by God in our making, a necessity of nature, and not in man's power to have or not have. It is the right use of it only, which man has in his power. This analysis, Pelagius illustrates at length, by appealing to the difference between the possession and use of the various bodily senses. The ability to see, for instance, he says, is a necessity of our nature; we do not make it, we cannot help having it; it is ours only to use it. Augustine criticises this presentation of the matter with great sharpness (although he is not averse to the analysis itself)—showing

the inapplicability of the illustrations used—for, he asks, is it not possible for us to blind ourselves, and so no longer have the ability to see? and would not many a man like to control the "use" of his "capacity" to hear when a screechy saw is in the neighbourhood? (55); and as well the falsity of the contention illustrated, since Pelagius has ignored the fall, and, even were that not so, has so ignored the need of God's aid for all good, in any state of being, as to deny it (56). Moreover, it is altogether a fallacy, Augustine argues, to contend that men have the "ability" to make every use we can conceive of our faculties. We *cannot* wish for unhappiness; God *cannot* deny Himself (57); and just so, in a corrupt nature, the mere possession of a *faculty of choice* does not imply the ability to use that faculty for not sinning. "Of a man, indeed, who has his legs strong and sound, it may be said admissibly enough, 'whether he will or not, he has the capacity of walking;' but if his legs be broken, however much he may wish, he has not the 'capacity.' The nature of which our author speaks is corrupted" (57). What, then, can he mean by saying that, whether we will or not, we have the capacity of not sinning—a statement so opposite to Paul's in Rom. vii. 15? Some space is next given to an attempted rebuttal by Pelagius of the testimony of Gal. v. 17, on the ground that the "flesh" there does not refer to the baptized (60-70); and then the passages are examined which Pelagius had quoted against Augustine out of earlier writers—Lactantius (71), Hilary (72), Ambrose (75), John of Constantinople (76), Xystus—a blunder of Pelagius, who quoted from a Pythagorean philosopher, mistaking him for the Roman bishop Sixtus (57), Jerome (78), and Augustine himself (80). All these writers, Augustine shows, admitted the universal sinfulness of man—and especially he himself had confessed the necessity of grace in the immediate context of the passage quoted by Pelagius. The treatise closes (82 sq.) with a noble panegyric on that love which God sheds

abroad in the heart, by the Holy Ghost, and by which alone we can be made keepers of the law.

The treatise *On Nature and Grace* was as yet unfinished, when the over-busy scriptorium at Hippo was invaded by another young man seeking instruction. This time it was a zealous young presbyter from the remotest part of Spain, "from the shore of the ocean,"—Paulus Orosius by name, whose pious soul had been afflicted with grievous wounds by the Priscillianist and Origenist heresies that had broken out in his country, and who had come with eager haste to Augustine, on hearing that he could get from him the instruction which he needed for confuting them. Augustine seems to have given him his heart at once; and, feeling too little informed as to the special heresies which he wished to be prepared to controvert, persuaded him to go on to Palestine to be taught by Jerome, and gave him introductions which described him as one "who is in the bond of catholic peace a brother, in point of age a son, and in honour a fellow-presbyter—a man of quick understanding, ready speech, and burning zeal." His departure to Palestine gave Augustine an opportunity to consult with Jerome on the one point that had been raised in the Pelagian controversy on which he had not been able to see light. The Pelagians had early argued, that, if souls are created anew for men at their birth, it would be unjust in God to impute Adam's sin to them. And Augustine found himself unable either to prove that souls are transmitted ( *traduced* , as the phrase is), or to show that it would not involve God in injustice to make a soul only to make it subject to a sin committed by another. Jerome had already put himself on record as a believer in both original sin and the creation of souls at the time of birth. Augustine feared the logical consequences of this assertion, and yet was unable to refute it. He therefore seized this occasion to send a long treatise on the origin of the soul to his friend, with the request that he would consider the

subject anew, and answer his doubts. In this treatise he stated that he was fully persuaded that the soul had fallen into sin, but by no fault of God or of nature, but of its own free will; and asked when could the soul of an infant have contracted the guilt, which, unless the grace of Christ should come to its rescue by baptism, would involve it in condemnation, if God (as Jerome held, and as he was willing to hold with him, if this difficulty could be cleared up) makes each soul for each individual at the time of birth? He professed himself embarrassed on such a supposition by the penal sufferings of infants, the pains they endured in this life, and much more the danger they are in of eternal damnation, into which they actually go unless saved by baptism. God is good, just, omnipotent: how, then, can we account for the fact that "in Adam all die," if souls are created afresh for each birth? "If new souls are made for men," he affirms, "individually at their birth, I do not see, on the one hand, that they could have any sin while yet in infancy; nor do I believe, on the other hand, that God condemns any soul which He sees to have no sin;" "and yet, whoever says that those children who depart out of this life without partaking of the sacrament of baptism, shall be made alive in Christ, certainly contradicts the apostolic declaration," and "he that is not made alive in Christ must necessarily remain under the condemnation of which the apostle says that by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." "Wherefore," he adds to his correspondent, "if that opinion of yours does not contradict this firmly grounded article of faith, let it be mine also; but if it does, let it no longer be yours." So far as obtaining light was concerned, Augustine might have spared himself the pain of this composition: Jerome simply answered that he had no leisure to reply to the questions submitted to him. But Orosius' mission to Palestine was big with consequences. Once there, he became the accuser of Pelagius before John of Jerusalem, and the occasion, at least, of the trials of Pelagius in Palestine during the summer and winter of 415



which issued so disastrously, and ushered in a new phase of the conflict.

Meanwhile, however, Augustine was ignorant of what was going on in the East, and had his mind directed again to Sicily. About a year had passed since he had sent thither his long letter to Hilary. Now his conjecture that Coelestius was in some way at the bottom of the Sicilian outbreak, received confirmation from a paper which certain catholic brethren brought out of Sicily, and which was handed to Augustine by two exiled Spanish bishops, Eutropius and Paul. This paper bore the title, *Definitions Ascribed to Coelestius*, and presented internal evidence, in style and thought, of being correctly so ascribed. It consisted of three parts, in the first of which were collected a series of brief and compressed "definitions," or "ratiocinations" as Augustine calls them, in which the author tries to place the catholics in a logical dilemma, and to force them to admit that man can live in this world without sin. In the second part, he adduced certain passages of Scripture in defence of his doctrine. In the third part, he undertook to deal with the texts that had been quoted against his contention, not, however, by examining into their meaning, or seeking to explain them in the sense of his theory, but simply by matching them with others which he thought made for him. Augustine at once (about the end of 415) wrote a treatise in answer to this, which bears the title of *On the Perfection of Man's Righteousness*. The distribution of the matter in this work follows that of the treatise to which it is an answer. First of all (1-16), the "ratiocinations" are taken up one by one and briefly answered. As they all concern sin, and have for their object to prove that man cannot be accounted a sinner unless he is able, in his own power, wholly to avoid sin—that is, to prove that a plenary natural ability is the necessary basis of responsibility—Augustine argues *per contra* that man can entail a sinfulness on himself for which and for the

deeds of which he remains responsible, though he is no longer able to avoid sin; thus admitting that for the race, plenary ability must stand at the root of sinfulness. Next (17-22) he discusses the passages which Coelestius had advanced in defence of his teachings, viz., (1) passages in which God commands men to be without sin, which Augustine meets by saying that the point is, whether these commands are to be fulfilled *without God's aid*, in the body of this death, while absent from the Lord (17-20); and (2) passages in which God declares that His commandments are not grievous, which Augustine meets by explaining that all God's commandments are fulfilled only by *Love*, which finds nothing grievous; and that this love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, without whom we have only fear, to which the commandments are not only grievous, but impossible. Lastly, Augustine patiently follows Coelestius through his odd "oppositions of texts," explaining carefully all that he had adduced, in an orthodox sense (23-42). In closing, he takes up Coelestius' statement, that "it is quite possible for man not to sin even in word, if God so will," pointing out how he avoids saying "if God give him His help," and then proceeds to distinguish carefully between the differing assertions of sinlessness that may be made. To say that any man ever lived, or will live, without needing forgiveness, is to contradict Rom. v. 12, and must imply that he does not need a Saviour, against Matt. ix. 12, 13. To say that after his sins have been forgiven, any one has ever remained without sin, contradicts I John i. 8 and Matt. vi. 12. Yet, if God's help be allowed, this contention is not so wicked as the other; and the great heresy is to deny the necessity of God's constant grace, for which we pray when we say, "Lead us not into temptation."

Tidings were now (416) beginning to reach Africa of what was doing in the East. There was diligently circulated everywhere, and came into Augustine's hands, an epistle of Pelagius' own "filled with

vanity," in which he boasted that fourteen bishops had approved his assertion that "man can live without sin, and easily keep the commandments if he wishes," and had thus "shut the mouth of opposition in confusion," and "broken up the whole band of wicked conspirators against him." Soon afterwards a copy of an "apologetical paper," in which Pelagius used the authority of the Palestinian bishops against his adversaries, not altogether without disingenuousness, was sent by him to Augustine through the hands of a common acquaintance, Charus by name. It was not accompanied, however, by any letter from Pelagius; and Augustine wisely refrained from making public use of it. Towards midsummer Orosius came with more authentic information, and bearing letters from Jerome and Heros and Lazarus. It was apparently before his coming that a controversial sermon was preached, only a fragment of which has come down to us. So far as we can learn from the extant part, its subject seems to have been the relation of prayer to Pelagianism; and what we have, opens with a striking anecdote: "When these two petitions-`Forgive us our debts as we also forgive our debtors,' and `Lead us not into temptation'-are objected to the Pelagians, what do you think they reply? I was horrified, my brethren, when I heard it. I did not, indeed, hear it with my own ears; but my holy brother and fellow-bishop Urbanus, who used to be presbyter here, and now is bishop of Sicca," when he was in Rome, and was arguing with one who held these opinions, pressed him with the weight of the Lord's Prayer, and "what do you think he replied to him? `We ask God,' he said, `not to lead us into temptation, lest we should suffer something that is not in our power—lest I should be thrown from my horse; lest I should break my leg; lest a robber should slay me, and the like. For these things,' he said, `are not in my power; but for overcoming the temptations of my sins, I both have ability if I wish to use it, and am not able to receive God's help.' You see, brethren," the good bishop adds, "how malignant this

heresy is: you see how it horrifies all of you. Have a care that you be not taken by it." He then presses the general doctrine of prayer as proving that all good things come from God, whose aid is always necessary to us, and is always attainable by prayer; and closes as follows: "Consider, then, these things, my brethren, when any one comes to you and says to you, 'What, then, are we to do if we have nothing in our power, unless God gives all things? God will not then crown us, but He will crown Himself.' You already see that this comes from that vein: it is a vein, but it has poison in it; it is stricken by the serpent; it is not sound. For what Satan is doing to-day is seeking to cast out from the Church by the poison of heretics, just as he once cast out from Paradise by the poison of the serpent. Let no one tell you that this one was acquitted by the bishops: there was an acquittal, but it was his confession, so to speak, his amendment, that was acquitted. For what he said before the bishops seemed catholic; but what he wrote in his books, the bishops who pronounced the acquittal were ignorant of. And perchance he was really convinced and amended. For we ought not to despair of the man who perchance preferred to be united to the catholic faith, and fled to its grace and aid. Perchance this was what happened. But, in any event, it was not the heresy that was acquitted, but the man who denied the heresy."

The coming of Orosius must have dispelled any lingering hope that the meaning of the council's finding was that Pelagius had really recanted. Councils were immediately assembled at Carthage and Mileve, and the documents which Orosius had brought were read before them. We know nothing of their proceedings except what we can gather from the letters which they sent to Innocent at Rome, seeking his aid in their condemnation of the heresy now so nearly approved in Palestine. To these two official letters, Augustine, in company with four other bishops, added a third private letter, in which they took care that Innocent should be informed on all the

points necessary to his decision. This important letter begins almost abruptly with a characterization of Pelagianism as inimical to the grace of God, and has grace for its subject throughout. It accounts for the action of the Palestinian synod, as growing out of a misunderstanding of Pelagius' words, in which he seemed to acknowledge grace, which these catholic bishops understood naturally to mean that grace of which they read in the Scriptures, and which they were accustomed to preach to their people—the grace by which we are justified from iniquity, and saved from weakness; while he meant nothing more than that by which we are given free will at our creation. "For if these bishops had understood that he meant only that grace which we have in common with the ungodly and with all, along with whom we are men, while he denied that by which we are Christians and the sons of God, they not only could not have patiently listened to him—they could not even have borne him before their eyes." The letter then proceeds to point out the difference between grace and natural gifts, and between grace and the law, and to trace out Pelagius' meaning when he speaks of grace, and when he contends that man can be sinless without any really inward aid. It suggests that Pelagius be sent for, and thoroughly examined by Innocent, or that he should be examined by letter or in his writings; and that he be not cleared until he unequivocally confessed the grace of God in the catholic sense, and anathematized the false teachings in the books attributed to him. The book of Pelagius which was answered in the treatise *On Nature and Grace* was enclosed, with this letter, with the most important passages marked: and it was suggested that more was involved in the matter than the fate of one single man, Pelagius, who, perhaps, was already brought to a better mind; the fate of multitudes already led astray, or yet to be deceived by these false views, was in danger.

At about this same time (417), the tireless bishop sent a short letter to a Hilary, who seems to be Hilary of Norbonne, which is interesting from its undertaking to convey a characterization of Pelagianism to one who was as yet ignorant of it. It thus brings out what Augustine conceived to be its essential features. "An effort has been made," we read, "to raise a certain new heresy, inimical to the grace of Christ, against the Church of Christ. It is not yet openly separated from the Church. It is the heresy of men who dare to attribute so much power to human weakness that they contend that this only belongs to God's grace—that we are created with free will and the possibility of not sinning, and that we receive God's commandments which are to be fulfilled by us; but, for keeping and fulfilling these commandments, we do not need any divine aid. No doubt, the remission of sins is necessary for us; for we have no power to right what we have done wrong in the past. But for avoiding and overcoming sins in the future, for conquering all temptations with virtue, the human will is sufficient by its natural capacity without any aid of God's grace. And neither do infants need the grace of the Saviour, so as to be liberated by it through His baptism from perdition, seeing that they have contracted no contagion of damnation from Adam." He engages Hilary in the destruction of this heresy, which ought to be "concordantly condemned and anathematized by all who have hope in Christ," as a "pestiferous impiety," and excuses himself for not undertaking its full refutation in a brief letter. A much more important letter was sent off, at about the same time, to John of Jerusalem, who had conducted the first Palestinian examination of Pelagius, and had borne a prominent part in the synod at Diospolis. He sent with it a copy of Pelagius' book which he had examined in his treatise *On Nature and Grace*, as well as a copy of that reply itself, and asked John to send him an authentic copy of the proceedings at Diospolis. He took this occasion seriously to warn his brother bishop against the wiles of Pelagius, and begged him, if he loved Pelagius, to

let men see that he did not so love him as to be deceived by him. He pointed out that in the book sent with the letter, Pelagius called nothing the grace of God except nature; and that he affirmed, and even vehemently contended, that by free will alone, human nature was able to suffice for itself for working righteousness and keeping all God's commandments; whence any one could see that he opposed the grace of God of which the apostles spoke in Rom. vii. 24, 25, and contradicted, as well, all the prayers and benedictions of the Church by which blessings were sought for men from God's grace. "If you love Pelagius, then," he continued, "let him, too, love you as himself—nay, more than himself; and let him not deceive you. For when you hear him confess the grace of God and the aid of God, you think he means what you mean by it. But let him be openly asked whether he desires that we should pray God that we sin not; whether he proclaims the assisting grace of God, without which we would do much evil; whether he believes that even children who have not yet been able to do good or evil are nevertheless, on account of one man by whom sin entered into the world, sinners in him, and in need of being delivered by the grace of Christ." If he openly denies such things, Augustine would be pleased to hear of it.

Thus we see the great bishop sitting in his library at Hippo, placing his hands on the two ends of the world. That nothing may be lacking to the picture of his universal activity, we have another letter from him, coming from about this same time, that exhibits his care for the individuals who had placed themselves in some sort under his tutelage. Among the refugees from Rome in the terrible times when Alaric was a second time threatening the city, was a family of noble women—Proba, Juliana, and Demetrias, -grandmother, mother, and daughter—who, finding an asylum in Africa, gave themselves to God's service, and sought the friendship and counsel of Augustine. In 413 the granddaughter "took the veil" under circumstances that

thrilled the Christian world, and brought out letters of congratulation and advice from Augustine and Jerome, and also from Pelagius. This letter of Pelagius seems not to have fallen into Augustine's way until now (416): he was so disturbed by it that he wrote to Juliana a long letter warning her against its evil counsels. It was so shrewdly phrased, that, at first sight, Augustine was himself almost persuaded that it did somehow acknowledge the grace of God; but when he compared it with others of Pelagius' writings, he saw that here, too, he was using ambiguous phrases in a non-natural sense. The object of his letter (in which Alypius is conjoined, as joint author) to Juliana is to warn her and her holy daughter against all opinions that opposed the grace of God, and especially against the covert teaching of the letter of Pelagius to Demetrias. "In this book," he says, "were it lawful for such an one to read it, a virgin of Christ would read that her holiness and all her spiritual riches are to spring from no other source than herself; and thus before she attains to the perfection of blessedness, she would learn—which may God forbid!—to be ungrateful to God." Then, after quoting the words of Pelagius, in which he declares that "earthly riches came from others, but your spiritual riches no one can have conferred on you but yourself; for these, then, you are justly praised, for these you are deservedly to be preferred to others—for they can exist only from yourself and in yourself," he continues: "Far be it from any virgin to listen to statements like these. Every virgin of Christ understands the innate poverty of the human heart, and therefore declines to be adorned otherwise than by the gifts of her spouse.... Let her not listen to him who says, 'No one can confer them on you but yourself, and they cannot exist except from you and in you:' but to him who says, 'We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.' And be not surprised that we speak of these things as yours, and not from you; for we speak of daily bread as 'ours,' but yet add 'give it to us,' lest it should be thought it was



from ourselves." Again, he warns her that grace is not mere knowledge any more than mere nature; and that Pelagius, even when using the word "grace," means no inward or efficient aid, but mere nature or knowledge or forgiveness of past sins; and beseeches her not to forget the God of all grace from whom (Wisdom i. 20, 21) Demetrias had that very virgin continence which was so justly her boast.

With the opening of 417, came the answers from Innocent to the African letters. And although they were marred by much boastful language concerning the dignity of his see, which could not but be distasteful to the Africans, they admirably served their purpose in the satisfactory manner in which they, on the one hand, asserted the necessity of the "daily grace, and help of God," for our good living, and, on the other, determined that the Pelagians had denied this grace, and declared their leaders Pelagius and Coelestius deprived of the communion of the Church until they should "recover their senses from the wiles of the Devil by whom they are held captive according to his will." Augustine may be pardoned for supposing that a condemnation pronounced by two provincial synods in Africa, and heartily concurred in by the Roman bishop, who had already at Jerusalem been recognized as in some sort the fit arbiter of this Western dispute, should settle the matter. If Pelagius had been before jubilant, Augustine found this a suitable time for his rejoicing.

About the same time with Innocent's letters, the official proceedings of the synod of Diospolis at last reached Africa, and Augustine lost no time (early in 417) in publishing a full account and examination of them, thus providing us with that inestimable boon, a full contemporary history of the chief events connected with the controversy up to this time. This treatise, which is addressed to Aurelius, bishop of Carthage, opens with a brief explanation of

Augustine's delay heretofore, in discussing Pelagius' defence of himself in Palestine, as due to his not having received the official copy of the Proceedings of the Council at Diospolis (1-2 *a* ). Then Augustine proceeds at once to discuss at length the doings of the synod, point by point, following the official record step by step (2 *b* -45). He treats at large here eleven items in the indictment, with Pelagius' answers and the synod's decision, showing that in all of them Pelagius either explained away his heresy, taking advantage of the ignorance of the judges of his books, or else openly repudiated or anathematized it. When the twelfth item of the indictment was reached (41 *b* -43), Augustine shows that the synod was so indignant at its character (it charged Pelagius with teaching that men cannot be sons of God unless they are sinless, and with condoning sins of ignorance, and with asserting that choice is not free if it depends on God's help, and that pardon is given according to merit), that, without waiting for Pelagius' answer, it condemned the statement, and Pelagius at once repudiated and anathematized it (43). How could the synod act in such circumstances, he asks, except by acquitting the man who condemned the heresy? After quoting the final judgment of the synod (44), Augustine briefly characterizes it and its effect (45) as being indeed all that could be asked of the judges, but of no moral weight to those better acquainted than they were with Pelagius' character and writings. In a word, they approved his answers to them, as indeed they ought to have done; but they by no means approved, but both they and he condemned, his heresies as expressed in his writings. To this statement, Augustine appends an account of the origin of Pelagianism, and of his relations to it from the beginning, which has the very highest value as history (46-49); and then speaks of the character and doubtful practices of Pelagius (50-58), returning at the end (59-65) to a thorough canvass of the value of the acquittal which he obtained by such doubtful practices at

the synod. He closes with an indignant account of the outrages which the Pelagians had perpetrated on Jerome (66).

This valuable treatise is not, however, the only account of the historical origin of Pelagianism that we have, from Augustine's hands. Soon after the death of Innocent (March 12, 417), he found occasion to write a very long letter to the venerable Paulinus of Nola, in which he summarized both the history of and the arguments against this "worldly philosophy." He begins by saying that he knows Paulinus has loved Pelagius as a servant of God, but is ignorant in what way he now loves him. For he himself not only has loved him, but loves him still, but in different ways. Once he loved him as apparently a brother in the true faith: now he loves him in the longing that God will by His mercy free him from his noxious opinions against God's grace. He is not merely following report in so speaking of him: no doubt report did for a long time represent this of him, but he gave the less heed to it because report is accustomed to lie. But a book of his at last came into his hands, which left no room for doubt, since in it he asserted repeatedly that God's grace consisted of the gift to man of the capacity to will and act, and thus reduced it to what is common to pagans and Christians, to the ungodly and godly, to the faithful and infidels. He then gives a brief account of the measures that had been taken against Pelagius, and passes on to a treatment of the main matters involved in the controversy—all of which gather around the one magic word of "the grace of God." He argues first that we are all lost—in one mass and concretion of perdition—and that God's grace alone makes us to differ. It is therefore folly to talk of deserving the beginnings of grace. Nor can a faithful man say that he merits justification by his faith, although it is given to faith; for at once he hears the words, "what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" and learns that even the deserving faith is the gift of God. But if, peering into God's

inscrutable judgments, we go farther, and ask why, from the mass of Adam, all of which undoubtedly has fallen from one into condemnation, this vessel is made for honor, that for dishonor—we can only say that we do not know more than the fact; and God's reasons are hidden, but His acts are just. Certain it is that Paul teaches that all die in Adam; and that God freely chooses, by a sovereign election, some out of that sinful mass, to eternal life; and that He knew from the beginning to whom He would give this grace, and so the number of the saints has always been fixed, to whom he gives in due time the Holy Ghost. Others, no doubt, are called; but no others are elect, or "called according to his purpose." On no other body of doctrines, can it be possibly explained that some infants die unbaptized, and are lost. Is God unjust to punish innocent children with eternal pains? And are they not innocent if they are not partakers of Adam's sin? And can they be saved from that, save by the undeserved, and that is the gratuitous, grace of God? The account of the Proceedings at the Palestinian synod is then taken up, and Pelagius' position in his latest writings is quoted and examined. "But why say more?" he adds.... "Ought they not, since they call themselves Christians, to be more careful than the Jews that they do not stumble at the stone of offence, while they subtly defend nature and free will just like philosophers of this world who vehemently strive to be thought, or to think themselves, to attain for themselves a happy life by the force of their own will? Let them take care, then, that they do not make the cross of Christ of none effect by the wisdom of word (I Cor. i. 17), and thus stumble at the rock of offence. For human nature, even if it had remained in that integrity in which it was created, could by no means have served its own Creator without His aid. Since then, without God's grace it could not keep the safety it had received, how can it without God's grace repair what it has lost?" With this profound view of the Divine immanence, and of the necessity of His moving grace in all the acts of all his creatures, as

over against the heathen-deistic view of Pelagius, Augustine touched in reality the deepest point in the whole controversy, and illustrated the essential harmony of all truth.

The sharpest period of the whole conflict was now drawing on. Innocent's death brought Zosimus to the chair of the Roman See, and the efforts which he made to re-instate Pelagius and Coelestius now began (September, 417). How little the Africans were likely to yield to his remarkable demands, may be seen from a sermon which Augustine preached on the 23d of September, while Zosimus' letter (written on the 21st of September) was on its way to Africa. The preacher took his text from John vi. 54-66. "We hear here," he said, "the true Master, the Divine Redeemer, the human Saviour, commending to us our ransom, His blood. He calls His body food, and His blood drink; and, in commending such food and drink, He says, 'Unless you eat My flesh, and drink My blood, ye shall have no life in you.' What, then, is this eating and drinking, but to live? Eat life, drink life; you shall have life, and life is whole. This will come—that is, the body and blood of Christ will be life to every one—if what is taken visibly in the sacrament is in real truth spiritually eaten and spiritually drunk. But that He might teach us that even to believe in Him is of gift, not of merit, He said, 'No one comes to Me, except the Father who sent Me draw him.' *Draw* him, not *lead* him. This violence is done to the *heart*, not the flesh. Why do you marvel? Believe, and you come; love, and you are drawn. Think not that this is harsh and injurious violence; it is soft, it is sweet; it is sweetness itself that draws you. Is not the sheep drawn when the succulent herbage is shown to him? And I think that there is no compulsion of the body, but an assembling of the desire. So, too, do you come to Christ; wish not to plan a long journey—when you believe, then you come. For to Him who is everywhere, one comes by loving, not by taking a voyage. No doubt, if you come not, it is your work; but if you

come, it is God's work. And even after you have come, and are walking in the right way, become not proud, lest you perish from it: 'happy are those that confide in Him,' not in *themselves*, but in *Him*. We are saved by grace, not of ourselves: it is the gift of God. Why do I continually say this to you? It is because there are men who are ungrateful to grace, and attribute much to unaided and wounded nature. It is true that man received great powers of free will at his creation; but he lost them by sinning. He has fallen into death; he has been made weak; he has been left half dead in the way, by robbers; the good Samaritan has lifted him up upon his ass, and borne him to the inn. Why should we boast? But I am told that it is enough that sins are remitted in baptism. But does the removal of sin take away weakness too? What! will you not see that after pouring the oil and the wine into the wounds of the man left half dead by the robbers, he must still go to the inn where his weakness may be healed? Nay, so long as we are in this life we bear a fragile body; it is only after we are redeemed from corruption that we shall find no sin, and receive the crown of righteousness. Grace, that was hidden in the Old Testament, is now manifest to the whole world. Even though the Jew may be ignorant of it, why should Christians be enemies of grace? why presumptuous of themselves? why ungrateful to grace? For, why did Christ come? Was not nature already here—that very nature by the praise of which you are beguiled? Was not the law here? But the apostle says, 'If righteousness is of the law, then is Christ dead in vain.' What the apostle says of the law, that we say to these men about nature: if righteousness is by nature, then Christ is dead in vain. What then was said of the Jews, this we see repeated in these men. They have a zeal for God: I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For, being ignorant of God's righteousness, and wishing to establish their own, they are not subject to the righteousness of God. My brethren, share my compassion. Where you find such men, wish no concealment; let

there be no perverse pity in you: where you find them, wish no concealment at all. Contradict and refute, resist, or persuade them to us. For already two councils have, in this cause, sent letters to the Apostolic See, whence also rescripts have come back. The cause is ended: would that the error might some day end! Therefore we admonish so that they may take notice, we teach so that they may be instructed, we pray so that their way be changed." Here is certainly tenderness to the persons of the teachers of error; readiness to forgive, and readiness to go all proper lengths in recovering them to the truth. But here is also absolute firmness as to the truth itself, and a manifesto as to policy. Certainly, on the lines of the policy here indicated, the Africans fought out the coming campaign. They met in council at the end of this year, or early in the next (418); and formally replied to Zosimus, that the cause had been tried, and was finished, and that the sentence that had been already pronounced against Pelagius and Coelestius should remain in force until they should unequivocally acknowledge that "we are aided by the grace of God through Christ, not only to know, but to do, what is right, and that in each single act; so that without grace we are unable to have, think, speak, or do anything belonging to piety." As we may see Augustine's hand in this, so, doubtless, we may recognize it in that remarkable piece of engineering which crushed Zosimus' plans within the next few months. There is, indeed, no direct proof that it was due to Augustine, or to the Africans under his leading, or to the Africans at all, that the State interfered in the matter; it is even in doubt whether the action of the Empire was put forth as a rescript, or as a self-moved decree: but surely it is difficult to believe that such a *coup de thÈtre* could have been prepared for Zosimus by chance; and as it is well known, both that Augustine believed in the righteousness of civil penalty for heresy, and invoked it on other occasions, and defended and used it on this, and that he had influential friends at court with whom he was in correspondence, it

seems, on internal grounds, altogether probable that he was the *Deus ex machin*, who let loose the thunders of ecclesiastical and civil enactment simultaneously on the poor Pope's devoted head.

The "great African Council" met at Carthage, on the 1st of May, 418; and, after its decrees were issued, Augustine remained at Carthage, and watched the effect of the combination of which he was probably one of the moving causes. He had now an opportunity to betake himself once more to his pen. While still at Carthage, at short notice, and in the midst of much distraction, he wrote a large work, in two books which have come down to us under the separate titles of *On the Grace of Christ*, and *On Original Sin*, at the instance of another of those ascetic families which formed so marked a feature in those troubled times. Pinianus and Melania, the daughter of Albina, were husband and wife, who, leaving Rome amid the wars with Alaric, had lived in continence in Africa for some time, but now in Palestine had separated, he to become head of a monastery, and she an inmate of a convent. While in Africa, they had lived at Sagaste under the tutelage of Alypius, and in the enjoyment of the friendship and instruction of Augustine. After retiring to Bethlehem, like the other holy ascetics whom he had known in Africa, they kept up their relations with him. Like the others, also, they became acquainted with Pelagius in Palestine, and were well-nigh deceived by him. They wrote to Augustine that they had begged Pelagius to condemn in writing all that had been alleged against him, and that he had replied in the presence of them all, that "he anathematized the man who either thinks or says that the grace of God whereby Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners is not necessary, not only for every hour and for every moment, but also for every act of our lives," and asserted that "those who endeavor to disannul it are worthy of everlasting punishment." Moreover, they wrote that Pelagius had read to them, out of his book that he had sent to Rome, his assertion



"that infants ought to be baptized with the same formula of sacramental words as adults." They wrote that they were delighted to hear these words from Pelagius, as they seemed exactly what they had been desirous of hearing; and yet they preferred consulting Augustine about them, before they were fully committed regarding them. It was in answer to this appeal, that the present work was written; the two books of which take up the two points in Pelagius' asseveration—the theme of the first being "the assistance of the Divine grace towards our justification, by which God co-operates in all things for good to those who love Him, and whom He first loved, giving to them that He may receive from them,"-while the subject of the second is "the sin which by one man has entered the world along with death, and so has passed upon all men."

The first book, *On the Grace of Christ* , begins by quoting and examining Pelagius' anathema of all those who deny that grace is necessary for every action (2 sq.). Augustine confesses that this would deceive all who were not fortified by knowledge of Pelagius' writings; but asserts that in the light of them it is clear that he means that grace is always necessary, because we need continually to remember the forgiveness of our sins, the example of Christ, the teaching of the law, and the like. Then he enters (4 sq.) upon an examination of Pelagius' scheme of human faculties, and quotes at length his account of them given in his book, *In Defence of Free Will*, wherein he distinguishes between the *possibilitas (posse)*, *voluntas (velle)*, and *actio (esse)* , and declares that the first only is from God and receives aid from God, while the others are entirely ours, and in our own power. Augustine opposes to this the passage in Phil. ii. 12, 13 (6), and then criticises (7 sq.) Pelagius' ambiguous acknowledgment that God is to be praised for man's good works, "because the capacity for any action on man's part is from God," by which he reduces all grace to the primeval endowment of nature with

"capacity" ( *possibilitas, posse* ), and the help afforded it by the law and teaching. Augustine points out the difference between law and grace, and the purpose of the former as a pedagogue to the latter (9 sq.), and then refutes Pelagius' further definition of grace as consisting in the promise of future glory and the revelation of wisdom, by an appeal to Paul's thorn in the flesh, and his experience under its discipline (11 sq.). Pelagius' illustrations from our senses, of his theory of natural faculty, are then sharply tested (16) ; and the criticism on the whole doctrine is then made and pressed (17 sq.), that it makes God equally sharer in our blame for evil acts as in our praise for good ones, since if God does help, and His help is only His gift to us of ability to act in either part, then He has equally helped to the evil deeds as to the good. The assertion that this "capacity of either part" is the fecund root of both good and evil is then criticised (19 sq.), and opposed to Matt. vii. i8, with the result of establishing that we must seek two roots in our dispositions for so diverse results—covetousness for evil, and love for good—not a single root for both in nature. Man's "capacity," it is argued, is the root of nothing; but it is capable of both good and evil according to the moving cause, which, in the case of evil, is man-originated, while, in the case of good, it is from God (21). Next, Pelagius' assertion that grace is given according to our merits (23 sq.) is taken up and examined. It is shown, that, despite his anathema, Pelagius holds to this doctrine, and in so extreme a form as explicitly to declare that man comes and cleaves to God by his freedom of will alone, and without God's aid. He shows that the Scriptures teach just the opposite (24-26); and then points out how Pelagius has confounded the functions of knowledge and love (27 sq.), and how he forgets that we cannot have merits until we love God, while John certainly asserts that *God loved us first* (I John iv. 10). The representation that what grace does is to render obedience *easier* (28-30), and the twin view that prayer is only relatively necessary, are next criticised (32). That Pelagius never

acknowledges real grace, is then demonstrated by a detailed examination of all that he had written on the subject (31-45). The book closes (46-80) with a full refutation of Pelagius' appeal to Ambrose, as if he supported him; and exhibition of Ambrose's contrary testimony as to grace and its necessity.

The object of the second book- *On Original Sin* -is to show, that, in spite of Pelagius' admissions as to the baptism of infants, he yet denies that they inherit original sin and contends that they are born free from corruption. The book opens by pointing out that there is no question as to Coelestius' teaching in this matter (2-8), as he at Carthage refused to condemn those who say that Adam's sin injured no one but himself, and that infants are born in the same state that Adam was in before the fall, and openly asserted at Rome that there is no sin *ex traduce* . As for Pelagius, he is simply more cautious and mendacious than Coelestius: he deceived the Council at Diospolis, but failed to deceive the Romans (5-13), and, as a matter of fact (14-18), teaches exactly what Coelestius does. In support of this assertion, Pelagius' *Defence of Free Will* is quoted, wherein he asserts that we are born neither good nor bad, "but with a capacity for either," and "as without virtue, so without vice; and previous to the action of our own proper will, that that alone is in man which God has formed" (14). Augustine also quotes Pelagius' explanation of his anathema against those who say Adam's sin injured only himself, as meaning that he has injured man by setting a bad "example," and his even more sinuous explanation of his anathema against those who assert that infants are born in the same condition that Adam was in before he fell, as meaning that they are *infants* and he was a *man!* (16-18). With this introduction to them, Augustine next treats of Pelagius' subterfuges (19-25), and then animadverts on the importance of the issue (26-37), pointing out that Pelagianism is not a mere error, but a deadly heresy, and strikes at the very centre of

Christianity. A counter argument of the Pelagians is then answered (38-45), "Does not the doctrine of original sin make marriage an evil thing?" No, says Augustine, marriage is ordained by God, and is good; but it is a diseased good, and hence what is born of it is a good nature made by God, but this good nature in a diseased condition—the result of the Devil's work. Hence; if it be asked why God's gift produces any thing for the Devil to take possession of, it is to be answered that God gives his gifts liberally (Matt. v. 45), and makes men; but the Devil makes these men sinners (46). Finally, as Ambrose had been appealed to in the former book, so at the end of this it is shown that he openly proclaimed the doctrine of original sin, and here too, before Pelagius, condemned Pelagius (47 sq.).

What Augustine means by writing to Pinianus and his family that he was more oppressed by work at Carthage than anywhere else, may perhaps be illustrated from his diligence in preaching while in that capital. He seems to have been almost constantly in the pulpit, during this period "of the sharpest conflict with them," preaching against the Pelagians. There is one series of his sermons, of the exact dates of which we can be pretty sure, which may be adverted to here—Sermons 151 and 152, preached early in October, 418; Sermon 155 on Oct. 14, 156 on Oct. 17, and 26 on Oct. 18; thus following one another almost with the regularity of the days. The first of these was based on Rom. vii. 15-25, which he declares to contain dangerous words if not properly understood; for men are prone to sin, and when they hear the apostle so speaking they do evil, and think they are like him. They are meant to teach us, however, that the life of the just in this body is a war, not yet a triumph: the triumph will come only when death is swallowed up in victory. It would, no doubt, be better not to have an enemy than even to conquer. It would be better not to have evil desires: but we have them; therefore, let us not go after them. If they rebel against us, let us rebel against them; if they

fight, let us fight; if they besiege, let us besiege: let us look only to this, that they do not conquer. With some evil desires we are born: others we make, by bad habit. It is on account of those with which we are born, that infants are baptized; that they may be freed from the guilt of inheritance, not from any evil of custom, which, of course, they have not. And it is on account of these, too, that our war must be endless: the concupiscence with which we are born cannot be done away as long as we live; it may be diminished, but not done away. Neither can the law free us, for it only reveals the sin to our greater apprehension. Where, then, is hope, save in the superabundance of grace? The next sermon (152) takes up the words in Rom. viii. 1-4, and points out that the inward aid of the Spirit brings all the help we need. "We, like farmers in the field, work from without: but, if there were no one who worked from within, the seed would not take root in the ground, nor would the sprout arise in the field, nor would the shoot grow strong and become a tree, nor would branches and fruit and leaves be produced. Therefore the apostle distinguishes between the work of the workmen and of the Creator (I Cor. iii. 6, 7). If God give not the increase, empty is this sound within your ears; but if he gives, it avails somewhat that we plant and water, and our labor is not in vain." He then applies this to the individual, striving against his lusts; warns against Manichean error; and distinguishes between the three laws—the law of sin, the law of faith, and the law of deeds—defending the latter, the law of Moses, against the Manicheans; and then he comes to the words of the text, and explains its chief phrases, closing thus: "What other do we read here than that Christ is a sacrifice for sin? ...Behold by what `sin' he condemned sin: by the sacrifice which he made for sins, he condemned sin. This is the law of the Spirit of life which has freed you from the law of sin and death. For that other law, the law of the letter, the law that commands, is indeed good; `the commandment is holy and just and good:' but `it was weak by the flesh,' and what it commanded it could not bring

about in us. Therefore there is one law, as I began by saying, that reveals sin to you, and another that takes it away: the law of the letter reveals sin, the law of grace takes it away." Sermon 155 covers the same ground, and more, taking the broader text, Rom. viii. 1-11, and fully developing its teaching, especially as discriminating between the law of sin and the law of Moses and the law of faith; the law of Moses being the holy law of God written with His finger on the tables of stone, while the law of the Spirit of life is nothing other than the same law written in the heart, as the prophet (Jer. xxx. 1, 33) clearly declares. So written, it does not terrify from without, but soothes from within. Great care is also taken, lest by such phrases as, "walk in the Spirit, not in the flesh," "who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" a hatred of the body should be begotten. "Thus you shall be freed from the body of this death, not by having no body, but by having another one and dying no more. If, indeed, he had not added, 'of this death,' perchance an error might have been suggested to the human mind, and it might have been said, 'You see that God does not wish us to have a body.' But He says, 'the body of this death.' Take away death, and the body is good. Let our last enemy, death, be taken away, and my dear flesh will be mine for eternity. For no one can ever 'hate his own flesh.' Although the 'spirit lusts against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit,' although there is now a battle in this house, yet the husband is seeking by his strife not the ruin of, but concord with, his wife. Far be it, far be it, my brethren, that the spirit should hate the flesh in lusting against it! It hates the vices of the flesh; it hates the wisdom of the flesh; it hates the contention of death. This corruption shall put on incorruption—this mortal shall put on immortality; it is sown a natural body; it shall rise a spiritual body; and you shall see full and perfect concord—you shall see the creature praise the Creator." One of the special interests of such passages is to show, that, even at this early date, Augustine was careful to guard his hearers from Manichean error while proclaiming

original sin. One of the sermons which, probably, was preached about this time (153), is even entitled, "Against the Manicheans openly, but tacitly against the Pelagians," and bears witness to the early development of the method that he was somewhat later to use effectively against Julian's charges of Manicheanism against the catholics. Three days afterwards, Augustine preached on the next few verses, Rom. viii. 12-17, but can scarcely be said to have risen to the height of its great argument. The greater part of the sermon is occupied with a discussion of the law, why it was given, how it is legitimately used, and its usefulness as a pedagogue to bring us to Christ; then of the need of a mediator; and then, of what it is to live according to the flesh, which includes living according to merely human nature; and the need of mortifying the flesh in this world. All this, of course, gave full opportunity for opposing the leading Pelagian errors; and the sermon is brought to a close by a direct polemic against their assertion that the function of grace is only to make it more easy to do what is right. "With the sail more easily, with the oar with more difficulty: nevertheless even with the oar we can go. On a beast more easily, on foot with more difficulty: nevertheless progress can be made on foot. It is not true! For the true Master who flatters no one, who deceives no one—the truthful Teacher and very Saviour to whom the most grievous pedagogue has led us—when he was speaking about good works, i.e., about the fruits of the twigs and branches, did not say, 'Without me, indeed, you can do something, but you will do it more easily with me;' He did not say, 'You can make your fruit without me, but more richly with me.' He did not say this! Read what He said: it is the holy gospel—bow the proud necks! Augustine does not say this: the Lord says it. What says the Lord? 'Without me you can do *nothing!*' "On the very next day, he was again in the pulpit, and taking for his text chiefly the ninety-fourth Psalm. The preacher began by quoting the sixth verse, and laying stress on the words "our Maker." 'No Christian,' he said, 'doubted

that God had made him, and that in such a sense that God created not only the first man, from whom all have descended, but that God to-day creates every man—as He said to one of His saints, "Before that I formed thee in the womb, I knew thee." At first He created man apart from man; now He creates man from man: nevertheless, whether man apart from man, or man from man, "it is He that made us, and not we ourselves." Nor has He made us and then deserted us; He has not cared to make us, and not cared to keep us. Will He who made us without being asked, desert us when He is besought? But is it not just as foolish to say, as some say or are ready to say, that God made them men, but they make themselves righteous? Why, then, do we pray to God to make us righteous? The first man was created in a nature that was without fault or flaw. He was made righteous: he did not make himself righteous; what he did for himself was to fall and break his righteousness. This God did not do: He permitted it, as if He had said, "Let him desert Me; let him find himself; and let his misery prove that he has no ability without Me." In this way God wished to show man what free will was worth without God. O evil free will without God! Behold, man was made good; and by free will man was made evil! When will the evil man make himself good by free will? When good, he was not able to keep himself good; and now that he is evil, is he to make himself good? Nay, behold, He that made us has also made us "His people" (Ps. xciv. 7). This is a distinguishing gift. Nature is common to all, but grace is not. It is not to be confounded with nature; but if it were, it would still be gratuitous. For certainly no man, before he existed, deserved to come into existence. And yet God has made him, and that not like the beasts or a stock or a stone, but in His own image. Who has given this benefit? He gave it who was in existence: he received it who was not. And only He could do this, who calls the things that are not as though they were: of whom the apostle says that "He chose us before the foundation of the world." We have been made in this world, and



yet the world was not when we were chosen. Ineffable! wonderful! They are chosen who are not: neither does He err in choosing, nor choose in vain. He chooses, and has elect whom He is to create to be chosen: He has them in Himself; not indeed in His nature, but in His prescience. Let us not, then, glory in ourselves, or dispute against grace. If we are men, He made us. If we are believers, He made us this too. He who sent the Lamb to be slain has, out of wolves, made us sheep. This is grace. And it is an even greater grace than that grace of nature by which we were all made men.' "I am continually endeavouring to discuss such things as these," said the preacher, "against a new heresy which is attempting to rise; because I wish you to be fixed in the good, untouched by the evil....For, disputing against grace in favor of free will, they became an offence to pious and catholic ears. They began to create horror; they began to be avoided as a fixed pest; it began to be said of them, that they argued against grace. And they found such a device as this: `Because I defend man's free will, and say that free will is sufficient in order that I may be righteous,' says one, `I do not say that it is without the grace of God.' The ears of the pious are pricked up, and he who hears this, already begins to rejoice: `Thanks be to God! He does not defend free will without the grace of God! There is free will, but it avails nothing without the grace of God' If, then, they do not defend free will without the grace of God, what evil do they say? Expound to us, O teacher, what grace you mean? `When I say,' he says, `the free will of man, you observe that I say " *of man* "?' What then? `Who created man?' God. `Who gave him free will?' God. `If, then, God created man, and God gave man free will, whatever man is able to do by free will, to whose grace does he owe it, except to His who made him with free will?' And this is what they think they say so acutely! You see, nevertheless, my brethren, how they preach that general grace by which we were created and by which we are men; and, of course, we are men in common with the ungodly, and are Christians apart from

them. It is this grace by which we are Christians, that we wish them to preach, this that we wish them to acknowledge, this that we wish—of which the apostle says, `I do not make void the grace of God, for if righteousness is by the law, Christ is dead in vain.' "Then the true function of the law is explained, as a revealer of our sinfulness, and a pedagogue to lead us to Christ: the Manichean view of the Old Testament law is attacked, but its insufficiency for salvation is pointed out; and so we are brought back to the necessity of grace, which is illustrated from the story of the raising of the dead child in 2 Kings iv. 18-37—the dead child being Adam; the ineffective staff (by which we ought to walk), the law; but the living prophet, Christ with his grace, which we must preach. "The prophetic staff was not enough for the dead boy: would dead nature itself have been enough? Even this, by which we are made, although we nowhere read of it under this name, we nevertheless, because it is given gratuitously, confess to be grace. But we show to you a greater grace than this, by which we are Christians.... This is the grace by Jesus Christ our Lord: it was He that made us—both before we were at all, it was He that made us, and now, after we are made, it is He that has made us all righteous—and not we ourselves." There was but one mass of perdition from Adam, to which nothing was due but punishment; and from that mass vessels have been made unto honor. "Rejoice because you have escaped; you have escaped the death that was due—you have received the life that was not due. `But,' you ask, `why did He make me unto honor, and another unto dishonor?' Will you who will not hear the apostle saying, `O man, who art thou that repliest against God?' hear Augustine?... Do you wish to dispute with me? Nay, wonder with me, and cry out with me, `Oh the depth of the riches!' Let us both be afraid—let us both cry out, `Oh the depth of the riches!' Let us both agree in fear, lest we perish in error."

Augustine was not less busy with his pen, during these months, than with his voice. Quite a series of letters belong to the last half of 418, in which he argues to his distant correspondents on the same themes which he was so iterantly trying to make clear to his Carthaginian auditors. One of the most interesting of these was written to a fellow-bishop, Optatus, on the origin of the soul. Optatus, like Jerome, had expressed himself as favoring the theory of a special creation of each at birth; and Augustine, in this letter as in the paper sent to Jerome, lays great stress on so holding our theories on so obscure a matter as to conform to the indubitable fact of the transmission of sin. This fact, such passages as I Cor. xv. 21 sq., Rom. v. 12 sq., make certain; and in stating this, Augustine takes the opportunity to outline the chief contents of the catholic faith over against the Pelagian denial of original sin and grace: that all are born under the contagion of death and in the bond of guilt; that there is no deliverance except in the one Mediator, Christ Jesus; that before His coming men received him as promised, now as already come, but with the same faith; that the law was not intended to save, but to shut up under sin and so force us back upon the one Saviour; and that the distribution of grace is sovereign. Augustine pries into God's sovereign counsels somewhat more freely here than is usual with him. "But why those also are created who, the Creator foreknew, would belong to damnation, not to grace, the blessed apostle mentions with as much succinct brevity as great authority. For he says that God, 'wishing to show His wrath and demonstrate His power,' etc. (Rom. ix. 22). Justly, however, would he seem unjust in forming vessels of wrath for perdition, if the whole mass from Adam were not condemned. That, therefore, they are made on birth vessels of anger, belongs to the punishment due to them; but that they are made by re-birth vessels of mercy, belongs to the grace that is not due to them. God, therefore, shows his wrath—not, of course, perturbation of mind, such as is called wrath among men, but a just and fixed vengeance.... He shows also his power, by

which he makes a good use of evil men, and endows them with many natural and temporal goods, and bends their evil to admonition and instruction of the good by comparison with it, so that these may learn from them to give thanks to God that they have been made to differ from them, not by their own deserts which were of like kind in the same mass, but by His pity.... But by creating so many to be born who, He foreknew, would not belong to his grace, so that they are more by an incomparable multitude than those whom he deigned to predestinate as children of the promise into the glory of His Kingdom—He wished to show by this very multitude of the rejected how entirely of no moment it is to the just God what is the multitude of those most justly condemned. And that hence also those who are redeemed from this condemnation may understand, that what they see rendered to so great a part of the mass was the due of the whole of it—not only of those who add many others to original sin, by the choice of an evil will, but as well of so many children who are snatched from this life without the grace of the Mediator, bound by no bond except that of original sin alone." With respect to the question more immediately concerning which the letter was written, Augustine explains that he is willing to accept the opinion that souls are created for men as they are born, if only it can be made plain that it is consistent with the original sin that the Scriptures so clearly teach. In the paper sent to Jerome, the difficulties of creationism are sufficiently urged; this letter is interesting on account of its statement of some of the difficulties of traducianism also—thus evidencing Augustine's clear view of the peculiar complexity of the problem, and justifying his attitude of balance and uncertainty between the two theories. 'The human understanding,' he says, 'can scarcely comprehend how a soul arises from a parent's soul in the offspring; or is transmitted to the offspring as a candle is lighted from a candle and thence another fire comes into existence without loss to the former one. Is there an incorporeal seed for the soul,

which passes, by some hidden and invisible channel of its own, from the father to the mother, when it is conceived in the woman? Or, even more incredible, does it lie enfolded and hidden within the corporeal seed?' He is lost in wonder over the question whether, when conception does not take place, the immortal seed of an immortal soul perishes; or, does the immortality attach itself to it only when it lives? He even expresses the doubt whether traducianism will explain what it is called in to explain, much better than creationism; in any case, who denies that God is the maker of every soul? Isaiah (lvii. 16) says, "I have made every breath;" and the only question that can arise is as to method—whether He "makes every breath from the one first breath, just as He makes every body of man from the one first body; or whether he makes new bodies indeed, from the one body, but new souls out of nothing." Certainly nothing but Scripture can determine such a question; but where do the Scriptures speak unambiguously upon it? The passages to which the creationists point only affirm the admitted fact that God makes the soul; and the traducianists forget that the word "soul" in the Scriptures is ambiguous, and can mean "man," and even a "dead man." What more can be done, then, than to assert what is certain, viz., that sin is propagated, and leave what is uncertain in the doubt in which God has chosen to place it?

This letter was written not long after the issue of Zosimus' *Tractoria*, demanding the signature of all to African orthodoxy; and Augustine sends Optatus "copies of the recent letters which have been sent forth from the Roman see, whether specially to the African bishops or generally to all bishops," on the Pelagian controversy, "lest perchance they had not yet reached" his correspondent, who, it is very evident, he was anxious should thoroughly realize "that the authors, or certainly the most energetic and noted teachers," of these new heresies, "had been condemned in the whole Christian world by

the vigilance of episcopal councils aided by the Saviour who keeps His Church, as well as by two venerable overseers of the Apostolical see, Pope Innocent and Pope Zosimus, unless they should show repentance by being convinced and reformed." To this zeal we owe it that the letter contains an extract from Zosimus' *Tractoria*, one of the two brief fragments of that document that have reached our day.

There was another ecclesiastic in Rome, besides Zosimus, who was strongly suspected of favoring the Pelagians—the presbyter Sixtus, who afterwards became Pope Sixtus III. But when Zosimus sent forth his condemnation of Pelagianism, Sixtus sent also a short letter to Africa addressed to Aurelius of Carthage, which, though brief; indicated a considerable vigor against the heresy which he was commonly believed to have before defended, and which claimed him as its own. Some months afterwards, he sent another similar, but longer, letter to Augustine and Alypius, more fully expounding his rejection of "the fatal dogma" of Pelagius, and his acceptance of "that grace of God freely given by Him to small and great, to which Pelagius' dogma was diametrically opposed." Augustine was overjoyed with these developments. He quickly replied in a short letter in which he expresses the delight he has in learning from Sixtus' own hand that he is not a defender of Pelagius, but a preacher of grace. And close upon the heels of this he sent another much longer letter, in which he discusses the subtler arguments of the Pelagians with an anxious care that seems to bear witness to his desire to confirm and support his correspondent in his new opinions. Both letters testify to Augustine's approval of the persecuting measures which had been instituted by the Roman see in obedience to the emperor; and urge on Sixtus his duty not only to bring the open heretics to deserved punishment, but to track out those who spread their poison secretly, and even to remember those whom he had formerly heard announcing the error before it had been

condemned, and who were now silent through fear, and to bring them either to open recantation of their former beliefs, or to punishment. It is pleasanter to recall our thoughts to the dialectic of these letters. The greater part of the second is given to a discussion of the gratuitousness of grace, which, just because grace, is given to no preceding merits. Many subtle objections to this doctrine were brought forward by the Pelagians. They said that "free will was taken away if we asserted that man did not have even a good will without the aid of God;" that we made "God an acceptor of persons, if we believed that without any preceding merits He had mercy on whom He would, and whom He would He called, and whom He would He made religious;" that "it was unjust, in one and the same case, to deliver one and punish another;" that, if such a doctrine is preached, "men who do not wish to live rightly and faithfully, will excuse themselves by saying that they have done nothing evil by living ill, since they have not received the grace by which they might live well;" that it is a puzzle "how sin can pass over to the children of the faithful, when it has been remitted to the parents in baptism;" that "children respond truly by the mouth of their sponsors that they believe in remission of sins, but not because sins are remitted to *them*, but because they believe that sins are remitted in the church or in baptism to those in whom they are found, not to those in whom they do not exist," and consequently they said that "they were unwilling that infants should be so baptized unto remission of sins as if this remission took place in them," for (they contend) "they have no sin ; but they are to be baptized, although without sin, with the same rite of baptism through which remission of sins takes place in any that are sinners." This last objection is especially interesting because it furnishes us with the reply which the Pelagians made to the argument that Augustine so strongly pressed against them from the very act and ritual of baptism, as implying remission of sins. His rejoinder to it here is to point to the other parts of the same ritual,

and to ask why, then, infants are exorcised and exsufflated in baptism. "For, it cannot be doubted that this is done fictitiously, if the Devil does not rule over them; but if he rules over them, and they are therefore not falsely exorcised and exsufflated, why does that prince of sinners rule over them except because of sin?" On the fundamental matter of the gratuitousness of grace, this letter is very explicit. "If we seek for the deserving of hardening, we shall find it.... But if we seek for the deserving of pity, we shall not find it; for there is none, lest grace be made a vanity if it is not given gratis, but rendered to merits. But, should we say that faith preceded and in it there is desert of grace, what desert did man have before faith that he should receive faith? For, what did he have that he did not receive? and if he received it, why does he glory as if he received it not? For as man would not have wisdom, understanding, prudence, fortitude, knowledge, piety, fear of God, unless he had received (according to the prophet) the spirit of wisdom and understanding, of prudence and fortitude, of knowledge and piety and the fear of God ; as he would not have justice, love, continence, except the spirit was received of whom the apostle says, `For you did not receive the spirit of fear, but of virtue, and love, and continence:' so he would not have faith unless he received the spirit of faith of whom the same apostle says, `Having then the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I believed and therefore spoke," we too believe and therefore speak.' But that He is not received by desert, but by His mercy who has mercy on whom He will, is manifestly shown where he says of himself, `I have obtained mercy to be faithful.' ""If we should say that the merit of prayer precedes, that the gift of grace may follow,...even prayer itself is found among the gifts of grace" (Rom. viii. 26). "It remains, then, that faith itself, whence all righteousness takes beginning;...it remains, I say, that even faith itself is not to be attributed to the human will which they extol, nor to any preceding merits, since from it begin whatever good things are



merits: but it is to be confessed to be the gratuitous gift of God, since we consider it true grace, that is, without merits, inasmuch as we read in the same epistle, 'God divides out the measure of faith to each' (Rom. xii. 3). Now, good works are done by man, but faith is wrought in man, and without it these are not done by any man. For all that is not of faith is sin" (Rom. xiv. 23).

By the same messenger who carried this important letter to Sixtus, Augustine sent also a letter to Mercator, an African layman who was then apparently at Rome, but who was afterwards (in 429) to render service by instructing the Emperor Theodosius as to the nature and history of Pelagianism, and so preventing the appeal of the Pelagians to him from being granted. Now he appears as an inquirer: Augustine, while at Carthage, had received a letter from him in which he had consulted him on certain questions that the Pelagians had raised, but in such a manner as to indicate his opposition to them. Press of business had compelled the postponement of the reply until this later date. One of the questions that Mercator had put concerned the Pelagian account of infants sharing in the one baptism unto remission of sins, which we have seen Augustine answering when writing to Sixtus. In this letter he replies: "Let them, then, hear the Lord (John iii. 36). Infants, therefore, who made believers by others, by whom they are brought to baptism, are, of course, unbelievers by others, if they are in the hands of such as do not believe that they should be brought, inasmuch as they believe they are nothing profited; and accordingly, if they believe by believers, and have eternal life, they are unbelievers by unbelievers, and shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on them. For it is not said, 'it *comes* on them,' but 'it *abideth* on them,' because it was on them from the beginning, and will not be taken from them except by the grace of God through Jesus Christ, our Lord....Therefore, when children are baptized, the confession is made that they are believers, and it is not

to be doubted that those who are not believers are condemned: let them, then, dare to say now, if they can, that they contract no evil from their origin to be condemned by the just God, and have no contagion of sin." The other matter on which Mercator sought light concerned the statement that universal death proved universal sin: he reported that the Pelagians replied that not even death was universal—that Enoch, for instance, and Elijah, had not died. Augustine adds those who are to be found living at the second advent, who are not to die, but be "changed;" and replies that Rom. v. 12 is perfectly explicit that there is no death in the world except that which comes from sin, and that God a Saviour, and we cannot at all "deny that He is able to do that, now, in any that he wishes, without death, which we undoubtingly believe is to be done in so many after death." He adds that the difficult question is not why Enoch and Elijah did not die, if death is the punishment of sin; but why, such being the case, the justified ever die; and he refers his correspondent to his book *On the Baptism of Infants* for a resolution of this greater difficulty.

It was probably at the very end of 418 that Augustine wrote a letter of some length to Asellicus, in reply to one which he had written on "avoiding the deception of Judaism," to the primate of the Bizacene province, and which that ecclesiastic had sent to Augustine for answering. He discusses in this the law of the Old Testament. He opens by pointing out that the apostle forbids Christians to Judaize (Gal. ii. 14-16), and explains that it is not merely the ceremonial law that we may not depend upon, "but also what is said in the law, 'Thou shalt not covet' (which no one, of course, doubts is to be said to Christians too), does not justify man, except by faith in Jesus Christ and the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." He then expounds the use of the law: "This, then, is the usefulness of the law: that it shows man to himself, so that he may know his weakness, and

see how, by the prohibition, carnal concupiscence is rather increased than healed....The use of the law is, thus, to convince man of his weakness, and force him to implore the medicine of grace that is in Christ." "Since these things are so," he adds, "those who rejoice that they are Israelites after the flesh, and glory in the law apart from the grace of Christ, these are those concerning whom the apostle said that `being ignorant of God's righteousness, and wishing to establish their own, they are not subject to God's righteousness;' since he calls `God's righteousness' that which is from God to man; and `their own,' what they think that the commandments suffice for them to do without the help and gift of Him who gave the law. But they are like those who, while they profess to be Christians, so oppose the grace of Christ, that they suppose that they fulfil the divine commands by human powers, and, `wishing to establish their own,' are `not subject to the righteousness of God,' and so, not indeed in name, but yet in error, Judaize. This sort of men found heads for themselves in Pelagius and Coelestius, the most acute asserters of this impiety, who by God's recent judgment, through his diligent and faithful servants, have been deprived even of catholic communion, and, on account of an impenitent heart, persist still in their condemnation."

At the beginning of 419, a considerable work was published by Augustine on one of the more remote corollaries which the Pelagians drew from his teachings. It had come to his ears, that they asserted that his doctrine condemned marriage: "if only sinful offspring come from marriage," they asked, "is not marriage itself made a sinful thing?" The book which Augustine composed in answer to this query, he dedicated to, and sent along with an explanatory letter to, the Comes Valerius, a trusted servant of the Emperor Honorius, and one of the most steady opponents at court of the Pelagian heresy. Augustine explains why he has desired to address the book to him: first, because Valerius was a striking example of those continent

husbands of which that age furnishes us with many instances, and, therefore, the discussion would have especial interest for him; secondly, because of his eminence as an opponent of Pelagianism; and, thirdly, because Augustine had learned that he had read a Pelagian document in which Augustine was charged with condemning marriage by defending original sin. The book in question is the first book of the treatise *On Marriage and Concupiscence*. It is, naturally, tinged, or rather stained, with the prevalent ascetic notions of the day. Its doctrine is that marriage is good, and God is the maker of the offspring that comes from it, although now there can be no begetting and hence no birth without sin. Sin made concupiscence, and now concupiscence perpetuates sinners. The specific object of the work, as it states it itself, is "to distinguish between the evil of carnal concupiscence, from which man, who is born therefrom, contracts original sin, and the good of marriage" (I. 1). After a brief introduction, in which he explains why he writes, and why he addresses his book to Valerius (1-2), Augustine points out that conjugal chastity, like its higher sister-grace of continence, is God's gift. Thus copulation, but only for the propagation of children, has divine allowance (3-5). Lust, or "shameful concupiscence," however, he teaches, is not of the essence, but only an accident, of marriage. It did not exist in Eden, although true marriage existed there; but arose from, and therefore only after, sin (6-7). Its addition to marriage does not destroy the good of marriage: it only conditions the character of the offspring (8). Hence it is that the apostle allows marriage, but forbids the "disease of desire" (1 Thess. iv. 3-5); and hence the Old-Testament saints were even permitted more than one wife, because, by multiplying wives, it was not lust, but offspring, that was increased (9-10). Nevertheless, fecundity is not to be thought the only good of marriage: true marriage can exist without offspring, and even without cohabitation (11-13), and cohabitation is now, under the New Testament, no

longer a duty as it was under the Old Testament (14-15), but the apostle praises continence above it. We must, then, distinguish between the goods of marriage, and seek the best (16-19). But thus it follows that it is not due to any inherent and necessary evil in marriage, but only to the presence, now, of concupiscence in all cohabitation, that children are born under sin, even the children of the regenerate, just as from the seed of olives only oleasters grow (20-24). And yet again, concupiscence is not itself sin in the regenerate; it is remitted as guilt in baptism: but it is the daughter of sin, and it is the mother of sin, and in the unregenerate it is itself sin, as to yield to it is even to the regenerate (25-39). Finally, as so often, the testimony of Ambrose is appealed to, and it is shown that he too teaches that all born from cohabitation are born guilty (40). In this book, Augustine certainly seems to teach that the bond of connection by which Adam's sin is conveyed to his offspring is not mere descent, or heredity, or mere inclusion in him, in a realistic sense, as partakers of the same numerical nature, but concupiscence. Without concupiscence in the act of generation, the offspring would not be a partaker of Adam's sin. This he had taught also previously, as, e.g., in the treatise *On Original Sin*, from which a few words may be profitably quoted as succinctly summing up the teaching of this book on the subject: "It is, then, manifest, that that must not be laid to the account of marriage, in the absence of which even marriage would still have existed....Such, however, is the present condition of mortal men, that the connubial intercourse and lust are at the same time in action....Hence it follows that infants, although incapable of sinning, are yet not born without the contagion of sin,...not, indeed, because of what is lawful, but on account of that which is unseemly: for, from what is lawful, nature is born; from what is unseemly, sin" (42).

Towards the end of the same year (419), Augustine was led to take up again the vexed question of the origin of the soul—both in a new

letter to Optatus, by the zeal of the same monk, Renatus, who had formerly brought Optatus' inquiries to his notice—in an elaborate treatise entitled *On the Soul and its Origin*, by way of reply to a rash adventure of a young man named Vincentius Victor, who blamed him for his uncertainty on such a subject, and attempted to determine all the puzzles of the question, though, as Augustine insists, on assumptions that were partly Pelagian and partly worse. Optatus had written in the hope that Augustine had heard by this time from Jerome, in reply to the treatise he had sent him on this subject. Augustine, in answering his letter, expresses his sorrow that he has not yet been worthy of an answer from Jerome, although five years had passed away since he wrote, but his continued hope that such an answer will in due time come. For himself, he confesses that he has not yet been able to see how the soul can contract sin from Adam and yet not itself be contracted from Adam; and he regrets that Optatus, although holding that God creates each soul for its birth, has not sent him the proofs on which he depends for that opinion, nor met its obvious difficulties. He rebukes Optatus for confounding the question of whether God makes the soul, with the entirely different one of how he makes it, whether *ex propagine* or *sive propagine*. No one doubts that God makes the soul, as no one doubts that He makes the body. But when we consider how he makes it, sobriety and vigilance become necessary lest we should unguardedly fall into the Pelagian heresy. Augustine defends his attitude of uncertainty, and enumerates the points as to which he has no doubt: viz., that the soul is spirit, not body; that it is rational or intellectual; that it is not of the nature of God, but is so far a mortal creature that it is capable of deterioration and of alienation from the life of God, and so far immortal that after this life it lives on in bliss or punishment forever; that it was not incarnated because of, or according to, preceding deserts acquired in a previous existence, yet

that it is under the curse of sin which it derives from Adam, and therefore in all cases alike needs redemption in Christ.

The whole subject of the nature and origin of the soul, however, is most fully discussed in the four books which are gathered together under the common title of *On the Soul and its Origin*. Vincentius Victor was a young layman who had recently been converted from the Rogatian heresy; on being shown by his friend Peter, a presbyter, a small work of Augustine's on the origin of the soul, he expressed surprise that so great a man could profess ignorance on a matter so intimate to his very being, and, receiving encouragement, wrote a book for Peter in which he attacked and tried to solve all the difficulties of the subject. Peter received the work with transports of delighted admiration; but Renatus, happening that way, looked upon it with distrust, and, finding that Augustine was spoken of in it with scant courtesy, felt it his duty to send him a copy of it, which he did in the summer of 419. It was probably not until late in the following autumn that Augustine found time to take up the matter; but then he wrote to Renatus, to Peter, and two books to Victor himself, and it is these four books together which constitute the treatise that has come down to us. The first book is a letter to Renatus, and is introduced by an expression of thanks to him for sending Victor's book, and of kindly feeling towards and appreciation for the high qualities of Victor himself (1-3). Then Victor's errors are pointed out—as to the nature of the soul (4-9), including certain far-reaching corollaries that flow from these (10-15), as well as, as to the origin of the soul(16-30); and the letter closes with some remarks on the danger of arguing from the silence of Scripture (31), on the self-contradictions of Victor (34), and on the errors that must be avoided in any theory of the origin of the soul that hopes to be acceptable—to wit, that souls become sinful by an alien original sin, that unbaptized infants need no salvation, that souls sinned in a previous state, and

that they are condemned for sins which they have not committed but would have committed had they lived longer. The second book is a letter to Peter, warning him of the responsibility that rests on him as Victor's trusted friend and a clergyman, to correct Victor's errors, and reproving him for the uninstructed delight he had taken in Victor's crudities. It opens by asking Peter what was the occasion of the great joy which Victor's book brought him? could it be that he learned from it, for the first time, the old and primary truths it contained? (2-3); or was it due to the new errors that it proclaimed—seven of which he enumerates? (4-16). Then, after animadverting on the dilemma in which Victor stood, of either being forced to withdraw his violent assertion of creationism, or else of making God unjust in His dealings with new souls (17), he speaks of Victor's unjustifiable dogmatism in the matter (18-21), and closes with severely solemn words to Peter on his responsibility in the premises (22-23). In the third and fourth books, which are addressed to Victor, the polemic, of course, reaches its height. The third book is entirely taken up with pointing out to Victor, as a father to a son, the errors into which he has fallen, and which, in accordance with his professions of readiness for amendment, he ought to correct. Eleven are enumerated: 1. That the soul was made by God out of Himself (3-7); 2. That God will continuously create souls forever (8); 3. That the soul has desert of good before birth (9); 4. (contradictingly), That the soul has desert of evil before birth (10); 5. That the soul deserved to be sinful before any sin (11); 6. That unbaptized infants are saved (12); 7. That what God predestinates may not occur (13) ; 8. That Wisd. iv. 1 is spoken of infants (14); 9. That some of the mansions with the Father are outside of God's kingdom (15-17); 10. That the sacrifice of Christ's blood may be offered for the unbaptized (18); 11. That the unbaptized may attain at the resurrection even to the kingdom of heaven (19). The book closes by reminding Victor of his professions of readiness to correct his errors, and warning him



against the obstinacy that makes the heretic (20-23). The fourth book deals with the more personal elements of the controversy, and discusses the points in which Victor had expressed dissent from Augustine. It opens with a statement of the two grounds of complaint that Victor had urged against Augustine; viz., that he refused to express a confident opinion as to the origin of the soul, and that he affirmed that the soul was not corporeal, but spirit (1-2). These two complaints are then taken up at length (2-16 and 17-37). To the first, Augustine replies that man's knowledge is at best limited, and often most limited about the things nearest to him; we do not know the constitution of our bodies; and, above most others, this subject of the origin of the soul is one on which no one but God is a competent witness. Who remembers his birth? Who remembers what was before birth? But this is just one of the subjects on which God has not spoken unambiguously in the Scriptures. Would it not be better, then, for Victor to imitate Augustine's cautious ignorance, than that Augustine should imitate Victor's rash assertion of errors? That the soul is not corporeal, Augustine argues (18-35) from the Scriptures and from the phenomena of dreams; and then shows, in opposition to Victor's trichotomy, that the Scriptures teach the identity of "soul" and "spirit" (36-37). The book closes with a renewed enumeration of Victor's eleven errors (38), and a final admonition to his rashness (39). It is pleasant to know that Augustine found in this case, also, that righteousness is the fruit of the faithful wounds of a friend. Victor accepted the rebuke, and professed his better instruction at the hands of his modest but resistless antagonist.

The controversy now entered upon a new stage. Among the evicted bishops of Italy who refused to sign Zosimus' *Epistola Tractoria*, Julian of Eclanum was easily the first, and at this point he appears as the champion of Pelagianism. It was a sad fate that arrayed this beloved son of his old friend against Augustine, just when there

seemed to be reason to hope that the controversy was at an end, and the victory won, and the plaudits of the world were greeting him as the saviour of the Church. But the now fast-aging bishop was to find, that, in this "very confident young man," he had yet to meet the most persistent and most dangerous advocate of the new doctrines that had arisen. Julian had sent, at an earlier period, two letters to Zosimus, one of which has come down to us as a "Confession of Faith," and the other of which attempted to approach Augustineian forms of speech as much as possible; the object of both being to gain standing ground in the Church for the Italian Pelagians. Now he appears as a Pelagian controversialist; and in opposition to the book *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, which Augustine had sent Valerius, he published an extended work in four thick books addressed to Turbantius. Extracts from the first of these books were sent by some one to Valerius, and were placed by him in the hands of Alypius, who was then in Italy, for transmission to Augustine. Meanwhile, a letter had been sent to Rome by Julian, designed to strengthen the cause of Pelagianism there; and a similar one, in the names of the eighteen Pelagianizing Italian bishops, was addressed to Rufus, bishop of Thessalonica, and representative of the Roman see in that portion of the Eastern Empire which was regarded as ecclesiastically a part of the West, the design of which was to obtain the powerful support of this important magnate, perhaps, also, a refuge from persecution within his jurisdiction. These two letters came into the hands of the new Pope, Boniface, who gave them also to Alypius for transmission to Augustine. Thus provided, Alypius returned to Africa. The tactics of all these writings of Julian were essentially the same; he attempted not so much to defend Pelagianism, as to attack Augustineianism, and thus literally to carry the war into Africa. He insisted that the corruption of nature which Augustine taught was nothing else than Manicheism; that the sovereignty of grace, as taught by him, was only the attribution of

"acceptance of persons," and partiality, to God; and that his doctrine of predestination was mere fatalism. He accused the anti-Pelagians of denying the goodness of the nature that God had created, of the marriage that He had ordained, of the law that He had given, of the free will that He had implanted in man, as well as the perfection of His saints. He insisted that this teaching also did dishonour to baptism itself which it professed so to honour, inasmuch as it asserted the continuance of concupiscence after baptism—and thus taught that baptism does not take away sins, but only shaves them off as one shaves his beard, and leaves the roots whence the sins may grow anew, and need cutting down again. He complained bitterly of the way in which Pelagianism had been condemned—that bishops had been compelled to sign a definition of dogma, not in council assembled, but sitting at home; and he demanded a rehearing of the whole case before a lawful council, lest the doctrine of the Manichees should be forced upon the acceptance of the world.

Augustine felt a strong desire to see the whole work of Julian against his book *On Marriage and Concupiscence* before he undertook a reply to the excerpts sent him by Valerius; but he did not feel justified in delaying obedience to that officer's request, and so wrote at once two treatises, one an answer to these excerpts, for the benefit of Valerius, constituting the second book of his *On Marriage and Concupiscence* ; and the other, a far more elaborate examination of the letters sent by Boniface, which bears the title, *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* . The purpose of the second book of *On Marriage and Concupiscence* , Augustine himself states, in its introductory sentences, to be "to reply to the taunts of his adversaries with all the truthfulness and scriptural authority he could command." He begins (2) by identifying the source of the extracts forwarded to him by Valerius, with Julian's work against his first book, and then remarks upon the garbled form in which he is quoted

in them (3-6), and passes on to state and refute Julian's charge that the catholics had turned Manicheans (7-9). At this point, the refutation of Julian begins in good earnest, and the method that he proposes to use is stated; viz., to adduce the adverse statements, and refute them one by one (10). Beginning at the beginning, he quotes first the title of the paper sent him, which declares that it is directed against "those who condemn matrimony, and ascribe its fruit to the Devil" (11), which certainly, says Augustine, does not describe him or the catholics. The next twenty chapters (10-30), accordingly, following Julian's order, labour to prove that marriage is good, and ordained by God, but that its good includes *fecundity* indeed, but not *concupiscence*, which arose from sin, and contracts sin. It is next argued, that the doctrine of original sin does not imply an evil origin for man (31-51); and in the course of this argument, the following propositions are especially defended: that God makes offspring for good and bad alike, just as He sends the rain and sunshine on just and unjust (31-34); that God makes everything to be found in marriage except its *flaw*, concupiscence (35-40); that marriage is not the cause of original sin, but only the channel through which it is transmitted (41-47); and that to assert that evil cannot arise from what is good leaves us in the clutches of that very Manicheism which is so unjustly charged against the catholics-for, if evil be not eternal, what else was there from which it could arise but something good? (48-51). In concluding, Augustine recapitulates, and argues especially, that shameful concupiscence is of sin, and the author of sin, and was not in paradise (52-54); that children are made by God, and only marred by the Devil (55); that Julian, in admitting that Christ died for infants, admits that they need salvation (56); that what the Devil makes in children is not a substance, but an injury to a substance (57-58); and that to suppose that concupiscence existed in any form in paradise introduces incongruities in our conception of life in that abode of primeval bliss (59-60).

The long and important treatise, *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians*, consists of four books, the first of which replies to the letter sent to Rome, and the other three to that sent to Thessalonica. After a short introduction, in which he thanks Boniface for his kindness, and gives reasons why heretical writings should be answered (1-3), Augustine begins at once to rebut the calumnies which the letter before him brings against the catholics (4-28). These are seven in number: 1. That the catholics destroy free will; to which Augustine replies that none are "forced into sin by the necessity of their flesh," but all sin by free will, though no man can have a righteous will save by God's grace, and that it is really the Pelagians that destroy free will by exaggerating it (4-8); 2. That Augustine declares that such marriage as now exists is not of God (9); 3. That sexual desire and intercourse are made a device of the Devil, which is sheer Manicheism (10-11); 4. That the Old-Testament saints are said to have died in sin (12); 5. That Paul and the other apostles are asserted to have been polluted by lust all their days; Augustine's answer to which includes a running commentary on Rom. vii. 7 sq., in which (correcting his older exegesis) he shows that Paul is giving here a transcript of his own experience as a typical Christian (13-24); 6. That Christ is said not to have been free from sin (25); 7. That baptism does not give complete remission of sins, but leaves roots from which they may again grow; to which Augustine replies that baptism does remit all sins, but leaves concupiscence, which, although not sin, is the source of sin (26-28). Next, the positive part of Julian's letter is taken up, and his profession of faith against the catholics examined (29-41). The seven affirmations that Julian makes here are designed as the obverse of the seven charges against the catholics. He believed: 1. That free will is in all by nature, and could not perish by Adam's sin (29); 2. That marriage, as now existent, was ordained by God (30); 3. That sexual impulse and virility are from God, (31-35); 4. That men are God's work, and no

one is forced to do good or evil unwillingly, but are assisted by grace to good, and incited by the Devil to evil (36-38); 5. That the saints of the Old Testament were perfected in righteousness here, and so passed into eternal life (39); 6. That the grace of Christ (ambiguously meant) is necessary for all, and all children-even those of baptized parents-are to be baptized (40); 7. And that baptism gives full cleansing from all sins; to which Augustine pointedly asks, "What does it do for infants, then?" (41). The book concludes with an answer to Julian's conclusion, in which he demands a general council, and charges the catholics with Manicheism.

The second, third, and fourth books deal with the letter to Rufus in a somewhat similar way, the second and third books being occupied with the calumnies brought against the catholics, and the fourth with the claims made by the Pelagians. The second begins by repelling the charge of Manicheism brought against the catholics (1-4), to which the pointed remark is added, that the Pelagians cannot hope to escape condemnation because they are willing to condemn another heresy; and then defends (with less success) the Roman clergy against the charge of prevarication in their dealing with the Pelagians (5-8), in the course of which all that can be said in defence of Zosimus' wavering policy is said well and strongly. Next the charges against catholic teaching are taken up and answered (9-16), especially the two important accusations that they maintain fate under the name of grace (9-12), and that they make God an "accepter of persons" (13-16). Augustine's replies to these charges are in every way admirable. The charge of "fate" rests solely on the catholic denial that grace is given according to preceding merits; but the Pelagians do not escape the same charge when they acknowledge that the "fates" of baptized and unbaptized infants do differ. It is, in truth, not a question of "fate," but of *gratuitous bounty*; and "it is not the catholics that assert fate under the name of grace, but the Pelagians

that choose to call divine grace by the name of 'fate' "(12). As to "acceptance of persons," we must define what we mean by that. God certainly does not accept one's "person" above another's; He does not give to one rather than to another because He sees something to please Him in one rather than another: quite the opposite. He gives of His bounty to one while giving all their due to all, as in the parable (Matt. xx. 9 sq.) To ask why He does this, is to ask in vain: the apostle answers by not answering (Rom. ix.); and before the dumb infants, who are yet made to differ, all objection to God is dumb. From this point, the book becomes an examination of the Pelagian doctrine of prevenient merit (17-23), concluding that God gives all by grace from the beginning to the end of every process of doing good. 1. He commands the good; 2. He gives the desire to do it; and, 3. He gives the power to do it: and all, of His gratuitous mercy. The third book continues the discussion of the calumnies of the Pelagians against the catholics, and enumerates and answers six of them: viz., that the catholics teach, 1. That the Old-Testament law was given, not to justify the obedient, but to serve as cause of greater sin (2-3); 2. That baptism does not give entire remission of sins, but the baptized are partly God's and partly the Devil's (4-5); 3. That the Holy Ghost did not assist virtue in the Old Testament (6-13); 4. That the Bible saints were not holy, but only less wicked than others (14-15); 5. That Christ was a sinner by necessity of His flesh (doubtless, Julian's inference from the doctrine of race-sin) (16); 6. That men will begin to fulfil God's commandments only after the resurrection (17-23). Augustine shows that at the basis of all these calumnies lies either misapprehension or misrepresentation; and, in concluding the book, enumerates the three chief points in the Pelagian heresy, with the five claims growing out of them, of which they most boasted, and then elucidates the mutual relations of the three parties, catholics, Pelagians, and Manicheans, with reference to these points, showing that the catholics stand asunder from both the others, and condemn

both (24-27). This conclusion is really a preparation for the fourth book, which takes up these five Pelagian claims, and, after showing the catholic position on them all in brief (1-3), discusses them in turn (4-19): viz., the praise of the creature (4-8), the praise of marriage (9), the praise of the law (10-11), the praise of free will (12-16), and the praise of the saints (17-18). At the end, Augustine calls on the Pelagians to cease to oppose the Manicheans, only to fall into as bad heresy as theirs (19); and then, in reply to their accusation that the catholics were proclaiming novel doctrine, he adduces the testimony of Cyprian and Ambrose, both of whom had received Pelagius' praise, on each of the three main points of Pelagianism (20-32), and then closes with the declaration that the "impious and foolish doctrine," as they called it, of the catholics, is immemorial truth (33), and with a denial of the right of the Pelagians to ask for a general council to condemn them (34). All heresies do not need an ecumenical synod for their condemnation; usually it is best to stamp them out locally, and not allow what may be confined to a corner to disturb the whole world.

These books were written late in 420, or early in 421, and Alypius appears to have conveyed them to Italy during the latter year. Before its close, Augustine, having obtained and read the whole of Julian's attack on the first book of his work *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, wrote out a complete answer to it, -a task that he was all the more anxious to complete, on perceiving that the extracts sent by Valerius were not only all from the first book of Julian's treatise, but were somewhat altered in the extracting. The resulting work, *Against Julian*, one of the longest that he wrote in the whole course of the Pelagian controversy, shows its author at his best: according to Cardinal Noris's judgment, he appears in it "almost divine," and Augustine himself clearly set great store by it. In the first book of this noble treatise, after professing his continued love for Julian, "whom



he was unable not to love, whatever he [Julian] should say against him" (35), he undertakes to show that in affixing the opprobrious name of Manicheans on those who assert original sin, Julian is incriminating many of the most famous fathers, both of the Latin and Greek Churches. In proof of this, he makes appropriate quotations from Irenaeus, Cyprian, Reticus, Olympius, Hilary, Ambrose, Gregory Nazianzenus, Basil, John of Constantinople. Then he argues, that, so far from the catholics falling into Manichean heresy, Julian plays, himself, into the hands of the Manicheans in their strife against the catholics, by many unguarded statements, such as, e.g., when he says that an evil thing cannot arise from what is good, that the work of the Devil cannot be suffered to be diffused by means of a work of God, that a root of evil cannot be placed within a gift of God, and the like. The second book advances to greater detail, and adduces the five great arguments which the Pelagians urged against the catholics, in order to test them by the voice of antiquity. These arguments are stated as follows (2): "For you say, 'That we, by asserting original sin, affirm that the Devil is the maker of infants, condemn marriage, deny that all sins are remitted in baptism, accuse God of the guilt of sin, and produce despair of perfection.' You contend that all these are consequences, if we believe that infants are born bound by the sin of the first man, and are therefore under the Devil unless they are born again in Christ. For, 'It is the Devil that creates,' you say, 'if they are created from that wound which the Devil inflicted on the human nature that was made at first.' 'And marriage is condemned,' you say, 'if it is to be believed to have something about it whence it produces those worthy of condemnation.' 'And all sins are not remitted in baptism,' you say, 'if there remains any evil in baptized couples whence evil offspring are produced.' 'And how is God,' you ask, 'not unjust, if He, while remitting their own sins to baptized persons, yet condemns their offspring, inasmuch as, although it is created by Him, it yet

ignorantly and involuntarily contracts the sins of others from those very parents to whom they are remitted?' 'Nor can men believe,' you add, 'that virtue-to which corruption is to be understood to be contrary-can be perfected, if they cannot believe that it can destroy the inbred vices, although, no doubt, these can scarcely be considered vices, since he does not sin, who is unable to be other than he was created.' "These arguments are then tested, one by one, by the authority of the earlier teachers who were appealed to in the first book, and shown to be condemned by them. The remaining four books follow Julian's four books, argument by argument, refuting him in detail. In the third book it is urged that although God is good, and made man good, and instituted marriage which is, therefore, good, nevertheless concupiscence is evil, and in it the flesh lusts against the spirit. Although chaste spouses use this evil well, continent believers do better in not using it at all. It is pointed out, how far all this is from the madness of the Manicheans, who dream of matter as essentially evil and co-eternal with God; and shown that evil concupiscence sprang from Adam's disobedience and, being transmitted to us, can be removed only by Christ. It is shown, also, that Julian himself confesses lust to be evil, inasmuch as he speaks of remedies against it, wishes it to be bridled, and speaks of the continent waging a glorious warfare. The fourth book follows the second book of Julian's work, and makes two chief contentions: that unbelievers have no true virtues, and that even the heathen recognize concupiscence as evil. It also argues that grace is not given according to merit, and yet is not to be confounded with fate; and explains the text that asserts that 'God wishes all men to be saved,' in the sense that 'all men' means 'all that are to be saved' since none are saved except by His will. The fifth book, in like manner, follows Julian's third book, and treats of such subjects as these: that it is due to sin that any infants are lost; that shame arose in our first parents through sin; that sin can well be the punishment of preceding sin;

that concupiscence is always evil, even in those who do not assent to it; that true marriage may exist without intercourse; that the "flesh" of Christ differs from the "sinful flesh" of other men; and the like. In the sixth book, Julian's fourth book is followed, and original sin is proved from the baptism of infants, the teaching of the apostles, and the rites of exorcism and exsufflation incorporated in the form of baptism. Then, by the help of the illustration drawn from the olive and the oleaster, it is explained how Christian parents can produce unregenerate offspring; and the originally voluntary character of sin is asserted, even though it now comes by inheritance.

After the completion of this important work, there succeeded a lull in the controversy, of some years duration; and the calm refutation of Pelagianism and exposition of Christian grace, which Augustine gave in his *Enchiridion*, might well have seemed to him his closing word on this all-absorbing subject. But he had not yet given the world all he had in treasure for it, and we can rejoice in the chance that five or six years afterwards drew from him a renewed discussion of some of the more important aspects of the doctrine of grace. The circumstances which brought this about are sufficiently interesting in themselves, and open up to us an unwonted view into the monastic life of the times. There was an important monastery at Adrumetum, the metropolitan city of the province of Byzacium, from which a monk named Florus went out on a journey of charity to his native country of Uzalis about 426. On the journey he met with Augustine's letter to Sixtus, in which the doctrines of gratuitous and prevenient grace were expounded. He was much delighted with it, and, procuring a copy, sent it back to his monastery for the edification of his brethren, while he himself went on to Carthage. At the monastery, the letter created great disturbance: without the knowledge of the abbot, Valentinus, it was read aloud to the monks, many of whom were unskilled in theological questions; and some five

or more were greatly offended, and declared that free will was destroyed by it. A secret strife arose among the brethren, some taking extreme grounds on both sides. Of all this, Valentinus remained ignorant until the return of Florus, who was attacked as the author of all the trouble, and who felt it his duty to inform the abbot of the state of affairs. Valentinus applied first to the bishop, Evodius, for such instruction as would make Augustine's letter clear to the most simple. Evodius replied, praising their zeal and deprecating their contentiousness, and explaining that Adam had full free will, but that it is now wounded and weak, and Christ's mission was as a physician to cure and recuperate it. "Let them read," is his prescription, "the words of God's elders....And when they do not understand, let them not quickly reprehend, but pray to understand." This did not, however, cure the malecontents, and the holy presbyter Sabrinus was appealed to, and sent a book with clear interpretations. But neither was this satisfactory; and Valentinus, at last, reluctantly consented that Augustine himself should be consulted—fearing, he says, lest by making inquiries he should seem to waver about the truth. Two members of the community were consequently permitted to journey to Hippos, but they took with them no introduction and no commendation from their abbot. Augustine, nevertheless, received them without hesitation, as they bore themselves with too great simplicity to allow him to suspect them of deception. Now we get a glimpse of life in the great bishop's monastic home. The monks told their story, and were listened to with courtesy and instructed with patience; and, as they were anxious to get home before Easter, they received a letter for Valentinus in which Augustine briefly explains the nature of the misapprehension that had arisen, and points out that both grace and free will must be defended, and neither so exaggerated as to deny the other. The letter of Sixtus, he explains, was written against the Pelagians, who assert that grace is given according to merit, and briefly expounds the true

doctrine of grace as necessarily gratuitous and therefore prevenient. When the monks were on the point of starting home, they were joined by a third companion from Adrumetum, and were led to prolong their visit. This gave him the opportunity he craved for their fuller instruction: he read with them and explained to them not only his letter to Sixtus, from which the strife had risen, but much of the chief literature of the Pelagian controversy, copies of which also were made for them to take home with them; and when they were ready to go, he sent by them another and longer letter to Valentinus, and placed in their hands a treatise composed for their especial use, which, moreover, he explained to them. This longer letter is essentially an exhortation "to turn aside neither to the right hand nor to the left,"-neither to the left hand of the Pelagian error of upholding free will in such a manner as to deny grace, nor to the right hand of the equal error of so upholding grace as if we might yield ourselves to evil with impunity. Both grace and free will are to be proclaimed; and it is true both that grace is not given to merits, and that we are to be judged at the last day according to our works. The treatise which Augustine composed for a fuller exposition of these doctrines is the important work *On Grace and Free Will*. After a brief introduction, explaining the occasion of his writing, and exhorting the monks to humility and teachableness before God's revelations (1), Augustine begins by asserting and proving the two propositions that the Scriptures clearly teach that man has free will (2-5), and, as clearly, the necessity of grace for doing any good (6-9). He then examines the passages which the Pelagians claim as teaching that we must first turn to God, before He visits us with His grace (10-11), and then undertakes to show that grace is not given to merit (12 sq.), appealing especially to Paul's teaching and example, and replying to the assertion that forgiveness is the only grace that is not given according to our merits (15-18), and to the query, "How can eternal life be both of grace and of reward?" (19-21). The nature of

grace, what it is, is next explained (22 sq.). It is not the law, which gives only knowledge of sin (22-24), nor nature, which would render Christ's death needless (25), nor mere forgiveness of sins, as the Lord's Prayer (which should be read with Cyprian's comments on it) is enough to show (26). Nor will it do to say that it is given to the merit of a good will, thus distinguishing the good work which is of grace from the good will which precedes grace (27-30); for the Scriptures oppose this, and our prayers for others prove that we expect God to be the *first mover*, as indeed both Scripture and experience prove that He is. It is next shown that both free will and grace are concerned in the heart's conversion (31-32), and that love is the spring of all good in man (33-40), which, however, we have only because God first loved us (38), and which is certainly greater than knowledge, although the Pelagians admit only the latter to be from God (40). God's sovereign government of men's wills is then proved from Scripture (41-43), and the wholly gratuitous character of grace is illustrated (44), while the only possible theodicy is found in the certainty that the Lord of all the earth will do right. For, though no one knows why He takes one and leaves another, we all know that He hardens judicially and saves graciously—that He hardens none who do not deserve hardening, but none that He saves deserve to be saved (45). The treatise closes with an exhortation to its prayerful and repeated study (46).

The one request that Augustine made, on sending this work to Valentinus, was that Florus, through whom the controversy had arisen, should be sent to him, that he might converse with him and learn whether he had been misunderstood, or himself had misunderstood Augustine. In due time Florus arrived at Hippo, bringing a letter from Valentinus which addresses Augustine as "Lord Pope" ( *domine papa* ), thanks him for his "sweet" and "healing" instruction, and introduces Florus as one whose true faith

could be confided in. It is very clear, both from Valentinus' letter and from the hints that Augustine gives, that his loving dealing with the monks had borne admirable fruit: "none were cast down for the worse, some were built up for the better." But it was reported to him that some one at the monastery had objected to the doctrine he had taught them, that "no man ought, then, to be rebuked for not keeping God's commandments; but only God should be besought that he might keep them." In other words, it was said that if all good was, in the last resort, from God's grace, man ought not to be blamed for not doing what he could not do, but God ought to be besought to do for man what He alone could do: we ought, in a word, to apply to the source of power. This occasioned the composition of yet another treatise *On Rebuke and Grace*, the object of which was to explain the relations of grace to human conduct, and especially to make it plain that the sovereignty of God's grace does not supersede our duty to ourselves or our fellow-men. It begins by thanking Valentinus for his letter and for sending Florus (whom Augustine finds well instructed in the truth), thanking God for the good effect of the previous book, and recommending its continued study, and then by briefly expounding the Catholic faith concerning grace, free-will, and the law (1-2). The general proposition that is defended is that the gratuitous sovereignty of God's grace does not supersede human means for obtaining and continuing it (3 sq.) This is shown by the apostle's example, who used all human means for the prosecution of his work, and yet confessed that it was "God that gave the increase" (3). Objections are then answered (4 sq.)—especially the great one that "it is not my fault if I do not do what I have not received grace for doing" (6); to which Augustine replies (7-10), that we deserve rebuke for our very unwillingness to be rebuked, that on the same reasoning the prescription of the law and the preaching of the gospel would be useless, that the apostle's example opposes such a position, and that our consciousness witnesses that we deserve rebuke for not

persevering in the right way. From this point an important discussion arises, in this interest, of the gift of perseverance (11-19), and of God's election (20-24); the teaching being that no one is saved who does not persevere, and all that are predestinated or "called according to the purpose" (Augustine's phrase for what we should call "effectual calling") will persevere, and yet that we co-operate by our will in all good deeds, and deserve rebuke if we do not. Whether Adam received the gift of perseverance, and, in general, the difference between the grace given to him, which was that grace by which he could stand) and that now given to God's children (which is that grace by which we are actually made to stand), are next discussed (26-38), with the result of showing the superior greatness of the gifts of grace now to those given before the fall. The necessity of God's mercy at all times, and our constant dependence on it, are next vigorously asserted (39-42); even in the day of judgment, if we are not judged "with mercy" we cannot be saved (41). The treatise is brought to an end by a concluding application of the whole discussion to the special matter in hand, *rebuke* (43-49). Seeing that rebuke is one of God's means of working out his gracious purposes, it cannot be inconsistent with the sovereignty of that grace; for, of course, God predestinates the means with the end (43). Nor can we know, in our ignorance, whether our rebuke is, in any particular case, to be the means of amendment or the ground of greater condemnation. How dare we, then, withhold it? Let it be, however, graduated to the fault, and let us always remember its purpose (46-48). Above all, let us not dare hold it back, lest we hold back from our brother the means of his recovery, and, as well, disobey the command of God (49).

It was not long afterwards (about 427) when Augustine was called upon to attempt to reclaim a Carthaginian brother, Vitalis by name, who had been brought to trial on the charge of teaching that the



beginning of faith was not the gift of God, but the act of man's own free will ( *ex propria voluntatis* ). This was essentially the semi-Pelagian position which was subsequently to make so large a figure in history; and Augustine treats it now as necessarily implying the basal idea of Pelagianism. In the important letter which he sent to Vitalis, he first argues that his position is inconsistent with the prayers of the church. He, Augustine, prays that Vitalis may come to the true faith; but does not this prayer ascribe the origination of right faith to God? The Church so prays for all men: the priest at the altar exhorts the people to pray God for unbelievers, that He may convert them to the faith; for catechumens, that He may breathe into them a desire for regeneration; for the faithful, that by His aid they may persevere in what they have begun: will Vitalis refuse to obey these exhortations, because, forsooth, faith is of free will and not of God's gift? Nay, will a Carthaginian scholar array himself against Cyprian's exposition of the Lord's Prayer? for he certainly teaches that we are to ask of God what Vitalis says is to be had of ourselves. We may go farther: it is not Cyprian, but Paul, who says, "Let us pray to God that we do no evil" (2 Cor. xiii. 7); it is the Psalmist who says, "The steps of man are directed by God" (Ps. xxxvi. 23). "If we wish to defend free will, let us not strive against that by which it is made free. For he who strives against grace, by which the will is made free for refusing evil and doing good, wishes his will to remain captive. Tell us, I beg you, how the apostle can say, 'We give thanks to the Father who made us fit to have our lot with the saints in light, who delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love' (Col. i. 12, 13), if not He, but itself, frees our choice? It is, then, a false rendering of thanks to God, as if He does what He does not do; and he has erred who has said that 'He makes us fit, etc.' 'The grace of God,' therefore, does not consist in the nature of free-will, and in law and teaching, as the Pelagian perversity dreams; but it is given for each single act by His will,

concerning whom it is written,"-quoting Ps. lxxvii. 10. About the middle of the letter, Augustine lays down twelve propositions against the Pelagians, which are important as communicating to us what he thought, at the end of the controversy, were the chief points in dispute. "Since, therefore," he writes, "we are catholic Christians: 1. We know that new-born children have not yet done anything in their own lives, good or evil, neither have they come into the miseries of this life according to the deserts of some previous life, which none of them can have had in their own persons; and yet, because they are born carnally after Adam, they contract the contagion of ancient death, by the first birth, and are not freed from the punishment of eternal death (which is contracted by a just condemnation, passing over from one to all), except they are by grace born again in Christ. 2. We know that the grace of God is given neither to children nor to adults according to our deserts. 3. We know that it is given to adults for each several act. 4. We know that it is not given to all men; and to those to whom it is given, it is not only not given according to the merits of works, but it is not even given to them according to the merits of their will; and this is especially apparent in children. 5. We know that to those to whom it is given, it is given by the gratuitous mercy of God. 6. We know that to those to whom it is not given, it is not given by the just judgment of God. 7. We know that we shall all stand before the tribunal of Christ, and each shall receive according to what he has done through the body—not according to what he would have done, had he lived longer—whether good or evil. 8. We know that even children are to receive according to what they have done through the body, whether good or evil. But according to what "they have done" not by their own act, but by the act of those by whose responses for them they are said both to renounce the Devil and to believe in God, wherefore they are counted among the number of the faithful, and have part in the statement of the Lord when He says, "Whosoever shall believe and be baptized, shall be saved."

Therefore also, to those who do not receive this sacrament, belongs what follows, "But whosoever shall not have believed, shall be damned" (Mark xvi. 16). Whence these too, as I have said, if they die in that early age, are judged, of course, according to what they have done through the body, i.e., in the time in which they were in the body, when they believe or do not believe by the heart and mouth of their sponsors, when they are baptized or not baptized, when they eat or do not eat the flesh of Christ, when they drink or do not drink His blood—according to those things, then, which they have done through the body, not according to those which, had they lived longer, they would have done. 9. We know that blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; and that what they would have done had they lived longer, is not imputed to them. 10. We know that those that believe, with their own heart, in the Lord, do so by their own free will and choice. 11. We know that we who already believe act with right faith towards those who do not wish to believe, when we pray to God that they may wish it. 12. We know that for those who have believed out of this number, we both ought and are rightly and truly accustomed to return thanks to God, as for his benefits." Certainly such a body of propositions commends their author to us as Christian both in head and heart: they are admirable in every respect; and even in the matter of the salvation of infants, where he had not yet seen the light of truth, he expresses himself in a way as engaging in its hearty faith in God's goodness as it is honorable in its loyalty to what he believed to be truth and justice. Here his doctrine of the Church ran athwart and clouded his view of the reach of grace; but we seem to see between the lines the promise of the brighter dawn of truth that was yet to come. The rest of the epistle is occupied with an exposition and commendation of these propositions, which ranks with the richest passages of the anti-Pelagian writings, and which breathes everywhere a yearning for his correspondent which we cannot help hoping proved salutary to his faith.

It is not without significance, that the error of Vitalis took a semi-Pelagian form. Pure Pelagianism was by this time no longer a living issue. Augustine was himself, no doubt, not yet done with it. The second book of his treatise *On Marriage and Concupiscence*, which seems to have been taken to Italy by Alypius, in 421, received at once the attention of Julian, and was elaborately answered by him, during that same year, in eight books addressed to Florus. But Julian was now in Cilicia, and his book was slow in working its way westward. It was found at Rome by Alypius, apparently in 427 or 428, and he at once set about transcribing it for his friend's use. An opportunity arising to send it to Africa before it was finished, he forwarded to Augustine the five books that were ready, with an urgent request that they should receive his immediate attention, and a promise to send the other three as soon as possible. Augustine gives an account of his progress in his reply to them in a letter written to Quodvultdeus, apparently in 428. This deacon was urging Augustine to give the Church a succinct account of all heresies; and Augustine excuses himself from immediately undertaking that task by the press of work on his hands. He was writing his *Retractations*, and had already finished two books of them, in which he had dealt with two hundred and thirty-two works. His letters and homilies remained and he had given the necessary reading to many of the letters. Also, he tells his correspondent, he was engaged on a reply to the eight books of Julian's new work. Working night and day, he had already completed his response to the first three of Julian's books, and had begun on the fourth while still expecting the arrival of the last three which Alypius had promised to send. If he had completed the answer to the five books of Julian which he already had in hand, before the other three reached him, he might begin the work which Quodvultdeus so earnestly desired him to undertake. In due time, whatever may have been the trials and labours that needed first to be met, the desired treatise *On Heresies* was written (about 428), and the eighty-eighth

chapter of it gives us a welcome compressed account of the Pelagian heresy, which may be accepted as the obverse of the account of catholic truth given in the letter to Vitalis. But the composition of this work was not the only interruption which postponed the completion of the second elaborate work against Julian. It was in the providence of God that the life of this great leader in the battle for grace should be prolonged until he could deal with semi-Pelagianism also. Information as to the rise of this new form of the heresy at Marseilles and elsewhere in Southern Gaul was conveyed to Augustine along with entreaties, that, as "faith's great patron," he would give his aid towards meeting it, by two laymen with whom he had already had correspondence—Prosper and Hilary. They pointed out the difference between the new party and thorough-going Pelagianism; but, at the same time, the essentially Pelagianizing character of its formative elements. Its representatives were ready, as a rule, to admit that all men were lost in Adam, and no one could recover himself by his own free will, but all needed God's grace for salvation. But they objected to the doctrines of prevenient and of irresistible grace; and asserted that man could initiate the process of salvation by turning first to God, that all men could resist God's grace, and no grace could be given which they could not reject, and especially they denied that the gifts of grace came irrespective of merits, actual or foreseen. They said that what Augustine taught as to the calling of God's elect according to His own purpose was tantamount to fatalism, was contrary to the teaching of the fathers and the true Church doctrine, and, even if true, should not be preached, because of its tendency to drive men into indifference or despair. Hence, Prosper especially desired Augustine to point out the dangerous nature of these views, and to show that prevenient and co-operating grace is not inconsistent with free will, that God's predestination is not founded on foresight of receptivity in its

objects, and that the doctrines of grace may be preached without danger to souls.

Augustine's answer to these appeals was a work in two books, *On the Predestination of the Saints*, the second book of which is usually known under the separate title of *The Gift of Perseverance*. The former book begins with a careful discrimination of the position of his new opponents they have made a right beginning in that they believe in original sin, and acknowledge that none are saved from it save by Christ, and that God's grace leads men's wills, and without grace no one can suffice for good deeds. These things will furnish a good starting-point for their progress to an acceptance of predestination also (1-2). The first question that needs discussion in such circumstances is, whether God gives the very beginnings of faith (3 sq.); since they admit that what Augustine had previously urged sufficed to prove that faith was the gift of God so far as that the increase of faith was given by Him, but not so far but that the beginning of faith may be understood to be man's, to which, then, God adds all other gifts (compare 43). Augustine insists that this is no other than the Pelagian assertion of grace according to merit (3), is opposed to Scripture (4-5), and begets arrogant boasting in ourselves (6). He replies to the objection that he had himself once held this view, by confessing it, and explaining that he was converted from it by 1 Cor. iv. 7, as applied by Cyprian (7-8), and expounds that verse as containing in its narrow compass a sufficient answer to the present theories (9-11). He answers, further, the objection that the apostle distinguishes faith from works, and works alone are meant in such passages, by pointing to John vi. 28, and similar statements in Paul (12-16). Then he answers the objection that he himself had previously taught that God acted on foresight of faith, by showing that he was misunderstood (17-18). He next shows that no objection lies against predestination that does not lie with equal force against

grace (19-22)—since predestination is nothing but God's foreknowledge of and preparation for grace, and all questions of sovereignty and the like belong to grace. Did God not know to whom he was going to give faith (19)? or did he promise the results of faith, works, without promising the faith without which, as going before, the works were impossible? Would not this place God's fulfilment of his promise out of His power, and make it depend on man (20)? Why are men more willing to trust in their weakness than in God's strength? do they count God's promises more uncertain than their own performance (22)? He next proves the sovereignty of grace, and of predestination, which is but the preparation for grace, by the striking examples of infants, and, above all, of the human nature of Christ (23-31), and then speaks of the twofold calling, one external and one "according to purpose,"-the latter of which is efficacious and sovereign (32-37). In closing, the semi-Pelagian position is carefully defined and refuted as opposed, alike with the grosser Pelagianism, to the Scriptures of both Testaments (38-42).

The purpose of the second book, which has come down to us under the separate title of *On the Gift of Perseverance*, is to show that that perseverance which endures to the end is as much of God as the beginning of faith, and that no man who has been "called according to God's purpose," and has received this gift, can fall from grace and be lost. The first half of the treatise is devoted to this theme (1-33). It begins by distinguishing between temporary perseverance, which endures for a time, and that which continues to the end (1), and affirms that the latter is certainly a gift of God's grace, and is, therefore, asked from God which would otherwise be but a mocking petition (2-3). This, the Lord's Prayer itself might teach us, as under Cyprian's exposition it does teach us—each petition being capable of being read as a prayer for perseverance (4-9). Of course, moreover, it cannot be lost, otherwise it would not be "to the end." If man

forsakes God, of course it is he that does it, and he is doubtless under continual temptation to do so; but if he abides with God, it is God who secures that, and God is equally able to *keep* one when drawn to Him, as He is to *draw* him to Him (10-15). He argues anew at this point, that grace is not according to merit, but always in mercy; and explains and illustrates the unsearchable ways of God in His sovereign but merciful dealing with men (16-25), and closes this part of the treatise by a defence of himself against adverse quotations from his early work on *Free Will*, which he has already corrected in his *Retractions*. The second half of the book discusses the objections that were being urged against the preaching of predestination (34-62), as if it opposed and enervated the preaching of the Gospel. He replies that Paul and the apostles, and Cyprian and the fathers, preached both together; that the same objections will lie against the preaching of God's foreknowledge and grace itself, and, indeed, against preaching any of the virtues, as, e.g., obedience, while declaring them God's gifts. He meets the objections in detail, and shows that such preaching is food to the soul, and must not be withheld from men; but explains that it must be given gently, wisely, and prayerfully. The whole treatise ends with an appeal to the prayers of the Church as testifying that all good is from God (63-65), and to the great example of unmerited grace and sovereign predestination in the choice of one human nature without preceding merit, to be united in one person with the Eternal Word—an illustration of his theme of the gratuitous grace of God which he is never tired of adducing (66-67).

These books were written in 428-429, and after their completion the unfinished work against Julian was resumed. Alypius had sent the remaining three books, and Augustine slowly toiled on to the end of his reply to the sixth book. But he was to be interrupted once more, and this time by the most serious of all interruptions. On the 28th of



August, 430, with the Vandals thundering at the gates of Hippo, full of good works and of faith, he turned his face away from the strifes-whether theological or secular-of earth, and entered into rest with the Lord whom he loved. The last work against Julian was already one of the most considerable in size of all his books; but it was never finished, and retains until to-day the significant title of *The Unfinished Work* . Augustine had hesitated to undertake this work, because he found Julian's arguments too silly either to deserve refutation, or to afford occasion for really edifying discourse. And certainly the result falls below Augustine's usual level, though this is not due, as is so often said, to failing powers and great age; for nothing that he wrote surpasses in mellow beauty and chastened strength the two books, *On the Predestination of the Saints* , which were written after four books of this work were completed. The plan of the work is to state Julian's arguments in his own words, and follow it with his remarks; thus giving it something of the form of a dialogue. It follows Julian's work, book by book. The first book states and answers certain calumnies which Julian had brought against Augustine and the catholic faith on the ground of their confession of original sin. Julian had argued, that, since God is just, He cannot impute another's sins to innocent infants; since sin is nothing but evil will, there can be no sin in infants who are not yet in the use of their will; and, since the freedom of will that is given to man consists in the capacity of both sinning and not sinning, free will is denied to those who attribute sin to nature. Augustine replies to these arguments, and answers certain objections that are made to his work *On Marriage and Concupiscence* , and then corrects Julian's false explanations of certain Scriptures from John viii., Rom. vi., vii., and 2 Timothy. The second book is a discussion of Rom. v. 12, which Julian had tried, like the other Pelagians, to explain by the "imitation" of Adam's bad example. The third book examines the abuse by Julian of certain Old-Testament passages-in Deut. xxiv., 2

Kings xiv., Ezek. xviii.-in his effort to show that God does not impute the father's sins to the children; as well as his similar abuse of Heb. xi. The charge of Manicheism, which was so repetitiously brought by Julian against the catholics, is then examined and refuted. The fourth book treats of Julian's strictures on Augustine's *On Marriage and Concupiscence* ii. 4-11, and proves from 1 John ii. 16 that concupiscence is evil, and not the work of God, but of the Devil. He argues that the shame that accompanies it is due to its sinfulness, and that there was none of it in Christ; also, that infants are born obnoxious to the first sin, and proves the corruption of their origin from Wisd. x. 10, 11. The fifth book defends *On Marriage and Concupiscence* ii. 12 sq., and argues that a sound nature could not have shame on account of its members, and the need of regeneration for what is generated by means of shameful concupiscence. Then Julian's abuse of 1 Cor. xv., Rom. v., Matt. vii. 17 and 33, with reference to *On Marriage and Concupiscence* ii. 14, 20, 26, is discussed; and then the origin of evil, and God's treatment of evil in the world. The sixth book traverses Julian's strictures on *On Marriage and Concupiscence* ii. 34 sq., and argues that human nature was changed for the worse by the sin of Adam, and thus was made not only sinful, but the source of sinners; and that the forces of free will by which man could at first do rightly if he wished, and refrain from sin if he chose, were lost by Adam's sin. He attacks Julian's definition of free will as "the capacity for sinning and not sinning" ( *possibilitas peccandi et non peccandi* ); and proves that the evils of this life are the punishment of sin—including, first of all, physical death. At the end, he treats of 1 Cor. xv. 22.

Although the great preacher of grace was taken away by death before the completion of this book, yet his work was not left incomplete. In the course of the next year (431) the Ecumenical Council of Ephesus condemned Pelagianism for the whole world; and an elaborate

treatise against the pure Pelagianism of Julian was already in 430 an anachronism. Semi-Pelagianism was yet to run its course, and to work its way so into the heart of a corrupt church as not to be easily displaced; but Pelagianism was to die with the first generation of its advocates. As we look back now through the almost millennium and a half of years that has intervened since Augustine lived and wrote, it is to his *Predestination of the Saints*— a completed, and well-completed, treatise—and not to *The Unfinished Work* , that we look as the crown and completion of his labours for grace.

#### **Part IV: The Theology of Grace**

The theology which Augustine opposed, in his anti-Pelagian writings, to the errors of Pelagianism, is, shortly, the theology of grace. Its roots were planted deeply in his own experience, and in the teachings of Scripture, especially of that apostle whom he delights to call 'the great preacher of grace,' and to follow whom, in his measure, was his greatest desire. The grace of God in Jesus Christ, conveyed to us by the Holy Spirit and evidenced by the love that He sheds abroad in our hearts, is the centre around which this whole side of His system revolves, and the germ out of which it grows. He was the more able to make it thus central because of the harmony of this view of salvation with the general principle of his whole theology, which was theocentric and revolved around his conception of God as the immanent and vital spirit in whom all things live and move and have their being. In like manner, God is the absolute good, and all good is either Himself or from Him; and only as God makes us good, are we able to do anything good.

The necessity of grace to man, Augustine argued from the condition of the race as partakers of Adam's sin. God created man upright, and endowed him with human faculties, including free will; and gave to

him freely that grace by which he was able to retain his uprightness. Being thus put on probation, with divine aid to enable him to stand if he chose, Adam used his free choice for sinning, and involved his whole race in his fall. It was on account of this sin that he died physically and spiritually, and this double death passes over from him to us. That all his descendants by ordinary generation are partakers in Adam's guilt and condemnation, Augustine is sure from the teachings of Scripture; and this is the fact of original sin, from which no one generated from Adam is free, and from which no one is freed save as regenerated in Christ. But how we are made partakers of it, he is less certain: sometimes he speaks as if it came by some mysterious unity of the race, so that we were all personally present in the individual Adam, and thus the whole race was the one man that sinned; sometimes he speaks more in the sense of modern realists, as if Adam's sin corrupted the nature, and the nature now corrupts those to whom it is communicated; sometimes he speaks as if it were due to simple heredity; sometimes, again, as if it depended on the presence of shameful concupiscence in the act of procreation, so that the propagation of guilt depends on the propagation of offspring by means of concupiscence. However transmitted, it is yet a fact that sin is propagated, and all mankind became sinners in Adam. The result of this is that we have lost the divine image, though not in such a sense that no lineaments of it remain to us; and, the sinning soul making the flesh corruptible, our whole nature is corrupted, and we are unable to do anything of ourselves truly good. This includes, of course, an injury to our will. Augustine, writing for the popular eye, treats this subject in popular language. But it is clear that he distinguished, in his thinking, between will as a faculty and will in a broader sense. As a mere faculty, will is and always remains an indifferent thing — after the fall, as before it, continuing poised in indifferency, and ready, like a weathercock, to be turned whithersoever the breeze that blows from the heart ('will,' in the

broader sense) may direct. It is not the faculty of willing, but the man who makes use of that faculty, that has suffered change from the fall. In paradise man stood in full ability: he had the *posse non peccare*, but not yet the *non posse peccare*; that is, he was endowed with a capacity for either part, and possessed the grace of God by which he was able to stand if he would, but also the power of free will by which he might fall if he would. By his fall he has suffered a change, is corrupt, and under the power of Satan; his will (in the broader sense) is now injured, wounded, diseased, enslaved, — although the faculty of will (in the narrow sense) remains indifferent. Augustine's criticism of Pelagius' discrimination of 'capacity' (*possibilitas, posse*), 'will' (*voluntas, velle*), and 'act' (*actio, esse*), does not turn on the discrimination itself, but on the incongruity of placing the power, ability in the mere capacity or possibility, rather than in the living agent who 'wills' and 'acts.' He himself adopts an essentially similar distribution, with only this correction; and thus keeps the faculty of will indifferent, but places the power of using it in the active agent, man. According, then, to the character of this man, will the use of the free will be. If the man be holy he will make a holy use of it, and if he be corrupt he will make a sinful use of it: if he be essentially holy, he cannot (like God Himself) make a sinful use of his will; and if he be enslaved to sin, he cannot make a good use of it. The last is the present condition of men by nature. They have free will; the faculty by which they act remains in indifferency, and they are allowed to use it just as they choose: but such as they cannot desire and therefore cannot choose anything but evil; and therefore they, and therefore their choice, and therefore their willing, is always evil and never good. They are thus the slaves of sin, which they obey; and while their free will avails for sinning, it does not avail for doing any good unless they be first freed by the grace of God. It is undeniable that this view is in consonance with modern psychology: let us once conceive of 'the will' as simply the whole man in the attitude of

willing, and it is immediately evident, that, however abstractly free the 'will' is, it is conditioned and enslaved in all its action by the character of the willing agent: a bad man does not cease to be bad in the act of willing, and a good man remains good even in his acts of choice.

In its nature, grace is assistance, help from God; and all divine aid may be included under the term, — as well what may be called natural, as what may be called spiritual, aid, Spiritual grace includes, no doubt, all external help that God gives man for working out his salvation, such as the law, the preaching of the gospel, the example of Christ, by which we may learn the right way; it includes also forgiveness of sins, by which we are freed from the guilt already incurred; but above all it includes that help which God gives by His Holy Spirit, working within, not without, by which man is enabled to choose and to do what he sees, by the teachings of the law, or by the gospel, or by the natural conscience, to be right. Within this aid are included all those spiritual exercises which we call regeneration, justification, perseverance to the end, — in a word, all the divine assistance by which, in being made Christians, we are made to differ from other men. Augustine is fond of representing this grace as in essence the writing of God's law (or of God's will) on our hearts, so that it appears hereafter as our own desire and wish; and even more prevalently as the shedding abroad of love in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, given to us in Christ Jesus; therefore, as a change of disposition, by which we come to love and freely choose, in co-operation with God's aid, just the things which hitherto we have been unable to choose because in bondage to sin. Grace, thus, does not make void free will: it acts through free will, and acts upon it only by liberating it from its bondage to sin, i.e., by liberating the agent that uses the free will, so that he is no longer enslaved by his fleshly lusts, and is enabled to make use of his free will in choosing the good; and

thus it is only by grace that free will is enabled to act in good part. But just because grace changes the disposition, and so enables man, hitherto enslaved to sin, for the first time to desire and use his free will for good, it lies in the very nature of the case that it is prevenient. Also, as the very name imports, it is necessarily gratuitous; since man is enslaved to sin until it is given, all the merits that he can have prior to it are bad merits, and deserve punishment, not gifts of favour. When, then, it is asked, on the ground of what, grace is given, it can only be answered, 'on the ground of God's infinite mercy and undeserved favour.' There is nothing in man to merit it, and it first gives merit of good to man. All men alike deserve death, and all that comes to them in the way of blessing is necessarily of God's free and unmerited favour. This is equally true of all grace. It is pre-eminently clear of that grace which gives faith, the root of all other graces, which is given of God, not to merits of good-will or incipient turning to Him, but of His sovereign good pleasure. But equally with faith, it is true of all other divine gifts: we may, indeed, speak of 'merits of good' as succeeding faith; but as all these merits find their root in faith, they are but 'grace on grace,' and men need God's mercy always, throughout this life, and even on the judgment day itself, when, if they are judged without mercy, they must be condemned. If we ask, then, why God gives grace, we can only answer that it is of His unspeakable mercy; and if we ask why He gives it to one rather than to another, what can we answer but that it is of His will? The sovereignty of grace results from its very gratuitousness: where none deserve it, it can be given only of the sovereign good pleasure of the great Giver, — and this is necessarily inscrutable, but cannot be unjust. We can faintly perceive, indeed, some reasons why God may be supposed not to have chosen to give His saving grace to all, or even to the most; but we cannot understand why He has chosen to give it to just the individuals to whom He has given it, and to withhold it from just those from whom He has withheld it. Here we

are driven to the apostle's cry, 'Oh the depth of the riches both of the mercy and the justice of God!'

The effects of grace are according to its nature. Taken as a whole, it is the recreative principle sent forth from God for the recovery of man from his slavery to sin, and for his reformation in the divine image. Considered as to the time of its giving, it is either operating or co-operating grace, i.e., either the grace that first enables the will to choose the good, or the grace that co-operates with the already enabled will to do the good; and it is, therefore, also called either prevenient or subsequent grace. It is not to be conceived of as a series of disconnected divine gifts, but as a constant efflux from God; but we may look upon it in the various steps of its operation in men, as bringing forgiveness of sins, faith, which is the beginning of all good, love to God, progressive power of good working, and perseverance to the end. In any case, and in all its operations alike, just because it is power from on high and the living spring of a new and re-created life, it is irresistible and indefectible. Those on whom the Lord bestows the gift of faith working from within, not from without, of course, have faith, and cannot help believing. Those to whom perseverance to the end is given must persevere to the end. It is not to be objected to this, that many seem to begin well who do not persevere: this also is of God, who has in such cases given great blessings indeed, but not this blessing, of perseverance to the end. Whatever of good men have, that God has given; and what they have not, why, of course, God has not given it. Nor can it be objected, that this leaves all uncertain: it is only unknown to us, but this is not uncertainty; we cannot know that we are to have any gift which God sovereignly gives, of course, until it is given, and we therefore cannot know that we have perseverance unto the end until we actually persevere to the end; but who would call what God does, and knows He is to do, uncertain, and what man is to do certain? Nor will it do



to say that thus nothing is left for us to do: no doubt, all things are in God's hands, and we should praise God that this is so, but we must co-operate with Him; and it is just because it is He that is working in us the willing and the doing, that it is worth our while to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. God has not determined the end without determining the appointed means.

Now, Augustine argues, since grace certainly is gratuitous, and given to no preceding merits, — prevenient and antecedent to all good, — and, therefore, sovereign, and bestowed only on those whom God selects for its reception; we must, of course, believe that the eternal God has foreknown all this from the beginning. He would be something less than God, had He not foreknown that He intended to bestow this prevenient, gratuitous, and sovereign grace on some men, and had He not foreknown equally the precise individuals on whom He intended to bestow it. To foreknow is to prepare beforehand. And this is predestination. He argues that there can be no objection to predestination, in itself considered, in the mind of any man who believes in a God: what men object to is the gratuitous and sovereign grace to which no additional difficulty is added by the necessary assumption that it was foreknown and prepared or from eternity. That predestination does not proceed on the foreknowledge of good or of faith, follows from its being nothing more than the foresight and preparation of grace, which, in its very idea, is gratuitous and not according to any merits, sovereign and according only to God's purpose, prevenient and in order to faith and good works. It is the sovereignty of grace, not its foresight or the preparation for it, which places men in God's hands, and suspends salvation absolutely on his unmerited mercy. But just because God is God, of course, no one receives grace who has not been foreknown and afore-selected for the gift; and, as much of course, no one who has been foreknown and afore-selected for it, fails to receive it.

Therefore the number of the predestinated is fixed, and fixed by God. Is this fate? Men may call God's grace fate if they choose; but it is not fate, but undeserved love and tender mercy, without which none would be saved. Does it paralyze effort? Only to those who will not strive to obey God because obedience is His gift. Is it unjust? Far from it: shall not God do what He will with His own undeserved favour? It is nothing but gratuitous mercy, sovereignly distributed, and foreseen and provided for from all eternity by Him who has selected us in His Son.

When Augustine comes to speak of the means of grace, i.e., of the channels and circumstances of its conference to men, he approaches the meeting point of two very dissimilar streams of his theology — his doctrine of grace and his doctrine of the Church — and he is sadly deflected from the natural course of his theology by the alien influence. He does not, indeed, bind the conference of grace to the means in such a sense that the grace must be given at the exact time of the application of the means. He does not deny that 'God is able, even when no man rebukes, to correct whom He will, and to lead him on to the wholesome mortification of repentance by the most hidden and most mighty power of His medicine.' Though the Gospel must be known in order that man may be saved (for how shall they believe without a preacher?), yet the preacher is nothing, and the preachment is nothing, but God only that gives the increase. He even has something like a distant glimpse of what has since been called the distinction between the visible and invisible Church — speaking of men not yet born as among those who are 'called according to God's purpose,' and, therefore, of the saved who constitute the Church — asserting that those who are so called, even before they believe, are 'already children of God enrolled in the memorial of their Father with unchangeable surety,' and, at the same time; allowing that there are many already in the visible Church who are not of it,

and who can therefore depart from it. But he teaches that those who are thus lost out of the visible Church are lost because of some fatal flaw in their baptism, or on account of post-baptismal sins; and that those who are of the 'called according to the purpose' are predestinated not only to salvation, but to salvation by baptism. Grace is not tied to the means in the sense that it is not conferred save in the means; but it is tied to the means in the sense that it is not conferred without the means. Baptism, for instance, is absolutely necessary for salvation: no exception is allowed except such as save the principle — baptism of blood (martyrdom), and, somewhat grudgingly, baptism of intention. And baptism, when worthily received, is absolutely efficacious: 'if a man were to die immediately after baptism, he would have nothing at all left to hold him liable to punishment.' In a word, while there are many baptized who will not be saved, there are none saved who have not been baptized; it is the grace of God that saves, but baptism is a channel of grace without which none receive it.

The saddest corollary that flowed from this doctrine was that by which Augustine was forced to assert that all those who died unbaptized, including infants, are finally lost and depart into eternal punishment. He did not shrink from the inference, although he assigned the place of lightest punishment in hell to those who were guilty of no sin but original sin, but who had departed this life without having washed this away in the 'laver of regeneration.' This is the dark side of his soteriology; but it should be remembered that it was not his theology of grace, but the universal and traditional belief in the necessity of baptism for remission of sins, which he inherited in common with all of his time, that forced it upon him. The theology of grace was destined in the hands of his successors, who have rejoiced to confess that they were taught by him, to remove this stumbling-block also from Christian teaching; and if not to

Augustine, it is to Augustine's theology that the Christian world owes its liberation from so terrible and incredible a tenet. Along with the doctrine of infant damnation, another stumbling-block also, not so much of Augustinean, but of Church theology, has gone. It was not because of his theology of grace, or of his doctrine of predestination, that Augustine taught that comparatively few of the human race are saved. It was, again, because he believed that baptism and incorporation into the visible Church were necessary for salvation. And it is only because of Augustine's theology of grace, which places man in the hands of an all-merciful Saviour and not in the grasp of a human institution, that men can see that in the salvation of all who die in infancy, the invisible Church of God embraces the vast majority of the human race — saved not by the washing of water administered by the Church, but by the blood of Christ administered by God's own hand outside of the ordinary channels of his grace. We are indeed born in sin, and those that die in infancy are, in Adam, children of wrath even as others; but God's hand is not shortened by the limits of His Church on earth, that it cannot save. In Christ Jesus, all souls are the Lord's, and only the soul that itself sinneth shall die (Ezek. xviii. 1-4); and the only judgment wherewith men shall be judged proceeds on the principle that as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law, and as many as have sinned under law shall be judged by the law (Rev. ii. 12).

Thus, although Augustine's theology had a very strong churchly element within it, it was, on the side that is presented in the controversy against Pelagianism, distinctly anti-ecclesiastical. Its central thought was the absolute dependence of the individual on the grace of God in Jesus Christ. It made everything that concerned salvation to be of God, and traced the source of all good to Him. 'Without me ye can do nothing,' is the inscription on one side of it; on the other stands written, 'All things are yours.' Augustine held

that he who builds on a human foundation builds on sand, and founded all his hope on the Rock itself. And there also he founded his teaching; as he distrusted man in the matter of salvation, so he distrusted him in the form of theology. No other of the fathers so conscientiously wrought out his theology from the revealed Word; no other of them so sternly excluded human additions. The subjects of which theology treats, he declares, are such as 'we could by no means find out unless we believed them on the testimony of Holy Scripture.' 'Where Scripture gives no certain testimony,' he says, 'human presumption must beware how it decides in favor of either side.' 'We must first bend our necks to the authority of Scripture,' he insists, 'in order that we may arrive at knowledge and understanding through faith.' And this was not merely his theory, but his practice. No theology was ever, it may be more broadly asserted, more conscientiously wrought out from the Scriptures. Is it without error? No; but its errors are on the surface, not of the essence. It leads to God, and it came from God; and in the midst of the controversies of so many ages it has shown itself an edifice whose solid core is built out of material 'which cannot be shaken.'

# **The Leaven of Synergism**

**by Arthur Custance**

Throughout the centuries since God covenanted to save man through the sacrifice of his Son, Jesus Christ, whereby He provided a full, perfect, and sufficient satisfaction for our sins, one aberration of the Gospel has recurrently threatened the truth. It is the view that man must make some contribution himself in securing his salvation. It is not the size of this contribution that is the important factor, but the necessity of it.

It is as though healing is promised to a terminally ill patient if only he will prepare himself in some way, or yield himself, or present himself at his own expense before the physician. The Roman Catholic Church holds strongly to the view that some self-preparation is essential, usually in the form of a willingness to make amends for wrongs done, or to effect some self-correction in order to merit the grace of God. The Lutherans place the emphasis on the necessity of man's willingness to accept God's salvation. Modern evangelism calls upon men to "make an active decision" as though to pick up the phone and arrange an appointment. Or the patient is invited at least to unlock the door before the physician can make this call and heal him. This door is locked on the inside and can be unlocked only by the patient.

But there is no question of the patient's healing himself. On this there is a wide measure of unanimity. He does need the Savior; but he is not considered to be without any ability to assist in some way, or at least to cooperate in the healing process, though the measure of

his cooperation may amount to no more than that he allow the physician to visit his soul.

Whatever form the human contribution takes, it always means that salvation is a cooperative activity. Salvation is not a God-only process, but a God-and process. This working together is termed Synergism. Such Synergism was a religious philosophy with humanistic overtones even in Old Testament times, and it has been in evidence in every generation. It is man's demand not to be considered impotent, Man admits his sickness, but he is unwilling to admit his death.

Theologically, Synergism is fatal to any sound Christian soteriology, for it is a denial of man's total bondage in sin and a claim to some remaining will to absolute good. By and large, the Greek Fathers were always content to place the grace of God and the free will of man side by side, and as a consequence, the Greek Catholic Church early assumed a synergistic position. The Roman Catholic Church followed suit--though somewhat more slowly. Since the Council of Trent it has held dogmatically that man prepares himself and disposes his own heart to receive the grace of justification. (1)

The Reformation was a total break with this almost universal teaching, a recovery of a truly monergistic doctrine of salvation, a *Solus Deus* position. But like all other revivals of the truth of the Gospel, it soon began to be plagued by those who demanded that allowance be made for man's autonomy if he was not to be a mere puppet, some tiny admission of spiritual competence, some small part which man might be called upon to play, as a sound basis for exhortation in preaching the Gospel and as an incentive to those striving after holiness.

Luther himself was wholly committed to a God-only position. Unregenerate man is spiritually dead, not perfectly well as Pelagius held, nor merely sick as Arminius held, but completely dead as Calvin held. We have already traced briefly the gradual leavening of Luther's position by the synergistic tendencies of those who followed him (Chapter 4). This fatal return to the heresy of all ages was, in Germany, largely the result of one man, Melancthon (1497-1560).

It was this godly and gentle man whose humanistic influence introduced once again the corrupting stream into Lutheran theology, where it took the seemingly harmless form of attributing to man nothing of a positive nature but only a non-resistance to the overtures of God without which the Holy Spirit is unable to make the grace of God effectual unto salvation. Luther was aware of this tendency from its first reappearance among his disciples and spoke out strongly against it. He said (in *Table Talk*, under the heading "Of Free Will"):

Some allege that the Holy Spirit works not in those that resist Him but only in such as are willing and give consent thereto, whence it follows that free will is a cause and helper of faith; and consequently the Holy Ghost does not work alone through the word, but that our will does something therein.

But *I say it is not so; the will of man works* not at all in his conversion and justification...It is a matter on which the Holy Spirit works (as a potter makes a pot out of clay), equally in those that are averse and remiss as in St. Paul. But after the Holy Spirit has wrought in the wills of such resistants, then He also manages that the will be consenting thereto. (2)

Luther agreed that Melancthon seemed to be asking very little when he proposed that we grant only man's non-resistance as his



contribution. But Luther warned that this "very little" was more dangerous than the "very much" that the Pelagians demanded when they argued that man was wholly capable of meriting the grace of God, for it had the appearance of a relatively harmless concession whereas in fact it was a fatal one. For those who support it are teaching that "we are able to obtain righteousness and grace by that 'very little.'" The Pelagians struck Luther as being more forthright. He saw Melancthon's apparently mad concession as the more dangerous because it was less patent. The very violence of his diatribe against Erasmus in his famous work on *The Bondage of the Will* stemmed from the subtlety of this synergistic position. And in this connection Luther wrote:

These [Pelagians] assert that it is not a certain little something in us by which we obtain grace, but we obtain it by whole, full, perfect, great and many efforts and works. Our adversaries [the followers of Melancthon], however, declare that it is a mere trifle and practically nothing at all by which we merit grace. (3)

And here, as Luther saw it, was the danger. It is no longer the Gospel of the sovereign grace of God that we are proclaiming, but the delusion of the sovereignty of man who in the final analysis holds the trump card. It is not a Gospel of revelation but a Gospel of common sense, for why would God command men to repent or yield to the overtures of the Holy Spirit if man did not of his own have freedom of will to do so?

In the Western Church the drift to Synergism was slower than in the East. At the Council of Orange (A.D. 529) it had been agreed that "God does not wait for man's decision." (4) But at the Council of Trent (1545-63) the synergistic view was officially written into the theology of the Roman Catholic Church, it there being agreed that

man's will is a decisive factor. Berkhof says: "In the days of the Reformation the monergism of the Reformers was opposed by the Roman Catholic Church with greater vehemence than any other doctrine." (5) Indeed it may very well have been the major reason for the calling of the Council of Trent in the first place.

The Reformation was nothing less than the purging out of this synergistic tendency. And yet so strongly entrenched in human nature is its basic philosophy that within fifty years it was, as we have seen, once again embraced by the Lutheran community, and the terms of surrender were couched virtually in the words of Melancthon. Melancthon held that conversion is the result of the combined action of three causes: (1) the truth of God; (2) the Holy Spirit; and (3) the will of man. He made a *facultas* out of a mere *capacitas*, an active ability for grace out of a passive aptitude for the reception of it. (6) And so after over five hundred pages of debate and discussion of the issue, the *Formula of Concord* finally confesses: "Towards this work [of grace] the will of the person who is to be converted does nothing but only *lets God work* [in him] (my emphasis)! until he is converted." (7)

Meanwhile Arminius, assuming this active ability on the part of the unregenerate man, argued that the basis of Predestination to Election was God's foreknowledge of those who would exercise this capacity responsively. And by this heresy he left a similar community of misguided followers both in Holland and, even more seriously, in England and the New World, who, holding the synergistic view, formed a further major division of the Church of God. Methodism, and out of Methodism a number of other denominational bodies, cultivated the error which has largely inspired modern evangelistic methods. Such human techniques of persuasion are held to be in line

with God's appointed method of reaching the unregenerate. Thus man usurps the convicting role of the Holy Spirit of God.

The consequences of these "persuasive techniques" in the free world are yet to become fully apparent. Already we see a great resurgence of religious enthusiasm, but if we look at the staying power of these thousands of decisions for the Lord it has to be admitted that the picture they often present a few months after "conversion" suggests there may be something seriously amiss with the method of evangelism, if not perhaps even more seriously with the theology which has inspired the method.

Karl Barth in a small volume entitled *God in Action*, sometimes referred to as his "Little Dogmatics," elaborates on this issue. To him Monergism is the keystone to any stand by the Church against the secular authority because it places the outcome of events squarely in the hands of God. As soon as we begin to say "God *and*," man becomes increasingly important as the decision maker and God decreasingly so. In due time God is reduced almost to the position of assistant or even bystander. The battle becomes not the Lord's but man's. When the world comes in like a flood to overwhelm the Church as Hitler's world did, man finds himself alone in his weakness and no longer able to meet the challenge. In 1934 Barth said to an English audience:

I'm sure that everyone of you is horrified [i.e.. by what was happening to the Christian Church in Germany, and says in his heart I thank God that I am not a German Christian]. I assure you that it will be the end of your road, too. It has its beginning with "Christian life" and ends in paganism.

For, if you once admit not only God but I also, and if your heart is with the latter--and friends, that's where you have it--there's

no stopping it...

Let me warn you now. If you start with God and...you are opening the doors to every demon. And the charge which I raise against you, I lay before you in the words of Anselm: *Tu non eons; considerastzi quandi ponderis sit peccatum!* You have failed to consider the weight of sin. And that is the sin that man takes himself so very seriously. (8)

This seemingly small concession to which Luther refers always has had the effect of opening the way to a flood of error that effectively neutralizes Paul's Gospel of salvation by faith without works. As W. G. T. Shedd observed:

The position of partial ability or synergism comes to the same result with that of full ability [i.e., Pelagianism] so far as divine independence and sovereignty are concerned. For it is this decision of the sinner to contribute his quota, to do his part in the transaction, which conditions the result. It is indeed true, upon this theory, that if God does not assent, the act of faith is impossible. But it is equally true that if the sinner does not assist, the act of faith is impossible. Neither party alone and by himself can originate faith in Christ's atonement. God is as dependent in this respect as man. (9)

G. C. Berkouwer wrote in a similar vein: "This theme of synthesis [between God's grace and man's power of decision] runs like a red thread through the history of the doctrine of election. It is the theme of harmony, of cooperation." (10) And it is a poison, fatal to the Gospel. It is a heresy that slowly undermines all the implications of the truth of the sovereign grace of God. Warfield refers to it as,

...the evil leaven of synergism, by which God is robbed of his glory and man is encouraged to attribute to some power, some act, some initiative of his own, his participation in that salvation which has come to him from pure grace...Any intrusion of any human merit, or act, or disposition, or power, as ground or cause or occasion, into the process of divine salvation--whether in the way of power to resist or ability to improve grace, or the employment of grace already received--is a breach with Calvin.  
(11)

And a breach with Calvin in this respect is a breach with Augustine and, more importantly, a breach with Paul. In short, the difference between a monergistic and a synergistic faith, between a *God only* and a *God and* Gospel, is nothing less than the difference between the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on the one hand, and all other religious systems of belief, whether pagan or so-called Christian, on the other. There are basically only two alternatives. If man contributes any essential part towards his salvation, he effectively becomes his own savior, even if that contribution takes no more concrete form than that of merely allowing God to act by non-resistance.

There is here a clear point of demarcation. It is all of God or it is no good news at all. If man is free to resist, God is not free to act, for He is bound by man's freedom. If God is to be free to act, man must be bound by the will of God. There can be nothing harmful in such a bondage, since perfect freedom by definition is perfect obedience to perfect law, and "the law of the Lord is perfect" (Ps. 19:7). In the perfect order which is yet to come there can never be any conflict of wills since God's will and man's will are to be one, and both are therefore to be entirely free. But in a fallen world, God's grace must

be irresistible or man's will can remain forever opposed to God, and the will of the creature overrides the will of the Creator.

In truth-there is no "Gospel" that is not entirely rooted in the sovereignty of God's grace in salvation, which is the sum and substance of Calvinism. And I venture to say that it must be not merely a three-point or a four-point Calvinism, but a five-point Calvinism. To depart from this is to surrender the whole by giving it a logical incoherence which makes it indefensible whether from Scripture or by reason. The crucial issue is the sovereignty of God's grace in the most absolute sense, a pure unabashed Monergism.

The only defense against Synergism is an unqualified Calvinism ascribing all the glory to God by insisting upon the total spiritual impotence of man, an Election based solely upon the good pleasure of God, an Atonement intended only for the elect though sufficient for all men, a grace that can neither be resisted nor earned, and a security for the believer that is as permanent as God Himself.

If such a system creates some problems because of the limitations of our comprehension, the problems it creates are not nearly as serious as the problems of another kind created by the alternatives which in fact destroy the Gospel altogether by dishonoring the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ both as to its sufficiency and its efficacy.

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4. G. C. Berkouwer, *Studies in Dogmatics: Divine Election*, p. 31.
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# **A Treatise on Grace and Free Will**

## **by Aurelius Augustine, Bishop of Hippo**

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**TWO LETTERS WRITTEN BY AUGUSTINE TO VALENTINUS AND THE MONKS OF ADRUMETUM, AND FORWARDED WITH THE FOLLOWING TREATISE.**

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### **LETTER I.**

[The 214th of Augustine's Epistles.]

TO MY VERY DEAR LORD AND MOST HONOURED BROTHER AMONG THE MEMBERS OF CHRIST, VALENTINUS, AND TO THE BRETHREN THAT ARE WITH YOU, AUGUSTINE SENDS GREETING IN THE LORD.

I. TWO young men, Cresconius and Felix, have found their way to us, and, introducing themselves as belonging to your brotherhood, have told us that your monastery was disturbed with no small commotion, because certain amongst you preach grace in such a manner as to deny that the will of man is free; and maintain--a more serious matter--that in the day of judgment God will not render to every man according to his works. At the same time, they have pointed out to us, that many of you do not entertain this opinion, but allow that free will is assisted by the grace of God, so as that we may think and do aright; so that, when the Lord shall come to render unto every man

according to his works, He shall find those works of ours good which God has prepared in order that we may walk in them. They who think this think rightly.

2. "I beseech you therefore, brethren," even as the apostle besought the Corinthians, "by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you." For, in the first place, the Lord Jesus, as it is written in the Gospel of the Apostle John, "came not to condemn the world, but that the world by Himself might be saved." Then, afterwards, as the Apostle Paul writes, "God shall judge the world when He shall come," as the whole Church confesses in the Creed, "to judge the quick and the dead." Now, I would ask, if there is no grace of God, how does He save the world? and if there is no free will, how does He judge the world? That book of mine, therefore, or epistle, which the above-mentioned brethren have brought with them to you, I wish you to understand in accordance with this faith, so that you may neither deny God's grace, nor uphold free will in such wise as to separate the latter from the grace of God, as if without this we could by any means either think or do anything according to God,--which is quite beyond our power. On this account, indeed, it is, that the Lord when speaking of the fruits of righteousness said, "Without me ye can do nothing."

3. From this you may understand why I wrote the letter which has been referred to, to Sixtus, presbyter of the Church at Rome, against the new Pelagian heretics, who say that the grace of God is bestowed according to our own merits, so that he who glories has to glory not in the Lord, but in himself,--that is to say, in man, not in the Lord. This, however, the apostle forbids in these words: "Let no man glory in man;" while in another passage he says, "He that glorieth let him glory in the Lord." But these heretics, under the idea that they are

justified by their own selves, just as if God did not bestow on them this gift, but they themselves obtained it by themselves, glory of course in themselves, and not in the Lord. Now, the apostle says to such, "Who maketh thee to differ from another?" and this he does on the ground that out of the mass of perdition which arose from Adam, none but God distinguishes a man to make him a vessel to honour, and not to dishonour. Lest, however, the carnal man in his foolish pride should, on hearing the question, "Who maketh thee to differ from another?" either in thought or in word answer and say: My faith, or my prayer, or my righteousness makes me to differ from other men, the apostle at once adds these words to the question, and so meets all such notions, saying, "What hast thou that thou didst not receive? now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou didst not receive it?" Now, they boast as if they did not receive their gifts by grace, who think that they are justified of their own selves, and who, on this account, glory in themselves, and not in the Lord.

4. Therefore I have in this letter, which has reached you, shown by passages of Holy Scripture, which you can examine for yourselves, that our good works and pious prayers and right faith could not possibly have been in us unless we had received them all from Him, concerning whom the Apostle James says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." And so no man can say that it is by the merit of his own works, or by the merit of his own prayers, or by the merit of his own faith, that God's grace has been conferred upon him; nor suppose that the doctrine is true which those heretics hold, that the grace of God is given us in proportion to our own merit. This is altogether a most erroneous opinion; not, indeed, because there is no desert, good in pious persons, or evil in impious ones (for how else shall God judge the world?), but because a man is converted by that mercy and grace of God, of which the Psalmist says, "As for my God, His mercy

shall prevent me;" so that the unrighteous man is justified, that is, becomes just instead of impious, and begins to possess that good desert which God will crown when the world shall be judged.

5. There were many things which I wanted to send you, by the perusal whereof you would have been able to gain a more exact and full knowledge of all that has been done by the bishops in their councils against these Pelagian heretics. But the brethren were in haste who came to us from your company. By them we have sent you this letter; which is, however, not an answer to any communication, because, in truth, they brought us no epistle from your beloved selves. Yet we had no hesitation in receiving them; for their simple manners proved to us clearly enough that there could have been nothing unreal or deceptive in their visit to us. They were, however, in much haste, as wishing to spend Easter at home with you; and my earnest prayer is, that so sacred a day may, by the Lord's help, bring peace to you, and not dissension.

6. You will, indeed, take the better course (as I earnestly request you), if you will not refuse to send to me the very person by whom they say they have been disturbed. For either he does not understand my book, or else, perhaps, he is himself misunderstood, when he endeavours to solve and explain a question which is a very difficult one, and intelligible to few. For it is none other than the question of God's grace which has caused persons of no understanding to think that the Apostle Paul prescribes it to us as a rule, "Let us do evil that good may come." It is in reference to these that the Apostle Peter writes in his second Epistle; "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of Him in peace, without spot and blameless and account that the long-suffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also, according to the wisdom given unto him, hath written unto you; as



also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things: in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction."

7. Take good heed, then, to these fearful words of the great apostle; and when you feel that you do not understand, put your faith in the meanwhile in the inspired word of God, and believe both that man's will is free, and that there is also God's grace, without whose help man's free will can neither be turned towards God, nor make any progress in God. And what you piously believe, that pray that you may have a wise understanding of. And, indeed, it is for this very purpose,--that is, that we may have a wise understanding, that there is a free will. For unless we understood and were wise with a free will, it would not be enjoined to us in the words of Scripture, "Understand now, ye simple among the people; and ye fools, at length be wise," The very precept and injunction which calls on us to be intelligent and wise, requires also our obedience; and we could exercise no obedience without free will. But if it were in our power to obey this precept to be understanding and wise by free will, without the help of God's grace, it would be unnecessary to say to God, "Give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments;" nor would it have been written in the gospel, "Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures;" nor should the Apostle James address us in such words as, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." But the Lord is able to grant, both to you and to us, that we may rejoice over very speedy tidings of your peace and pious unanimity. I send you greeting, not in my own name only, but of the brethren also who are with me; and I ask you to pray for us with one accord and with all earnestness. The Lord be with you.

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## **LETTER II.**

[The 215th of Augustine's Epistles.]

TO MY VERY DEAR LORD AND MOST HONOURED BROTHER  
AMONG THE MEMBERS OF CHRIST, VALENTINUS, AND TO  
THE BRETHREN THAT ARE WITH YOU, AUGUSTINE SENDS  
GREETING IN THE LORD.

1. That Cresconius and Felix, and another Felix, the servants of God, who came to us from your brotherhood, have spent Easter with us is known to your Love. We have detained them somewhat longer in order that they might return to you better instructed against the new Pelagian heretics, into whose error every one falls who supposes that it is according to any human merits that the grace of God is given to us, which alone delivers a man through Jesus Christ our Lord. But he, too, is no less in error who thinks that, when the Lord shall come to judgment, a man is not judged according to his works who has been able to use throughout his life free choice of will. For only infants, who have not yet done any works of their own, either good or bad, will be condemned on account of original sin alone, when they have not been delivered by the Saviour's grace in the laver of regeneration. As for all others who, in the use of their free will, have added to original sin, sins of their own commission, but who have not been delivered by God's grace from the power of darkness and removed into the kingdom of Christ, they will receive judgment according to the deserts not of their original sin only, but also of the acts of their own will. The good, indeed, shall receive their reward according to the merits of their own good-will, but then they received this very good-will through the grace of God; and thus is accomplished that sentence of Scripture, "Indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of

the Jew first, and also of the Gentile: but glory, honour, and peace to every man that worketh good; to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile."

2. Touching the very difficult question of will and grace, I have felt no need of treating it further in this letter, having given them another letter also when they were about to return in greater haste. I have written a book likewise for you, and if you, by the Lord's help, read it, and have a lively understanding of it, I think that no further dissension on this subject will arise among you. They take with them other documents besides, which, as we supposed, ought to be sent to you, in order that from these you may ascertain what means the catholic Church has adopted for repelling, in God's mercy, the poison of the Pelagian heresy. For the letters to Pope Innocent, Bishop of Rome, from the Council of the province of Carthage, and from the Council of Numidia, and one written with exceeding care by five bishops, and what he wrote back to these three; our letter also to Pope Zosimus about the African Council, and his answer addressed to all bishops throughout the world; and a brief constitution, which we drew up against the error itself at a later plenary Council of all Africa; and the above-mentioned book of mine, which I have just written for you,--all these we have both read over with them, while they were with us, and have now despatched by their hands to you.

3. Furthermore, we have read to them the work of the most blessed martyr Cyprian on the Lord's Prayer, and have pointed out to them how He taught that all things pertaining to our morals, which constitute right living, must be sought from our Father which is in heaven, lest, by presuming on free will, we fall from divine grace. From the same treatise we have also shown them how the same glorious martyr has taught us that it behoves us to pray even for our enemies who have not yet believed in Christ, that they may believe;

which would of course be all in vain unless the Church believed that even the evil and unbelieving wills of men might, by the grace of God, be converted to good. This book of St. Cyprian, however, we have not sent you, because they told us that you possessed it among yourselves already. My letter, also, which had been sent to Sixtus, presbyter of the Church at Rome, and which they brought with them to us, we read over with them, and pointed out how that it had been written in opposition to those who say that God's grace is bestowed according to our merits,--that is to say, in opposition to the same Pelagians.

4. As far, then, as lay in our power, we have used our influence with them, as both your brethren and our own, with a view to their persevering in the soundness of the catholic faith, Which neither denies free will whether for an evil or a good life, nor attributes to it so much power that it can avail anything without God's grace, whether that it may be changed from evil to good, or that it may persevere in the pursuit of good, or that it may attain to eternal good when there is no further fear of failure. To yourselves, too, my most dearly beloved, I also, in this letter, give the same exhortation which the apostle addresses to us all, "not to think of yourselves more highly than you ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

5. Mark well the counsel which the Holy Ghost gives us by Solomon: "Make straight paths for thy feet, and order thy ways aright. Turn not aside to the right hand nor to the left, but turn away thy foot from the evil way; for the Lord knoweth the ways on the right hand, but those on the left are perverse. He will make thy ways straight, and will direct thy steps in peace." Now consider, my brethren, that in these words of Holy Scripture, if there were no free will, it would not be said, "Make straight paths for thy feet, and order thy ways; turn not

aside to the right hand, nor to the left." Nor yet, were this possible for us to achieve without the grace of God, would it be afterwards added, "He will make thy ways straight, and will direct thy steps in peace."

6. Decline, therefore, neither to the right hand nor to the left, although the paths on the right hand are praised, and those on the left hand are blamed. This is why he added, "Turn away thy foot from the evil way,"--that is, from the left-hand path. This he makes manifest in the following words, saying, "For the Lord knoweth the ways on the right hand; but those on the left are perverse." In those ways we ought surely to walk which the Lord knows; and it is of these that we read in the Psalm, "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish;" for this way, which is on the left hand, the Lord does not know. As He will also say at last to such as are placed on His left hand at the day of judgment: "I know you not." Now what is that which He knows not, who knows all things, both good and evil, in man? But what is the meaning of the words, "I know you not," unless it be that you are now such as I never made you? Precisely as that passage runs, which is spoken of the Lord Jesus Christ, that "He knew no sin." How knew it not, except that He had never made it? And, therefore, how is to be understood the passage, "The ways which are on the right hand the Lord knoweth," except in the sense that He made those ways Himself,--even "the paths of the righteous," which no doubt are "those good works that God," as the apostle tells us, "hath before ordained that we should walk in them"? Whereas the left-hand ways--those perverse paths of the unrighteous--He truly knows nothing of, because He never made them for man, but man made them for himself. Wherefore tie says, "The perverse ways of the wicked I utterly abhor; they are on the left hand."

7. But the reply is made: Why did He say, "Turn not aside to the right hand, nor to the left," when he clearly ought rather to have said, Keep to the right hand, and turn not off to the left, if the right-hand paths are good? Why, do we think, except this, that the paths on the right hand are so good that it is not good to turn off from them, even to the right? For that man, indeed, is to be understood as declining to the right who chooses to attribute to himself, and not to God, even those good works which appertain to right-hand ways. Hence it was that after saying, "For the Lord knoweth the ways on the right hand, but those on the left hand are perverse," as if the objection were raised to Him, Wherefore, then, do you not wish us to turn aside to the right? He immediately added as follows: "He will Himself make thy paths straight, and will direct thy ways in peace." Understand, therefore, the precept, "Make straight paths for thy feet, and order thy ways aright," in such a sense as to know that whenever you do all this, it is the Lord God who enables you to do it. Then you will not turn off to the right, although you are walking in right-hand paths, not trusting in your own strength; and He will Himself be your strength, who will make straight paths for your feet, and will direct your ways in peace.

8. Wherefore, most dearly beloved, whosoever says, My will suffices for me to perform good works, declines to the right. But, on the other hand, they who think that a good way of life should be forsaken, when they hear God's grace so preached as to lead to the supposition and belief that it of itself makes men's wills from evil to good, and it even of itself keeps them what it has made them; and who, as the result of this opinion, go on to say, "Let us do evil that good may come," --these persons decline to the left. This is the reason why he said to you, "Turn not aside to the right hand, nor to the left;" in other words, do not uphold free will in such wise as to attribute good works to it without the grace of God, nor so defend and maintain grace as if, by reason of it, you may love evil works in security and

safety,--which may God's grace itself avert from you! Now it was the words of such as these which the apostle had in view when he said, "What shall we say, then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" And to this cavil of erring men, who know nothing about the grace of God, he returned such an answer as he ought in these words: "God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" Nothing could have been said more succinctly, and yet to the point. For what more useful gift does the grace of God confer upon us, in this present evil world, than our dying unto sin? Hence he shows himself ungrateful to grace itself who chooses to live in sin by reason of that whereby we die unto sin. May God, however, who is rich in mercy, grant you both to think soundly and wisely, and to continue perseveringly and progressively to the end in every good determination and purpose. For yourselves, for us, for all who love you, and for those who hate you, pray that this gift may be attained,--pray earnestly and vigilantly in brotherly peace. Live unto God. If I deserve any favour at your hands, let brother Florus come to me.

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## **A TREATISE ON GRACE AND FREE WILL.**

BY AURELIUS AUGUSTINE, BISHOP OF HIPPO;  
ADDRESSED TO VALENTINUS AND THE MONKS OF  
ADRUMETUM,  
AND COMPLETED IN ONE BOOK.  
WRITTEN IN A.D. 426 OR A.D. 427.

IN THIS TREATISE AUGUSTINE TEACHES US TO BEWARE OF MAINTAINING GRACE BY DENYING FREE WILL, OR FREE WILL BY DENYING GRACE; FOR THAT IT IS EVIDENT FROM THE TESTIMONY OF SCRIPTURE THAT THERE IS IN MAN A FREE CHOICE OF WILL; AND THERE ARE ALSO IN THE SAME SCRIPTURES INSPIRED PROOFS GIVEN OF THAT VERY GRACE OF GOD WITHOUT WHICH WE CAN DO NOTHING GOOD. AFTERWARDS, IN OPPOSITION TO THE PELAGIANS, HE PROVES THAT GRACE IS NOT BESTOWED ACCORDING TO OUR MERITS. HE EXPLAINS HOW ETERNAL LIFE, WHICH IS RENDERED TO GOOD WORKS, IS REALLY OF GRACE. HE THEN GOES ON TO SHOW THAT THE GRACE WHICH IS GIVEN TO US THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST IS NEITHER THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LAW, NOR NATURE, NOR SIMPLY REMISSION OF SINS; BUT THAT IT IS GRACE THAT MAKES US FULFIL THE LAW, AND CAUSES NATURE TO BE LIBERATED FROM THE DOMINION OF SIN. HE DEMOLISHES THAT VAIN SUBTERFUGE OF THE PELAGIANS, TO THE EFFECT THAT "GRACE, ALTHOUGH IT IS NOT BESTOWED ACCORDING TO THE MERITS OF GOOD WORKS, IS YET GIVEN ACCORDING TO THE MERITS OF THE ANTECEDENT GOOD-WILL OF THE MAN WHO BELIEVES AND PRAYS." HE INCIDENTALY TOUCHES THE QUESTION, WHY GOD COMMANDS WHAT HE MEANS HIMSELF TO GIVE, AND WHETHER HE IMPOSES ON US ANY COMMANDS WHICH WE ARE UNABLE TO PERFORM. HE CLEARLY SHOWS THAT THE LOVE WHICH IS INDISPENSABLE FOR FULFILLING THE COMMANDMENTS IS ONLY WITHIN US FROM GOD HIMSELF. HE POINTS OUT THAT GOD WORKS IN MEN'S HEARTS TO INCLINE THEIR WILLS WHITHERSOEVER HE WILLETH, EITHER TO GOOD WORKS ACCORDING TO HIS MERCY, OR TO EVIL ONES IN RETURN FOR THEIR DESERVING; HIS JUDGMENT, INDEED, BEING SOMETIMES



MANIFEST, SOMETIMES HIDDEN, BUT ALWAYS RIGHTEOUS. LASTLY, HE TEACHES US THAT A CLEAR EXAMPLE OF THE GRATUITOUSNESS OF GRACE, NOT GIVEN IN RETURN FOR OUR DESERTS, IS SUPPLIED TO US IN THE CASE OF THOSE INFANTS WHICH ARE SAVED, WHILE OTHERS PERISH THOUGH THEIR CASE IS IDENTICAL WITH THAT OF THE REST.

CHAP. I [I.]--THE OCCASION AND ARGUMENT OF THIS WORK.

WITH reference to those persons who so preach and defend man's free will, as boldly to deny, and endeavour to do away with, the grace of God which Calls us to Him, and delivers us from our evil deserts, and by which we obtain the good deserts which lead to everlasting life: we have already said a good deal in discussion, and committed it to writing, so far as the Lord has vouchsafed to enable us. But since there are some persons who so defend God's grace as to deny man's free will, or who suppose that free will is denied when grace is defended, I have determined to write somewhat on this point to your Love, my brother Valentinus, and the rest of you, who are serving God together under the impulse of a mutual love. For it has been told me concerning you, brethren, by some members of your brotherhood who have visited us, and are the bearers of this communication of ours to you, that there are dissensions among you on this subject. This, then, being the case, dearly beloved, that you be not disturbed by the obscurity of this question, I counsel you first to thank God for such things as you understand; but as for all which is beyond the reach of your mind, pray for understanding from the Lord, observing, at the same time peace and love among yourselves; and until He Himself lead you to perceive what at present is beyond your comprehension, walk firmly on the ground of which you are sure. This is the advice of the Apostle Paul, who, after saying that he was

not yet perfect, a little later adds, "Let us, therefore, as many as are perfect, be thus minded," --meaning perfect to a certain extent, but not having attained to a perfection sufficient for us; and then immediately adds, "And if, in any thing, ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you. Nevertheless, whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule." For by walking in what we have attained, we shall be able to advance to what we have not yet attained,--God revealing it to us if in anything we are otherwise minded,--provided we do not give up what He has already revealed.

#### CHAP. 2 [II]--PROVES THE EXISTENCE OF FREE WILL IN MAN FROM THE PRECEPTS ADDRESSED TO HIM BY GOD.

Now He has revealed to us, through His Holy Scriptures, that there is in a man a free choice of will. But how He has revealed this I do not recount in human language, but in divine. There is, to begin with, the fact that God's precepts themselves would be of no use to a man unless he had free choice of will, so that by performing them he might obtain the promised rewards. For they are given that no one might be able to plead the excuse of ignorance, as the Lord says concerning the Jews in the gospel: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they would not have sin; but now they have no excuse for their sin." Of what sin does He speak but of that great one which He foreknew, while speaking thus, that they would make their own--that is, the death they were going to inflict upon Him? For they did not have "no sin" before Christ came to them in the flesh. The apostle also says: "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold back the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invisible things of Him are from the creation of the world clearly

seen--being understood by the things that are made--even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are inexcusable." In what sense does he pronounce them to be "inexcusable," except with reference to such excuse as human pride is apt to allege in such words as, "If I had only known, I would have done it; did I not fail to do it because I was ignorant of it?" or, "I would do it if I knew how; but I do not know, therefore I do not do it"? All such excuse is removed from them when the precept is given them, or the knowledge is made manifest to them how to avoid sin.

### CHAP. 3.--SINNERS ARE CONVICTED WHEN ATTEMPTING TO EXCUSE THEMSELVES BY BLAMING GOD, BECAUSE THEY HAVE FREE WILL.

There are, however, persons who attempt to find excuse for themselves even from God. The Apostle James says to such: "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man. But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then, when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." Solomon, too, in his book of Proverbs, has this answer for such as wish to find an excuse for themselves from God Himself: "The folly of a man spoils his ways; but he blames God in his heart." And in the book of Ecclesiasticus we read: "Say not thou, It is through the Lord that I fell away; for thou oughtest not to do the things that He hateth: nor do thou say, He hath caused me to err; for He hath no need of the sinful man. The Lord hateth all abomination, and they that fear God love it not. He Himself made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of His counsel. If thou be willing, thou shalt keep His commandments, and perform true fidelity. He hath set fire and water before thee: stretch forth thine hand unto whether thou wilt. Before man is life

and death, and whichsoever pleaseth him shall be given to him." Observe how very plainly is set before our view the free choice of the human will.

#### CHAP. 4.--THE DIVINE COMMANDS WHICH ARE MOST SUITED TO THE WILL ITSELF ILLUSTRATE ITS FREEDOM.

What is the import of the fact that in so many passages God requires all His commandments to be kept and fulfilled? How does He make this requisition, if there is no free will? What means "the happy man," of whom the Psalmist says that "his will has been the law of the Lord"? Does he not clearly enough show that a man by his own will takes his stand in the law of God? Then again, there are so many commandments which in some way are expressly adapted to the human will; for instance, there is, "Be not overcome of evil," and others of similar import, such as, "Be not like a horse or a mule, which have no understanding;" and, "Reject not the counsels of thy mother;" and, "Be not wise in thine own conceit;" and, "Despise not the chastening of the Lord;" and, "Forget not my law;" and, "Forbear not to do good to the poor;" and, "Devise not evil against thy friend;" and, "Give no heed to a worthless woman; and, "He is not inclined to understand how to do good;" and, "They refused to attend to my counsel;" with numberless other passages of the inspired Scriptures of the Old Testament. And what do they all show us but the free choice of the human will? So, again, in the evangelical and apostolic books of the New Testament what other lesson is taught us? As when it is said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth;" and, "Fear not them which kill the body;" and, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself;" and again, "Peace on earth to men of good will." So also that the Apostle Paul says: "Let him do what he willeth; he sinneth not if he marry. Nevertheless, he that standeth stedfast in his heart, having no necessity, but hath power over his own will, and

hath so decreed in his heart that he will keep his virgin, doeth well." And so again," If I do this willingly, I have a reward;" while in another passage he says, "Be ye sober and righteous, and sin not;" and again, "As ye have a readiness to will, so also let there be a prompt performance;" then he remarks to Timothy about the younger widows, "When they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they choose to marry." So in another passage, "All that will to live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution;" while to Timothy himself he says, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee." Then to Philemon he addresses this explanation: "That thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but of thine own will." Servants also he advises to obey their masters "with a good will." In strict accordance with this, James says: "Do not err, my beloved brethren . . . and have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ with respect to persons;" and, "Do not speak evil one of another." So also John in his Epistle writes, "Do not love the world," and other things of the same import. Now wherever it is said, "Do not do this," and "Do not do that," and wherever there is any requirement in the divine admonitions for the work of the will to do anything, or to refrain from doing anything, there is at once a sufficient proof of free will. No man, therefore, when he sins, can in his heart blame God for it, but every man must impute the fault to himself. Nor does it detract at all from a man's own will when he performs any act in accordance with God. Indeed, a work is then to be pronounced a good one when a person does it willingly; then, too, may the reward of a good work be hoped for from Him concerning whom it is written, "He shall reward every man according to his works."

CHAP. 5.--HE SHOWS THAT IGNORANCE AFFORDS NO SUCH EXCUSE AS SHALL FREE THE OFFENDER FROM PUNISHMENT; BUT THAT TO SIN WITH KNOWLEDGE IS A GRAVER THING THAN TO SIN IN IGNORANCE.

The excuse such as men are in the habit of alleging from ignorance is taken away from those persons who know God's commandments. But neither will those be without punishment who know not the law of God. "For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law." Now the apostle does not appear to me to have said this as if he meant that they would have to suffer something worse who in their sins are ignorant of the law than they who know it. [III.] It is seemingly worse, no doubt, "to perish" than "to be judged;" but inasmuch as he was speaking of the Gentiles and of the Jews when he used these words, because the former were without the law, but the latter had received the law, who can venture to say that the Jews who sin in the law will not perish, since they refused to believe in Christ, when it was of them that the apostle said, "They shall be judged by the law"? For without faith in Christ no man can be delivered; and therefore they will be so judged that they perish. If, indeed, the condition of those who are ignorant of the law of God is worse than the condition of those who know it, how can that be true which the Lord says in the gospel: "The servant who knows not his lord's will, and commits things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes; whereas the servant who knows his lord's will, and commits things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with many stripes"? Observe how clearly He here shows that it is a graver matter for a man to sin with knowledge than in ignorance. And yet we must not on this account betake ourselves for refuge to the shades of ignorance, with the view of finding our excuse therein. It is one thing to be ignorant, and another thing to be unwilling to know. For the will is at fault in the case of the man of whom it is said, "He is not inclined to understand, so as to do good." But even the ignorance, which is not theirs who refuse to know, but theirs who are, as it were, simply ignorant, does not so far excuse any one as to exempt him from the punishment of eternal fire, though his failure to believe has been the

result of his not having at all heard what he should believe; but probably only so far as to mitigate his punishment. For it was not said without reason: "Pour out Thy wrath upon the heathen that have not known Thee;" nor again according to what the apostle says: "When He shall come from heaven in a flame of fire to take vengeance on them that know not God." But yet in order that we may have that knowledge that will prevent our saying, each one of us, "I did not know," "I did not hear," "I did not understand;" the human will is summoned, in such words as these: "Wish not to be as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding;" although it may show itself even worse, of which it is written, "A stubborn servant will not be reprov'd by words; for even if he understand, yet he will not obey." But when a man says, "I cannot do what I am commanded, because I am mastered by my concupiscence," he has no longer any excuse to plead from ignorance, nor reason to blame God in his heart, but he recognises and laments his own evil in himself; and still to such an one the apostle says: "Be not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good;" and of course the very fact that the injunction, "Consent not to be overcome," is addressed to him, undoubtedly summons the determination of his will. For to consent and to refuse are functions proper to will.

#### CHAP. 6 [IV.]--GOD'S GRACE TO BE MAINTAINED AGAINST THE PELAGIANS; THE PELAGIAN HERESY NOT AN OLD ONE.

It is, however, to be feared lest all these and similar testimonies of Holy Scripture (and undoubtedly there are a great many of them), in the maintenance of free will, be understood in such a way as to leave no room for God's assistance and grace in leading a godly life and a good conversation, to which the eternal reward is due; and lest poor wretched man, when he leads a good life and performs good works (or rather thinks that he leads a good life and performs good works),

should dare to glory in himself and not in the Lord, and to put his hope of righteous living in himself alone; so as to be followed by the prophet Jeremiah's malediction when he says, "Cursed is the man who has hope in man, and maketh strong the flesh of his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord." Understand, my brethren, I pray you, this passage of the prophet. Because the prophet did not say, "Cursed is the man who has hope in his own self," it might seem to some that the passage, "Cursed is the man who has hope in man," was spoken to prevent man having hope in any other man but himself. In order, therefore, to show that his admonition to man was not to have hope in himself, after saying, "Cursed is the man who has hope in man," he immediately added, "And maketh strong the flesh of his arm." He used the word "arm" to designate power in operation. By the term "flesh," however, must be understood human frailty. And therefore he makes strong the flesh of his arm who supposes that a power which is frail and weak (that is, human) is sufficient for him to perform good works, and therefore puts not his hope in God for help. This is the reason why he subjoined the further clause, "And whose heart departeth from the Lord." Of this character is the Pelagian heresy, which is not an ancient one, but has only lately come into existence. Against this system of error there was first a good deal of discussion; then, as the ultimate resource, it was referred to sundry episcopal councils, the proceedings of which, not, indeed, in every instance, but in some, I have despatched to you for your perusal. In order, then, to our performance of good works, let us not have hope in man, making strong the flesh of our arm; nor let our heart ever depart from the Lord, but let it say to him, "Be Thou my helper; forsake me not, nor despise me, O God of my salvation."

CHAP. 7.--GRACE IS NECESSARY ALONG WITH FREE WILL TO LEAD A GOOD LIFE.



Therefore, my dearly beloved, as we have now proved by our former testimonies from Holy Scripture that there is in man a free determination of will for living rightly and acting rightly; so now let us see what are the divine testimonies concerning the grace of God, without which we are not able to do any good thing. And first of all, I will say something about the very profession which you make in your brotherhood. Now your society, in which you are leading lives of continence, could not hold together unless you despised conjugal pleasure. Well, the Lord was one day conversing on this very topic, when His disciples remarked to Him, "If such be the case of a man with his wife, it is not good to marry." He then answered them, "All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given." And was it not to Timothy's free will that the apostle appealed, when he exhorted him in these words: "Keep thyself continent"? He also explained the power of the will in this matter when He said, "Having no necessity, but possessing power over his own will, to keep his virgin." And yet. "all men do not receive this saying, except those to whom the power is given." Now they to whom this is not given either are unwilling or do not fulfil what they will; whereas they to whom it is given so will as to accomplish what they will. In order, therefore, that this saying, which is not received by all men, may yet be received by some, there are both the gift of God and free will.

#### CHAP. 8.--CONJUGAL CHASTITY IS ITSELF THE GIFT OF GOD.

It is concerning conjugal chastity itself that the apostle treats, when he says, "Let him do what he will, he sinneth not if he marry;" and yet this too is God's gift, for the Scripture says, "It is by the Lord that the woman is joined to her husband." Accordingly the teacher of the Gentiles, in one of his discourses, commends both conjugal chastity, whereby adulteries are prevented, and the still more perfect continence which foregoes all cohabitation, and shows how both one

and the other are severally the gift of God. Writing to the Corinthians, he admonished married persons not to defraud each other; and then, after his admonition to these, he added: "But I could wish that all men were even as I am myself," --meaning, of course, that he abstained from all cohabitation; and then proceeded to say: "But every man hath his own gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that." Now, do the many precepts which are written in the law of God, forbidding all fornication and adultery, indicate anything else than free will? Surely such precepts would not be given unless a man had a will of his own, wherewith to obey the divine commandments. And yet it is God's gift which is indispensable for the observance of the precepts of chastity. Accordingly, it is said in the Book of Wisdom: "When I knew that no one could be continent, except God gives it, then this became a point of wisdom to know whose gift it was." "Every man," however, "is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed" not to observe and keep these holy precepts of chastity. If he should say in respect of these commandments, "I wish to keep them, but am mastered by my concupiscence," then the Scripture responds to his free will, as I have already said: "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good." In order, however, that this victory may be gained, grace renders its help; and were not this help given, then the law would be nothing but the strength of sin. For concupiscence is increased and receives greater energies from the prohibition of the law, unless the spirit of grace helps. This explains the statement of the great Teacher of the Gentiles, when he says, "The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law." See, then, I pray you, whence originates this confession of weakness, when a man says, "I desire to keep what the law commands, but am overcome by the strength of my concupiscence." And when his will is addressed, and it is said, "Be not overcome of evil," of what avail is anything but the succour of God's grace to the accomplishment of the precept? This the apostle

himself afterwards stated; for after saying "The strength of sin is the law" he immediately subjoined, "But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." It follows, then, that the victory in which sin is vanquished is nothing else than the gift of God, who in this contest helps free will.

#### CHAP. 9.--ENTERING INTO TEMPTATION. PRAYER IS A PROOF OF GRACE.

Wherefore, our Heavenly Master also says: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation." Let every man, therefore, when fighting against his own concupiscence, pray that he enter not into temptation; that is, that he be not drawn aside and enticed by it. But he does not enter into temptation if he conquers his evil concupiscence by good will. And yet the determination of the human will is insufficient, unless the Lord grant it victory in answer to prayer that it enter not into temptation. What, indeed, affords clearer evidence of the grace of God than the acceptance of prayer in any petition? If our Saviour had only said, "Watch that ye enter not into temptation," He would appear to have done nothing further than admonish man's will; but since He added the words, "and pray," He showed that God helps us not to enter into temptation. It is to the free will of man that the words are addressed: "My son, remove not thyself from the chastening of the Lord." And the Lord said: "I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not." So that a man is assisted by grace, in order that his will may not be uselessly commanded.

#### CHAP. 10 [V.]--FREE WILL AND GOD'S GRACE ARE SIMULTANEOUSLY COMMENDED.

When God says, "Turn ye unto me, and I will turn unto you,"(I) one of these clauses--that which invites our return to God--evidently

belongs to our will; while the other, which promises His return to us, belongs to His grace. Here, possibly, the Pelagians think they have a justification for their opinion which they so prominently advance, that God's grace is given according to our merits. In the East, indeed, that is to say, in the province of Palestine, in which is the city of Jerusalem, Pelagius, when examined in person by the bishop, did not venture to affirm this. For it happened that among the objections which were brought up against him, this in particular was objected, that he maintained that the grace of God was given according to our merits,--an opinion which was so diverse from catholic doctrine, and so hostile to the grace of Christ, that unless he had anathematized it, as laid to his charge, he himself must have been anathematized on its account. He pronounced, indeed, the required anathema upon the dogma, but how insincerely his later books plainly show; for in them he maintains absolutely no other opinion than that the grace of God is given according to our merits. Such passages do they collect out of the Scriptures,--like the one which I just now quoted, "Turn ye unto me, and I will turn unto you,"--as if it were owing to the merit of our turning to God that His grace were given us, wherein He Himself even turns unto us. Now the persons who hold this opinion fail to observe that, unless our turning to God were itself God's gift, it would not be said to Him in prayer, "Turn us again, O God of hosts;" and, "Thou, O God, wilt turn and quicken us;" and again, "Turn us, O God of our salvation," --with other passages of similar import, too numerous to mention here. For, with respect to our coming unto Christ, what else does it mean than our being turned to Him by believing? And yet He says: "No man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."

CHAP. 11.--OTHER PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE WHICH THE PELAGIANS ABUSE.

Then, again, there is the Scripture contained in the second book of the Chronicles: "The Lord is with you when ye are with Him: and if ye shall seek Him ye shall find Him; but if ye forsake Him, He also will forsake you." this passage, no doubt, clearly manifests the choice of the will. But they who maintain that God's grace is given according to our merits, receive these testimonies of Scripture in such a manner as to believe that our merit lies in the circumstance of our "being with God," while His grace is given according to this merit, so that He too may be with us. In like manner, that our merit lies in the fact of "our seeking God," and then His grace is given according to this merit, in order that we may find Him." Again, there is a passage in the first book of the same Chronicles which declares the choice of the will: "And thou, Solomon, my son, know thou the God of thy father, and serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind, for the Lord searcheth all hearts, and understandeth all the imaginations of the thoughts; if thou seek Him, He will be found of thee; but if thou forsake Him, He will cast thee off for ever." But these people find some room for human merit in the clause, "If thou seek Him," and then the grace is thought to be given according to this merit in what is said in the ensuing words, "He will be found of thee." And so they labour with all their might to show that God's grace is given according to our merits,--in other words, that grace is not grace. For, as the apostle most expressly says, to them who receive reward according to merit "the recompense is not reckoned of grace but of debt."

#### CHAP. 12.--HE PROVES OUT OF ST. PAUL THAT GRACE IS NOT GIVEN ACCORDING TO MEN'S MERITS.

Now there was, no doubt, a decided merit in the Apostle Paul, but it was an evil one, while he persecuted the Church, and he says of it: "I am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church

of God." And it was While he had this evil merit that a good one was rendered to him instead of the evil; and, therefore, he went on at once to say, "But by the grace of God I am what I am." Then, in order to exhibit also his free will, he added in the next clause, "And His grace within me was not in vain, but I have laboured more abundantly than they all." This free will of man he appeals to in the case of others also, as when he says to them, "We beseech you that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." Now, how could he so enjoin them, if they received God's grace in such a manner as to lose their own will? Nevertheless, lest the will itself should be deemed capable of doing any good thing without the grace of God, after saying, "His grace within me was not in vain, but I have laboured more abundantly than they all," he immediately added the qualifying clause, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." In other words, Not I alone, but the grace of God with me.

And thus, neither was it the grace of God alone, nor was it he himself alone, but it was the grace Of God with him. For his call, however, from heaven and his conversion by that great and most effectual call, God's grace was alone, because his merits, though great, were yet evil. Then, to quote one passage more, he says to Timothy: "But be thou a co-labourer with the gospel, according to the power of God, who saveth us and calleth us with His holy calling,--not according to our works but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus." Then, elsewhere, he enumerates his merits, and gives us this description of their evil character: "For we ourselves also were formerly foolish, unbelieving, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another." Nothing, to be sure, but punishment was due to such a course of evil desert! God, however, who returns good for evil by His grace, which is not given according to our merits, enabled the apostle to conclude his statement and say: "But when the kindness and love

of our Saviour God shone upon us,--not of works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the layer of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Ghost, whom He shed upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that, being justified by His grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

CHAP. 13 [VI.]--THE GRACE OF GOD IS NOT GIVEN ACCORDING TO MERIT, BUT ITSELF MAKES ALL GOOD DESERT.

From these and similar passages of Scripture, we gather the proof that God's grace is not given according to our merits. The truth is, we see that it is given not only where there are no good, but even where there are many evil merits preceding: and we see it so given daily. But it is plain that when it has been given, also our good merits begin to be,--yet only by means of it; for, were that only to withdraw itself, man falls, not raised up, but precipitated by free will. Wherefore no man ought, even when he begins to possess good merits, to attribute them to himself, but to God, who is thus addressed by the Psalmist: "Be Thou my helper, forsake me not." By saying, "Forsake me not," he shows that if he were to be forsaken, he is unable of himself to do any good thing. Wherefore also he says: "I said in my abundance, I shall never be moved," for he thought that he had such an abundance of good to call his own that he would not be moved. But in order that he might be taught whose that was, of which he had begun to boast as if it were his own, he was admonished by the gradual desertion of God's grace, and says: "O Lord, in Thy good pleasure Thou didst add strength to my beauty. Thou didst, however, turn away Thy face, and then I was troubled and distressed." Thus, it is necessary for a man that he should be not only justified when unrighteous by the grace of God,--that is, be changed from unholiness to righteousness,--when he is requited with good for his evil; but that, even after he has

become justified by faith, grace should accompany him on his way, and he should lean upon it, lest he fall. On this account it is written concerning the Church herself in the book of Canticles: "Who is this that cometh up in white raiment, leaning upon her kinsman?" Made white is she who by herself alone could not be white. And by whom has she been made white except by Him who says by the prophet, "Though your sins be as purple, I will make them white as snow"? At the time, then, that she was made white, she deserved nothing good; but now that she is made white, she walketh well;--but it is only by her continuing ever to lean upon Him by whom she was made white. Wherefore, Jesus Himself, on whom she leans that was made white, said to His disciples, "Without me ye can do nothing."

#### CHAP. 14.--PAUL FIRST RECEIVED GRACE THAT HE MIGHT WIN THE CROWN.

Let us return now to the Apostle Paul, who, as we have found, obtained God's grace, who recompenses good for evil, without any good merits of his own, but rather with many evil merits. Let us see what he says when his final sufferings were approaching, writing to Timothy: "I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith." He enumerates these as, of course, now his good merits; so that, as after his evil merits he obtained grace, so now, after his good merits, he might receive the crown. Observe, therefore, what follows: "There is henceforth laid up for me," he says, "a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day." Now, to whom should the righteous Judge award the crown, except to him on whom the merciful Father had bestowed grace? And how could the crown be one "of righteousness," unless the grace had preceded which "justifieth the ungodly"? How, moreover, could these things now be



awarded as of debt, unless the other had been before given as a free gift ?

CHAP. 15.--THE PELAGIANS PROFESS THAT THE ONLY GRACE WHICH IS NOT GIVEN ACCORDING TO OUR MERITS IS THAT OF THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

When, however, the Pelagians say that the only grace which is not given according to our merits is that whereby his sins are forgiven to man, but that at which is given in the end, that is, eternal life, is rendered to our preceding merits: they must not be allowed to go without an answer. If, indeed, they so understand our merits as to acknowledge them, too, to be the gifts of God, then their opinion would not deserve reprobation. But inasmuch as they so preach human merits as to declare that a man has them of his own self, then most rightly the apostle replies: "Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou, that thou didst not receive? Now, if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" To a man who holds such views, it is perfect truth to say: It is His own gifts that God crowns, not your merits,--if, at least, your merits are of your own self, not of Him. If, indeed, they are such, they are evil; and God does not crown them; but if they are good, they are God's gifts, because, as the Apostle James says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights." In accordance with which John also, the Lord's forerunner, declares: "A man can receive nothing except it be given him from heaven" --from heaven, of course, because from thence came also the Holy Ghost, when Jesus ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men. If, then, your good merits are God's gifts, God does not crown your merits as your merits, but as His own gifts.

CHAP. 16 [VII.]--PAUL FOUGHT, BUT GOD GAVE THE VICTORY:  
HE RAN, BUT GOD SHOWED MERCY.

Let us, therefore, consider those very merits of the Apostle Paul which he said the Righteous Judge would recompense with the crown of righteousness; and let us see whether these merits of his were really his own--I mean, whether they were obtained by him of himself, or were the gifts of God. "I have fought," says he, "the good fight; I have finished my course; I have kept the faith." Now, in the first place, these good works were nothing, unless they had been preceded by good thoughts. Observe, therefore, what he says concerning these very thoughts. His words, when writing to the Corinthians, are: "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God." Then let us look at each several merit. "I have fought the good fight." Well, now, I want to know by what power he fought. Was it by a power which he possessed of himself, or by strength given to him from above? It is impossible to suppose that so great a teacher as the apostle was ignorant of the law of God, which proclaims the following in Deuteronomy: "Say not in thine heart, My own strength and energy of hand hath wrought for me this great power; but thou shall remember the Lord thy God, how it is He that giveth thee strength to acquire such power." And what avails "the good fight," unless followed by victory? And who gives the victory but He of whom the apostle says himself, "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"? Then, in another passage, having quoted from the Psalm these words: "Because for Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for slaughter," he went on to declare: "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us." Not by ourselves, therefore, is the victory accomplished, but by Him who hath loved us. In the second clause he says, "I have finished my course." Now, who is it

that says this, but he who declares in another passage, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." And this sentence can by no means be transposed, so that it could be said: It is not of God, who showeth mercy, but of the man who willeth and runneth. If any person be bold enough to express the matter thus, he shows himself most plainly to be at issue with the apostle.

#### CHAP. 17.--THE FAITH THAT HE KEPT WAS THE FREE GIFT OF GOD,

His last clause runs thus: "I have kept the faith." But he who says this is the same who declares in another passage, "I have obtained mercy that I might be faithful." He does not say, "I obtained mercy because I was faithful," but "in order that I might be faithful," thus showing that even faith itself cannot be had without God's mercy, and that it is the gift of God. This he very expressly teaches us when he says, "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." They might possibly say, "We received grace because we believed;" as if they would attribute the faith to themselves, and the grace to God. Therefore, the apostle having said, "Ye are saved through faith," added, "And that not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God."

And again, lest they should say they deserved so great a gift by their works, he immediately added, "Not of works, lest any man should boast." Not that he denied good works, or emptied them of their value, when he says that God renders to every man according to his works; but because works proceed from faith, and not faith from works. Therefore it is from Him that we have works of righteousness, from whom comes also faith itself, concerning which it is written, "The just shall live by faith."

## CHAP. 18.--FAITH WITHOUT GOOD WORKS IS NOT SUFFICIENT FOR SALVATION.

Unintelligent persons, however, with regard to the apostle's statement: "We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the works of the law," have thought him to mean that faith suffices to a man, even if he lead a bad life, and has no good works. Impossible is it that such a character should be deemed "a vessel of election" by the apostle, who, after declaring that "in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision," adds at once, "but faith which worketh by love." It is such faith which severs God's faithful from unclean demons,--for even these "believe and tremble," as the Apostle James says; but they do not do well. Therefore they possess not the faith by which the just man lives,--the faith which works by love in such wise, that God recompenses it according to its works with eternal life. But inasmuch as we have even our good works from God, from whom likewise comes our faith and our love, therefore the selfsame great teacher of the Gentiles has designated "eternal life" itself as His gracious "gift."

## CHAP. 19 [VIII.]--HOW IS ETERNAL LIFE BOTH A REWARD FOR SERVICE AND A FREE GIFT OF GRACE?

And hence there arises no small question, which must be solved by the Lord's gift. If eternal life is rendered to good works, as the Scripture most openly declares: "Then He shall reward every man according to his works:" how can eternal life be a matter of grace, seeing that grace is not rendered to works, but is given gratuitously, as the apostle himself tells us: "To him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt;" and again: "There is a remnant saved according to the election of grace;" with these words immediately subjoined: "And if of grace, then is it no more of works;

otherwise grace is no more grace"? How, then, is eternal life by grace, when it is received from works? Does the apostle perchance not say that eternal life is a grace? Nay, he has so called it, with a clearness which none can possibly gainsay. It requires no acute intellect, but only an attentive reader, to discover this. For after saying, "The wages of sin is death," he at once added, "The grace of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

CHAP. 20.--THE QUESTION ANSWERED. JUSTIFICATION IS GRACE SIMPLY AND ENTIRELY, ETERNAL LIFE IS REWARD AND GRACE.

This question, then, seems to me to be by no means capable of solution, unless we understand that even those good works of ours, which are recompensed with eternal life, belong to the grace of God, because of what is said by the Lord Jesus: "Without me ye can do nothing." And the apostle himself, after saying, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast;" saw, of course, the possibility that men would think from this statement that good works are not necessary to those who believe, but that faith alone suffices for them; and again, the possibility of men's boasting of their good works, as if they were of themselves capable of performing them. To meet, therefore, these opinions on both sides, he immediately added, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." What is the purport of his saying, "Not of works, lest any man should boast," while commending the grace of God? And then why does he afterwards, when giving a reason for using such words, say, "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works"? Why, therefore, does it run, "Not of works, lest any man should boast"? Now, hear and understand. "Not

of works" is spoken of the works which you suppose have their origin in yourself alone; but you have to think of works for which God has moulded (that is, has formed and created) you. For of these he says, "We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." Now he does not here speak of that creation which made us human beings, but of that in reference to which one said who was already in full manhood, "Create in me a clean heart, O God;" concerning which also the apostle says, "Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God." We are framed, therefore, that is, formed and created, "in the good works which" we have not ourselves prepared, but "God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

It follows, then, dearly beloved, beyond all doubt, that as your good life is nothing else than God's grace, so also the eternal life which is the recompense of a good life is the grace of God; moreover it is given gratuitously, even as that is given gratuitously to which it is given. But that to which it is given is solely and simply grace; this therefore is also that which is given to it, because it is its reward;--grace is for grace, as if remuneration for righteousness; in order that it may be true, because it is true, that God "shall reward every man according to his works."

#### CHAP. 21 [IX.]--ETERNAL LIFE IS "GRACE FOR GRACE."

Perhaps you ask whether we ever read in the Sacred Scriptures of "grace for grace." Well you possess the Gospel according to John, which is perfectly clear in its very great light. Here John the Baptist says of Christ: "Of His fulness have we all received, even grace for grace." So that out of His fulness we have received, according to our humble measure, our particles of ability as it were for leading good

lives--"according as God hath dealt to every man his measure of faith;" because "every man hath his proper gift of God; one after this manner, and another after that." And this is grace. But, over and above this, we shall also receive "grace for grace," when we shall have awarded to us eternal life, of which the apostle said: "The grace of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord," having just said that "the wages of sin is death." Deservedly did he call it "wages," because everlasting death is awarded as its proper due to diabolical service. Now, when it was in his power to say, and rightly to say: "But the wages of righteousness is eternal life," he yet preferred to say: "The grace of God is eternal life;" in order that we may hence understand that God does not, for any merits of our own, but from His own divine compassion, prolong our existence to everlasting life. Even as the Psalmist says to his soul, "Who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion." Well, now, is not a crown given as the reward of good deeds? It is, however, only because He works good works in good men, of whom it is said, "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure," that the Psalm has it, as just now quoted: "He crowneth thee with mercy and compassion," since it is through His mercy that we perform the good deeds to which the crown is awarded. It is not, however, to be for a moment supposed, because he said, "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his own good pleasure," that free will is taken away. If this, indeed, had been his meaning, he would not have said just before, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." For when the command is given "to work," there free will is addressed; and when it is added, "with fear and trembling," they are warned against boasting of their good deeds as if they were their own, by attributing to themselves the performance of anything good. It is pretty much as if the apostle had this question put to him: "Why did you use the phrase, 'with fear and trembling'?" And as if he answered the inquiry of his examiners by telling them, "For it is God

which worketh in you." Because if you fear and tremble, you do not boast of your good works--as if they were your own, since it is God who works within you.

CHAP. 22 [X.] --WHO IS THE TRANSGRESSOR OF THE LAW?  
THE OLDNESS OF ITS LETTER. THE NEWNESS OF ITS SPIRIT.

Therefore, brethren, you ought by free will not do evil but do good; this, indeed, is the lesson taught us in the law of God, in the Holy Scriptures--both Old and New. Let us, however, read, and by the Lord's help understand, what the apostle tells us: "Because by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight; for by the law is the knowledge of sin." Observe, he says "the knowledge," not "the destruction," of sin. But when a man knows sin, and grace does not help him to avoid what he knows, undoubtedly the law works wrath. And this the apostle explicitly says in another passage. His words are: "The law worketh wrath." The reason of this statement lies in the fact that God's wrath is greater in the case of the transgressor who by the law knows sin, and yet commits it; such a man is thus a transgressor of the law, even as the apostle says in another sentence, "For where no law is, there is no transgression." It is in accordance with this principle that he elsewhere says, "That we may serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter;" wishing the law to be here understood; by "the oldness of the letter," and what else by "newness of spirit" than grace? Then, that it might not be thought that he had brought any accusation, or suggested any blame, against the law, he immediately takes himself to task with this inquiry: "What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? God forbid." He then adds the statement: "Nay, I had not known sin but by the law;" which is of the same import as the passage above quoted: "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Then: "For I had not known lust," he says, "except the law had said, 'Thou shalt not covet.'" But sin, taking



occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy; and the commandment holy, just, and good. Was, then, that which is good made death unto me ? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, worked death in me by that which is good,--in order that the sinner, or the sin, might by the commandment become beyond measure." And to the Galatians he writes: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, except through faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified."

#### CHAP. 23 [XI.]--THE PELAGIANS MAINTAIN THAT THE LAW IS THE GRACE OF GOD WHICH HELPS US NOT TO SIN.

Why, therefore, do those very vain and perverse Pelagians say that the law is the grace of God by which we are helped not to sin? Do they not, by making such an allegation, unhappily and beyond all doubt contradict the great apostle? He, indeed, says, that by the law sin received strength against man; and that man, by the commandment, although it be holy, and just, and good, nevertheless dies, and that death works in him through that which is good, from which death there is no deliverance unless the Spirit quickens him, whom the letter had killed,--as he says in another passage, "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." And yet these obstinate persons, blind to God's light, and deaf to His voice, maintain that the letter which kills gives life, and thus gainsay the quickening Spirit. "Therefore, brethren" (that I may warn you with better effect in the

words of the apostle himself), "we are debtors not to the flesh, to live after the flesh; for if ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye through: the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." I have said this to deter your free will from evil, and to exhort it to good by apostolic words; but yet you must not therefore glory in man,--that is to say, in your own selves,--and not in the Lord, when you live not after the flesh, but through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh. For in order that they to whom the apostle addressed this language might not exalt themselves, thinking that they were themselves able of their own spirit to do such good works as these, and not by the Spirit of God, after saying to them, "If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live," he at once added, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." When, therefore, you by the Spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh, that you may have life, glorify Him, praise Him, give thanks to Him by whose Spirit you are so led as to be able to do such things as show you to be the children of God; "for as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

CHAP. 24 [XII.] -- WHO MAY BE SAID TO WISH TO ESTABLISH THEIR OWN RIGHTEOUSNESS. "GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS," SO CALLED, WHICH MAN HAS FROM GOD.

As many, therefore, as are led by their own spirit, trusting in their own virtue, with the addition merely of the law's assistance, without the help of grace, are not the sons of God. Such are they of whom the same apostle speaks as "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and wishing to establish their own righteousness, who have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." He said this of the Jews, who in their self-assumption rejected grace, and therefore did not believe in Christ. Their own righteousness, indeed, he says, they wish to establish; and this righteousness is of the law,--not that

the law was established by themselves, but that they had constituted their righteousness in the law which is of God, when they supposed themselves able to fulfil that law by their own strength, ignorant of God's righteousness,--not indeed that by which God is Himself righteous, but that which man has from God. And that you may know that he designated as theirs the righteousness which is of the law, and as God's that which man receives from God, hear what he says in another passage, when speaking of Christ: "For whose sake I counted all things not only as loss, but I deemed them to be dung, that I might win Christ, and be found in Him--not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, which is of God." Now what does he mean by "not having my own righteousness, which is of the law," when the law is really not his at all, but God's,--except this, that he called it his own righteousness, although it was of the law, because he thought he could fulfil the law by his own will, without the aid of grace which is through faith in Christ? Wherefore, after saying, "Not having my own righteousness, which is of the law," he immediately subjoined, "But that which is through the faith of Christ, which is of God." This is what they were ignorant of, of whom he says, "Being ignorant of God's righteousness,"--that is, the righteousness which is of God (for it is given not by the letter, which kills, but by the life-giving Spirit), "and wishing to establish their own righteousness," which he expressly described as the righteousness of the law, when he said, "Not having my own righteousness, which is of the law;" they were not subject to the righteousness of God,--in other words, they submitted not themselves to the grace of God. For they were under the law, not under grace, and therefore sin had dominion over them, from which a man is not freed by the law, but by grace. On which account he elsewhere says, "For sin shall not have dominion over you; because ye are not under the law, but under grace." Not that the law is evil; but because they are under its power, whom it makes

guilty by imposing commandments, not by aiding. It is by grace that any one is a doer of the law; and without this grace, he who is placed under the law will be only a hearer of the law. To such persons he addresses these words: "Ye who are justified by the law are fallen from grace."

CHAP. 25 [XIII.] -- AS THE LAW IS NOT, SO NEITHER IS OUR NATURE ITSELF THAT GRACE BY WHICH WE ARE CHRISTIANS.

Now who can be so insensible to the words of the apostle, who so foolishly, nay, so insanely ignorant of the purport of his statement, as to venture to affirm that the law is grace, when he who knew very well what he was saying emphatically declares, "Ye who are justified by the law are fallen from grace"? Well, but if the law is not grace, seeing that in order that the law itself may be kept, it is not the law, but only grace which can give help, will not nature at any rate be grace? For this, too, the Pelagians have been bold enough to aver, that grace is the nature in which we were created, so as to possess a rational mind, by which we are enabled to understand,--formed as we are in the image of God, so as to have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that creepeth upon the earth. This, however, is not the grace which the apostle commends to us through the faith of Jesus Christ. For it is certain that we possess this nature in common with ungodly men and unbelievers; whereas the grace which comes through the faith of Jesus Christ belongs only to them to whom the faith itself appertains. "For all men have not faith." Now, as the apostle, with perfect truth, says to those who by wishing to be justified by the law have fallen from grace, "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain;" so likewise, to those who think that the grace which he commends and faith in Christ receives, is nature, the same language

is with the same degree of truth applicable: if righteousness come from nature, then Christ is dead in vain. But the law was in existence up to that time, and it did not justify; and nature existed too, but it did not justify. It was not, then, in vain that Christ died, in order that the law might be fulfilled through Him who said, "I am come not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it;" and that our nature, which was lost through Adam, might through Him be recovered, who said that "He was come to seek and to save that which was lost;" in whose coming the old fathers likewise who loved God believed.

CHAP. 26. -- THE PELAGIANS CONTEND THAT THE GRACE, WHICH IS NEITHER THE LAW NOR NATURE, AVAILS ONLY TO THE REMISSION OF PAST SINS, BUT NOT TO THE AVOIDANCE OF FUTURE ONES.

They also maintain that God's grace, which is given through the faith of Jesus Christ, and which is neither the law nor nature, avails only for the remission of sins that have been committed, and not for the shunning of future ones, or the subjugation of those which are now assailing us. Now if all this were true, surely after offering the petition of the Lord's Prayer, "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors," we could hardly go on and say, "And lead us not into temptation." The former petition we present that our sins may be forgiven; the latter, that they may be avoided or subdued,--a favour which we should by no means beg of our Father who is in heaven if we were able to accomplish it by the virtue of our human will. Now I strongly advise and earnestly require your Loves to read attentively the book of the blessed Cyprian which he wrote On the Lord's Prayer. As far as the Lord shall assist you, understand it, and commit it to memory. In this work you will see how he so appeals to the free will of those whom he edifies in his treatise, as to show them, that whatever they have to fulfil in the law, they must ask for in the

prayer. But this, of course, would be utterly empty if the human will were sufficient for the performance without the help of God.

CHAP. 27 [XIV.]--GRACE EFFECTS THE FULFILMENT OF THE LAW, THE DELIVERANCE OF NATURE, AND THE SUPPRESSION OF SIN'S DOMINION.

It has, however, been shown to demonstration that instead of really maintaining free will, they have only inflated a theory of it, which, having no stability, has fallen to the ground. Neither the knowledge of God's law, nor nature, nor the mere remission of sins is that grace which is given to us through our Lord Jesus Christ; but it is this very grace which accomplishes the fulfilment of the law, and the liberation of nature, and the removal of the dominion of sin. Being, therefore, convicted on these points, they resort to another expedient, and endeavour to show in some way or other that the grace of God is given us according to our merits. For they say: "Granted that it is not given to us according to the merits of good works, inasmuch as it is through it that we do any good thing, still it is given to us according to the merits of a good will; for," say they, "the good will of him who prays precedes his prayer, even as the will of the believer preceded his faith, so that according to these merits the grace of God who hears, follows."

CHAP. 28.--FAITH IS THE GIFT OF GOD.

I have already discussed the point concerning faith, that is, concerning the will of him who believes, even so far as to show that it appertains to grace,--so that the apostle did not tell us, "I have obtained mercy because I was faithful;" but he said, "I have obtained mercy in order to be faithful." And there are many other passages of similar import,--among them that in which he bids us "think soberly, according as God hath dealt out to every man the proportion of

faith;" and that which I have already quoted: "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God;" and again another in the same Epistle to the Ephesians: "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ;" and to the same effect that passage in which he says, "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake." Both alike are therefore due to the grace of God,--the faith of those who believe, and the patience of those who suffer, because the apostle spoke of both as given. Then, again, there is the passage, especially noticeable, in which he, says, "We, having the same spirit of faith," for his phrase is not "the knowledge of faith," but "the spirit of faith;" and he expressed himself thus in order that we might understand how that faith is given to us, even when it is not sought, so that other blessings may be granted to it at its request. For "how," says he, "shall they call upon Him in whom they have not believed?" The spirit of grace, therefore, causes us to have faith, in order that through faith we may, on praying for it, obtain the ability to do what we are commanded. On this account the apostle himself constantly puts faith before the law; since we are not able to do what the law commands unless we obtain the strength to do it by the prayer of faith.

#### CHAP. 29. -- GOD IS ABLE TO CONVERT OPPOSING WILLS, AND TO TAKE AWAY FROM THE HEART ITS HARDNESS.

Now if faith is simply of free will, and is not given by God, why do we pray for those who will not believe, that they may believe? This it would be absolutely useless to do, unless we believe, with perfect propriety, that Almighty God is able to turn to belief wills that are perverse and opposed to faith. Man's free will is addressed when it is said, "Today, if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." But if God were not able to remove from the human heart even its

obstinacy and hardness, He would not say, through the prophet, "I will take from them their heart of stone, and will give them a heart of flesh." That all this was foretold in reference to the New Testament is shown clearly enough by the apostle when he says, "Ye are our epistle, ... written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." We must not, of course, suppose that such a phrase as this is used as if those might live in a fleshly way who ought to live spiritually; but inasmuch as a stone has no feeling, with which man's hard heart is compared, what was there left Him to compare man's intelligent heart with but the flesh, which possesses feeling? For this is what is said by the prophet Ezekiel: "I will give them another heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh; that they may walk in my statutes, and keep mine ordinances, and do them: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, saith the Lord." Now can we possibly, without extreme absurdity, maintain that there previously existed in any man the good merit of a good will, to entitle him to the removal of his stony heart, when all the while this very heart of stone signifies nothing else than a will of the hardest kind and such as is absolutely inflexible against God? For where a good will precedes, there is, of course, no longer a heart of stone.

**CHAP. 30.--THE GRACE BY WHICH THE STONY HEART IS REMOVED IS NOT PRECEDED BY GOOD DESERTS, BUT BY EVIL ONES.**

In another passage, also, by the same prophet, God, in the clearest language, shows us that it is not owing to any good merits on the part of men, but for His own name's sake, that He does these things. This is His language: "This I do, O house of Israel, but for mine holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen, whither ye



went. And I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them; and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle you with clean water, and ye shall be clean: from all your own filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and the stony heart shall be taken away out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and will cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." Now who is so blind as not to see, and who so stone-like as not to feel, that this grace is not given according to the merits of a good will, when the Lord declares and testifies "It is I, O house of Israel, who do this, but for my holy name's sake"? Now why did He say "It is I that do it, but for my holy name's sake," were it not that they should not think that it was owing to their own good merits that these things were happening, as the Pelagians hesitate not unblushingly to say? But there were not only no good merits of theirs, but the Lord shows that evil ones actually preceded; for He says, "But for my holy name's sake, which ye have profaned among the heathen." Who can fail to observe how dreadful is the evil of profaning the Lord's own holy name? And yet, for the sake of this very name of mine, says He, which ye have profaned, I, even I, will make you good but not for your own sakes; and, as He adds "I will sanctify my great name, which was profaned among the heathen, which ye have profaned in the midst of them." He says that He sanctifies His name, which He had already declared to be holy. Therefore, this is just what we pray for in the Lord's Prayer--"Hallowed be Thy name." We ask for the hallowing among men of that which is in itself undoubtedly always holy. Then it follows, "And the heathen shall know that I am the

Lord, saith the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you." Although, then, He is Himself always holy, He is, nevertheless, sanctified in those on whom He bestows His grace, by taking from them that stony heart by which they profaned the name of the Lord.

CHAP. 31 [XV.] -- FREE WILL HAS ITS FUNCTION IN THE HEART'S CONVERSION; BUT GRACE TOO HAS ITS.

Lest, however, it should be thought that men themselves in this matter do nothing by free will, it is said in the Psalm, "Harden not your hearts;" and in Ezekiel himself, "Cast away from you all your transgressions, which ye have impiously committed against me; and make you a new heart and a new spirit; and keep all my commandments. For why will ye die, O house of Israel, saith the Lord? for I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God: and turn ye, and live." We should remember that it is He who says, "Turn ye and live," to whom it is said in prayer, "Turn us again, O God." We should remember that He says, "Cast away from you all your transgressions," when it is even He who justifies the ungodly. We should remember that He says, "Make you a new heart and a new spirit," who also promises, "I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit will I put within you." How is it, then, that He who says, "Make you," also says, "I will give you"? Why does He command, if He is to give? Why does He give if man is to make, except it be that He gives what He commands when He helps him to obey whom He commands? There is, however, always within us a free will,--but it is not always good; for it is either free from righteousness when it serves sin,--and then it is evil,--or else it is free from sin when it serves righteousness,--and then it is good. But the grace of God is always good; and by it it comes to pass that a man is of a good will, though he was before of an evil one. By it also it comes to pass that the very good will, which has now begun to be, is

enlarged, and made so great that it is able to fulfil the divine commandments which it shall wish, when it shall once firmly and perfectly wish. This is the purport of what the Scripture says: "If thou wilt, thou shalt keep the commandments;" so that the man who wills but is not able knows that he does not yet fully will, and prays that he may have so great a will that it may suffice for keeping the commandments. And thus, indeed, he receives assistance to perform what he is commanded. Then is the will of use when we have ability; just as ability is also then of use when we have the will. For what does it profit us if we will what we are unable to do, or else do not will what we are able to do ?

CHAP. 32 [XVI.] -- IN WHAT SENSE IT IS RIGHTLY SAID THAT, IF WE LIKE, WE MAY KEEP GOD'S COMMANDMENTS.

The Pelagians think that they know something great when they assert that "God would not command what He knew could not be done by man." Who can be ignorant of this? But God commands some things which we cannot do, in order that we may know what we ought to ask of Him. For this is faith itself, which obtains by prayer what the law commands. He, indeed, who said, "If thou wilt, thou shalt keep the commandments," did in the same book of Ecclesiasticus afterwards say, "Who shall give a watch before my mouth, and a seal of wisdom upon my lips, that I fall not suddenly thereby, and that my tongue destroy me not." Now he had certainly heard and received these commandments: "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile." Forasmuch, then, as what he said is true: "If thou wilt, thou shalt keep the commandments," why does he want a watch to be given before his mouth, like him who says in the Psalm, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth"? Why is he not satisfied with God's commandment and his own will; since, if he has the will, he shall keep the commandments? How many of God's

commandments are directed against pride! He is quite aware of them; if he will, he may keep them. Why, therefore, does he shortly afterwards say, "O God, Father and God of my life, give me not a proud look"? The law had long ago said to him, "Thou shalt not covet;" let him then only will, and do what he is bidden, because, if he has the will, he shall keep the commandments. Why, therefore, does he afterwards say, "Turn away from me concupiscence"? Against luxury, too, how many commandments has God enjoined! Let a man observe them; because, if he will, he may keep the commandments. But what means that cry to God, "Let not the greediness of the belly nor lust of the flesh take hold on me!" ? Now, if we were to put this question to him personally, he would very rightly answer us and say, From that prayer of mine, in which I offer this particular petition to God, you may understand in what sense I said, "If thou wilt, thou mayest keep the commandments." For it is certain that we keep the commandments if we will; but because the will is prepared by the Lord, we must ask of Him for such a force of will as suffices to make us act by the willing. It is certain that it is we that will when we will, but it is He who makes us will what is good, of whom it is said (as he has just now expressed it), "The will is prepared by the Lord." Of the same Lord it is said, "The steps of a man are ordered by the Lord, and his way doth He will." Of the same Lord again it is said, "It is God who worketh in you, even to will!" It is certain that it is we that act when we act; but it is He who makes us act, by applying efficacious powers to our will, who has said, "I will make you to walk in my statutes, and to observe my judgments, and to do them." When he says, "I will make you ... to do them," what else does He say in fact than, "I will take away from you your heart of stone," from which used to arise your inability to act, "and I will give you a heart of flesh," in order that you may act? And what does this promise amount to but this: I will remove your hard heart, out of which you did not act, and I will give you an obedient heart, out of

which you shall act? It is He who causes us to act, to whom the human suppliant says, "Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth." That is to say: Make or enable me, O Lord, to set a watch before my mouth,--a benefit which he had already obtained from God who thus described its influence: "I set a watch upon my mouth."

CHAP. 33 [XVII.]--A GOOD WILL MAY BE SMALL AND WEAK; AN AMPLE WILL, GREAT LOVE. OPERATING AND COOPERATING GRACE.

He, therefore, who wishes to do God's commandment, but is unable, already possesses a good will, but as yet a small and weak one; he will, however, become able when he shall have acquired a great and robust will. When the martyrs did the great commandments which they obeyed, they acted by a great will,--that is, with great love. Of this love the Lord Himself thus speaks: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." In accordance with this, the apostle also says, "He that loveth his neighbour hath fulfilled the law. For this: Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself? Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law." This love the Apostle Peter did not yet possess, when he for fear thrice denied the Lord. "There is no fear in love," says the Evangelist John in his first Epistle, "but perfect love casteth out fear." But yet, however small and imperfect his love was, it was not wholly wanting when he said to the Lord, "I will lay down my life for Thy sake;" for he supposed himself able to effect what he felt himself willing to do. And who was it that had begun to give him his love, however small, but He who prepares the will, and perfects by His co-operation what He initiates by His operation? Forasmuch as in beginning He works

in us that we may have the will, and in perfecting works with us when we have the will. On which account the apostle says, "I am confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." He operates, therefore, without us, in order that we may will; but when we will, and so will that we may act, He co-operates with us. We can, however, ourselves do nothing to effect good works of piety without Him either working that we may will, or co-working when we will. Now, concerning His working that we may will, it is said: "It is God which worketh in you, even to will." While of His co-working with us, when we will and act by willing, the apostle says, "We know that in all things there is co-working for good to them that love God." What does this phrase, "all things," mean, but the terrible and cruel sufferings which affect our condition? That burden, indeed, of Christ, which is heavy for our infirmity, becomes light to love. For to such did the Lord say that His burden was light, as Peter was when he suffered for Christ, not as he was when he denied Him.

#### CHAP. 34. -- THE APOSTLE'S EULOGY OF LOVE. CORRECTION TO BE ADMINISTERED WITH LOVE.

This charity, that is, this will glowing with intensest love, the apostle eulogizes with these words: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? (As it is written, For Thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, 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 another passage he says, "And yet I show unto you a

more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not love, it profiteth me nothing. Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not; love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth." And a little afterwards he says, "And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love. Follow after love." He also says to the Galatians, "For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." This is the same in effect as what he writes to the Romans: "He that loveth another hath fulfilled the law." In like manner he says to the Colossians, "And above all these things, put on love, which is the bond of perfectness." And to Timothy he writes, "Now the end of the commandment is love;" and he goes on to describe the quality of this grace, saying, "Out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." Moreover, when he says to the Corinthians, "Let all your things be done with love," he shows plainly enough that even those chastisements which are deemed sharp and bitter by those who are corrected thereby, are to be administered with love. Accordingly, in another passage, after saying, "Warn them that are unruly, comfort the feeble-minded, support the weak, be patient toward all men," he immediately added, "See that none render evil for evil unto any man." Therefore, even when the unruly are corrected, it is not

rendering evil for evil, but contrariwise, good. However, what but love worketh all these things ?

#### CHAP. 35.--COMMENDATIONS OF LOVE.

The Apostle Peter, likewise, says, "And, above all things, have fervent love among yourselves: for love shall cover the multitude of sins." The Apostle James also says, "If ye fulfil the royal law, according to the Scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well." So also the Apostle John says, "He that loveth his brother abideth in the right;" again, in another passage, "Whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother; for this is the message which we have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another." Then he says again, "This is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another." Once more: "And this commandment have we from Him that he who loveth God love his brother also." Then shortly afterwards he adds, "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep His commandments; for this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous." While, in his second Epistle, it is written, "Not as though I wrote a new commandment unto thee, but that which we had from the beginning, that we love one another."

#### CHAP. 36.--LOVE COMMENDED BY OUR LORD HIMSELF.

Moreover, the Lord Jesus Himself teaches us that the whole law and the prophets hang upon the two precepts of love to God and love to our neighbour. Concerning these two commandments the following is written in the Gospel according to St. Mark: "And one of the scribes came, and having heard them reasoning together, and perceiving that He had answered them well, asked Him: Which is the first commandment of all ? And Jesus answered him: The first of all



the commandments is, Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God is one Lord; and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like unto it: Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these." Also, in the Gospel according to St. John, He says, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that, ye are my disciples, if ye have love to one another."

CHAP. 37 [XVIII.]--THE LOVE WHICH FULFILS THE COMMANDMENTS IS NOT OF OURSELVES, BUT OF GOD.

All these commandments, however, respecting love or charity (which are so great, and such that whatever action a man may think he does well is by no means well done if done without love) would be given to men in vain if they had not free choice of will. But forasmuch as these precepts are given in the law, both old and new (although in the new came the grace which was promised in the old, but the law without grace is the letter which killeth, but in grace the Spirit which giveth life), from what source is there in men the love of God and of one's neighbour but from God Himself? For indeed, if it be not of God but of men, the Pelagians have gained the victory; but if it come from God, then we have vanquished the Pelagians. Let, then, the Apostle John sit in judgment between us; and let him say to us, "Beloved, let us love one another." Now, when they begin to extol themselves on these words of John, and to ask why this precept is addressed to us at all if we have not of our own selves to love one another, the same apostle proceeds at once, to their confusion, to add, "For love is of God."! It is not of ourselves, therefore, but it is of God. Wherefore, then, is it said, "Let us love one another, for love is of God," unless it be as a precept to our free will, admonishing it to

seek the gift of God? Now, this would be indeed a thoroughly fruitless admonition if the will did not previously receive some donation of love, which might seek to be enlarged so as to fulfil whatever command was laid upon it. When it is said, "Let us love one another," it is law; when it is said, "For love is of God," it is grace. For God's "wisdom carries law and mercy upon her tongue." Accordingly, it is written in the Psalm, "For He who gave the law will give blessings."

CHAP. 38.--WE WOULD NOT LOVE GOD UNLESS HE FIRST LOVED US. THE APOSTLES CHOSE CHRIST BECAUSE THEY WERE CHOSEN; THEY WERE NOT CHOSEN BECAUSE THEY CHOSE CHRIST.

Let no one, then, deceive you, my brethren, for we should not love God unless He first loved us. John again gives us the plainest proof of this when he says, "We love Him because He first loved us." Grace makes us lovers of the law; but the law itself, without grace, makes us nothing but breakers of the law. And nothing else than this is shown us by the words of our Lord when He says to His disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." For if we first loved Him, in order that by this merit He might love us, then we first chose Him that we might deserve to be chosen by Him. He, however, who is the Truth says otherwise, and flatly contradicts this vain conceit of men. "You have not chosen me,"

He says. If, therefore, you have not chosen me, undoubtedly you have not loved me (for how could they choose one whom they did not love?). "But I," says He, "have chosen you." And then could they possibly help choosing Him afterwards, and preferring Him to all the blessings of this world? But it was because they had been chosen, that they chose Him; not because they chose Him that they were

chosen. There could be no merit in men's choice of Christ, if it were not that God's grace was prevenient in His choosing them. Whence the Apostle Paul pronounces in the Thessalonians this benediction: "The Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men." This benediction to love one another He gave us, who had also given us a law that we should love each other. Then, in another passage addressed to the same church, seeing that there now existed in some of its members the disposition which he had wished them to cultivate, he says, "We are bound to thank God always for you, brethren, as it is meet, because that your faith groweth exceedingly, and the charity of every one of you all toward each other aboundeth." This he said lest they should make a boast of the great good which they were enjoying from God, as if they had it of their own mere selves. Because, then, your faith has so great a growth (this is the purport of his words), and the love of every one of you all toward each other so greatly abounds, we ought to thank God concerning you, but not to praise you, as if you possessed these gifts of yourselves.

#### CHAP. 39.--THE SPIRIT OF FEAR A GREAT GIFT OF GOD.

The apostle also says to Timothy, "For God hath not given to us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind." Now in respect of this passage of the apostle, we must be on our guard against supposing that we have not received the spirit of the fear of God, which is undoubtedly a great gift of God, and concerning which the prophet Isaiah says, "The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon thee, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and piety, the spirit of the fear of the Lord." It is not the fear with which Peter denied Christ that we have received the spirit of, but that fear concerning which Christ Himself says, "Fear Him who hath power to destroy both soul and body in

hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear Him." This, indeed, He said, lest we should deny Him from the same fear which shook Peter; for such cowardice he plainly wished to be removed from us when He, in the preceding passage, said, "Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do." It is not of this fear that we have received the spirit, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. And of this spirit the same Apostle Paul discourses to the Romans: "We glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." Not by ourselves, therefore, but by the Holy Ghost which is given to us, does it come to pass that, through that very love, which he shows us to be the gift of God, tribulation does not do away with patience, but rather produces it. Again, he says to the Ephesians, "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith." Great blessings these! Let him tell us, however, whence they come. "From God the Father," says he immediately afterwards, "and the Lord Jesus Christ." These great blessings, therefore, are nothing else than God's gifts to us.

CHAP. 40 [XIX.]--THE IGNORANCE OF THE PELAGIANS IN MAINTAINING THAT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE LAW COMES FROM GOD, BUT THAT LOVE COMES FROM OURSELVES.

It is no wonder that light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not. In John's Epistle the Light declares, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." And in the Pelagian writings the darkness says, "Love comes to us of our own selves." Now, if they only possessed the true, that is, Christian love, they would also know whence they obtained possession of it; even as the apostle knew when he said, "But we have received not the spirit of the world, but

the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." John says, "God is love." And thus the Pelagians affirm that they actually have God Himself, not from God, but from their own selves! and although they allow that we have the knowledge of the law from God, they will yet have it that love is from our very selves. Nor do they listen to the apostle when he says, "Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth." Now what can be more absurd, nay, what more insane and more alien from the very sacredness of love itself, than to maintain that from God proceeds the knowledge which, apart from love, puffs us up, while the love which prevents the possibility of this inflation of knowledge springs from ourselves? And again, when the apostle speaks of "the love of Christ as surpassing knowledge," what can be more insane than to suppose that the knowledge which must be subordinated to love comes from God, while the love which surpasses knowledge comes from man? The true faith, however, and sound doctrine declare that both graces are from God; the Scripture says, "From His face cometh knowledge and understanding;" and another Scripture says, "Love is of God." We read of "the Spirit of wisdom and understanding." Also of "the Spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind? But love is a greater gift than knowledge; for whenever a man has the gift of knowledge, love is necessary by the side of it, that he be not puffed up. For "love envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up."

CHAP. 41 [XX.]--THE WILLS OF MEN ARE SO MUCH IN THE POWER OF GOD, THAT HE CAN TURN THEM WHITHERSOEVER IT PLEASES HIM.

I think I have now discussed the point fully enough in opposition to those who vehemently oppose the grace of God, by which, however, the human will is not taken away, but changed from bad to good, and assisted when it is good. I think, too, that I have so discussed the

subject, that it is not so much I myself as the inspired Scripture which has spoken to you, in the clearest testimonies of truth; and if this divine record be looked into carefully, it shows us that not only men's good wills, which God Himself converts from bad ones, and, when converted by Him, directs to good actions and to eternal life, but also those which follow the world are so entirely at the disposal of God, that He turns them whithersoever He wills, and whensoever He wills,--to bestow kindness on some, and to heap punishment on others, as He Himself judges right by a counsel most secret to Himself, indeed, but beyond all doubt most righteous. For we find that some sins are even the punishment of other sins, as are those "vessels of wrath" which the apostle describes as "fitted to destruction;" as is also that hardening of Pharaoh, the purpose of which is said to be to set forth in him the power of God; as, again, is the flight of the Israelites from the face of the enemy before the city of Ai, for fear arose in their heart so that they fled, and this was done that their sin might be punished in the way it was right that it should be; by reason of which the Lord said to Joshua the son of Nun, "The children of Israel shall not be able to stand before the face of their enemies." What is the meaning of, "They shall not be able to stand"? Now, why did they not stand by free will, but, with a will perplexed by fear, took to flight, were it not that God has the lordship even over men's wills, and when He is angry turns to fear whomsoever He pleases? Was it not of their own will that the enemies of the children of Israel fought against the people of God, as led by Joshua, the son of Nun? And yet the Scripture says, "It was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that they might be exterminated," And was it not likewise of his own will that the wicked son of Gera cursed King David? And yet what says David, full of true, and deep, and pious wisdom? What did he say to him who wanted to smite the reviler? "What," said he, "have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? Let him alone and let him curse, because the

Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who, then, shall say, Wherefore hast thou done so?" And then the inspired Scripture, as if it would confirm the king's profound utterance by repeating it once more, tells us: "And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth from my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more may this Benjamite do it ! Let him alone, and let him curse; for the Lord hath hidden him. It may be that, the Lord will look on my humiliation, and will: requite me good for his cursing this day." Now what prudent reader will fail to understand in what way the Lord bade this profane man to curse David? It was not by a command that He bade him, in which case his obedience would be praiseworthy; but He inclined the man's will, which had become debased by his own perverseness, to commit this sin, by His own just and secret judgment. Therefore it is said, "The Lord said unto him." Now if this person had obeyed a command of God, he would have deserved to be praised rather than punished, as we know he was afterwards punished for this sin. Nor is the reason an obscure one why the Lord told him after this manner to curse David. "It may be," said the humbled king, "that the Lord will look on my humiliation, and will requite me good for his cursing this day." See, then, what proof we have here that God uses the hearts of even wicked men for the praise and assistance of the good. Thus did He make use of Judas when betraying Christ; thus did He make use of the Jews when they crucified Christ. And how vast the blessings which from these instances He has bestowed upon the nations that should believe in Him! He also uses our worst enemy, the devil himself, but in the best way, to exercise and try the faith and piety of good men,--not for Himself indeed, who knows all things before they come to pass, but for our sakes, for whom it was necessary that such a discipline should be gone through with us. Did not Absalom choose by his own will the counsel which was detrimental to him? And yet the reason of his doing so was that the Lord had heard his father's prayer that it

might be so. Wherefore the Scripture says that "the Lord appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the Lord might bring all evils upon Absalom." It called Ahithophel's counsel "good," because it was for the moment of advantage to his purpose. It was in favour of the son against his father, against whom he had rebelled; and it might have crashed him, had not the Lord defeated the counsel which Ahithophel had given, by acting on the heart of Absalom so that he rejected this counsel, and chose another which was not expedient for him.

#### CHAP. 42 [XXI]--GOD DOES WHATSOEVER HE WILLS IN THE HEARTS OF EVEN WICKED MEN.

Who can help trembling at those judgments of God by which He does in the hearts of even wicked men whatsoever He wills, at the same time rendering to them according to their deeds? Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, rejected the salutary counsel of the old men, not to deal harshly with the people, and preferred listening to the words of the young men of his own age, by returning a rough answer to those to whom he should have spoken gently. Now whence arose such conduct, except from his own will? Upon this, however, the ten tribes of Israel revolted from him, and chose for themselves another king, even Jeroboam, that the will of God in His anger might be accomplished which He had predicted would come to pass. For what says the Scripture? "The king hearkened not unto the people; for the turning was from the Lord, that He might perform His saying, which the Lord spake to Ahijah the Shilonite concerning Jeroboam the son of Nebat." All this, indeed, was done by the will of man, although the turning was from the Lord. Read the books of the Chronicles, and you will find the following passage in the second book: "Moreover, the Lord stirred up against Jehoram the spirit of the Philistines, and of the Arabians, that were neighbours to the Ethiopians; and they



came up to the land of Judah, and ravaged it, and carried away all the substance which was found in the king's house." Here it is shown that God stirs up enemies to devastate the countries which He adjudges deserving of such chastisement. Still, did these Philistines and Arabians invade the land of Judah to waste it with no will of their own? Or were their movements so directed by their own will that the Scripture lies which tells us that "the Lord stirred up their spirit" to do all this? Both statements to be sure are true, because they both came by their own will, and yet the Lord stirred up their spirit; and this may also with equal truth be stated the other way: The Lord both stirred up their spirit, and yet they came of their own will. For the Almighty sets in motion even in the innermost hearts of men the movement of their will, so that He does through their agency whatsoever He wishes to perform through them,--even He who knows not how to will anything in unrighteousness. What, again, is the purport of that which the man of God said to King Amaziah: "Let not the army of Israel go with thee; for the Lord is not with Israel, even with all the children of Ephraim: for if thou shalt think to obtain with these, the Lord shall put thee to flight before thine enemies: for God hath power either to strengthen or to put to flight"? Now, how does the power of God help some in war by giving them confidence, and put others to flight by injecting fear into them, except it be that He who has made all things according to His own will, in heaven and on earth, also works in the hearts of men? We read also what Joash, king of Israel, said when he sent a message to Amaziah, king of Judah, who wanted to fight with him. After certain other words, he added, "Now tarry at home; why dost thou challenge me to thine hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou, and Judah with thee?" Then the Scripture has added this sequel: "But Amaziah would not hear; for it came of God, that he might be delivered into their hands, because they sought after the gods of Edom." Behold, now, how God, wishing to punish the sin of idolatry, wrought this in

this man's heart, with whom He was indeed justly angry, not to listen to sound advice, but to despise it, and go to the battle, in which he with his army was routed. God says by the prophet Ezekiel, "If the prophet be deceived when he hath spoken a thing, I the Lord have deceived that prophet: I will stretch out my hand upon him, and will destroy him from the midst of my people Israel." Then there is the book of Esther, who was a woman of the people of Israel, and in the land of their captivity became the wife of the foreign King Ahasuerus. In this book it is written, that, being driven by necessity to interpose in behalf of her people, whom the king had ordered to be slain in every part of his dominions, she prayed to the Lord. So strongly was she urged by the necessity of the case, that she even ventured into the royal presence without the king's command, and contrary to her own custom. Now observe what the Scripture says: "He looked at her like a bull in the vehemence of his indignation; and the queen was afraid, and her colour changed as she fainted; and she bowed herself upon the head of her delicate maiden which went before her. But God turned the king, and transformed his indignation into gentleness." The Scripture says in the Proverbs of Solomon, "Even as the rush of water, so is the heart of a king in God's hand; He will turn it in whatever way He shall choose." Again, in the 104th Psalm, in reference to the Egyptians, one reads what God did to them: "And He turned their heart to hate His people, to deal subtilly with His servants." Observe, likewise, what is written in the letters of the apostles. In the Epistle of Paul, the Apostle, to the Romans occur these words: "Wherefore God gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts;" and a little afterwards: "For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections;" again, in the next passage: "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." So also in his second Epistle to the Thessalonians, the apostle says of sundry persons, "Inasmuch as they received not the

love of the truth, that they might be saved; therefore also God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be judged who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

CHAP. 43.--GOD OPERATES ON MEN'S HEARTS: TO INCLINE THEIR WILLS WHITHERSOEVER HE PLEASES.

From these statements of the inspired word, and from similar passages which it would take too long to quote in full, it is, I think, sufficiently clear that God works in the hearts of men to incline their wills whithersoever He wills, whether to good deeds according to His mercy, or to evil after their own deserts; His own judgment being sometimes manifest, sometimes secret, but always righteous. This ought to be the fixed and immoveable conviction of your heart, that there is no unrighteousness with God. Therefore, whenever you read in the Scriptures of Truth, that men are led aside, or that their hearts are blunted and hardened by God, never doubt that some ill deserts of their own have first occurred, so that they justly suffer these things. Thus you will not run counter to that proverb of Solomon: "The foolishness of a man perverteth his ways, yet he blameth God in his heart." Grace, however, is not bestowed according to men's deserts; otherwise grace would be no longer grace. For grace is so designated because it is given gratuitously. Now if God is able, either through the agency of angels (whether good ones or evil), or in any other way whatever, to operate in the hearts even of the wicked, in return for their deserts,--whose wickedness was not made by Him, but was either derived originally from Adam, or increased by their own will,--what is there to wonder at if, through the Holy Spirit, He works good in the hearts of the elect, who has wrought it that their hearts become good instead of evil?

CHAP. 44 [XXII.] -- GRATUITOUS GRACE EXEMPLIFIED IN INFANTS.

Men, however, may suppose that there are certain good deserts which they think are precedent to justification through God's grace; all the while failing to see, when they express such an opinion, that they do nothing else than deny grace. But, as I have already remarked, let them suppose what they like respecting the case of adults, in the case of infants, at any rate, the Pelagians find no means of answering the difficulty. For these in receiving grace have no will; from the influence of which they can pretend to any precedent merit. We see, moreover, how they cry and struggle when they are baptized, and feel the divine sacraments. Such conduct would, of course, be charged against them as a great impiety, if they already had free will in use; and notwithstanding this, grace cleaves to them even in their resisting struggles. But most certainly there is no prevenient merit, otherwise the grace would be no longer grace. Sometimes, too, this grace is bestowed upon the children of unbelievers, when they happen by some means or other to fall, by reason of God's secret providence, into the hands of pious persons; but, on the other hand, the children of believers fail to obtain grace, some hindrance occurring to prevent the approach of help to rescue them in their danger. These things, no doubt, happen through the secret providence of God, whose judgments are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out. These are the words of the apostle; and you should observe what he had previously said, to lead him to add such a remark. He was discoursing about the Jews and Gentiles, when he wrote to the Romans--themselves Gentiles--to this effect: "For as ye, in times past, have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief; even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy; for God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that He might have mercy upon all."

Now, after he had thought upon what he said, full of wonder at the certain truth of his own assertion, indeed, but astonished at its great depth, how God concluded all in unbelief that He might have mercy upon all,--as if doing evil that good might come,--he at once exclaimed, and said, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" Perverse men, who do not reflect upon these unsearchable judgments and untraceable ways, indeed, but are ever prone to censure, being unable to understand, have supposed the apostle to say, and censoriously gloried over him for saying, "Let us do evil, that good may come!" God forbid that the apostle should say so! But men, without understanding, have thought that this was in fact said, when they heard these words of the apostle: "Moreover, the law entered, that the offence might abound; but where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." But grace, indeed, effects this purpose--that good works should now be wrought by those who previously did evil; not that they should persevere in evil courses and suppose that they are recompensed with good. Their language, therefore, ought not to be: "Let us do evil, that good may come;" but: "We have done evil, and good has come; let us henceforth do good, that in the future world we may receive good for good, who in the present life are receiving good for evil." Wherefore it is written in the Psalm, "I will sing of mercy and judgment unto Thee, O Lord." When the Son of man, therefore, first came into the world, it was not to judge the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. And this dispensation was for mercy; by and by, however, He will come for judgment--to judge the quick and the dead. And yet even in this present time salvation itself does not eventuate without judgment--although it be a hidden one; therefore He says, "For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not may see, and that they which see may be made blind."

CHAP. 45 [XXIII]--THE REASON WHY ONE PERSON IS ASSISTED BY GRACE, AND ANOTHER IS NOT HELPED, MUST BE REFERRED TO THE SECRET JUDGMENTS OF GOD.

You must refer the matter, then, to the hidden determinations of God, when you see, in one and the same condition, such as all infants unquestionably have,--who derive their hereditary evil from Adam,--that one is assisted so as to be baptized, and another is not assisted, so that he dies in his very bondage; and again, that one baptized person is left and forsaken in his present life, who God foreknew would be ungodly, while another baptized person is taken away from this life," lest that wickedness should alter his understanding;" and be sure that you do not in such cases ascribe unrighteousness or unwisdom to God, in whom is the very fountain of righteousness and wisdom, but, as I have exhorted you from the commencement of this treatise, "whereto you have already attained, walk therein," and "even this shall God reveal unto you," --if not in this life, yet certainly in the next, "for there is nothing covered that shall not be revealed." When, therefore, you hear the Lord say, "I the Lord have deceived that prophet,"" and likewise what the apostle says: "He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth," believe that, in the case of him whom He permits to be deceived and hardened, his evil deeds have deserved the judgment; whilst in the case of him to whom He shows mercy, you should loyally and unhesitatingly recognise the grace of the God who "rendereth not evil for evil; but contrariwise blessing." Nor should you take away from Pharaoh free will, because in several passages God says, "I have hardened Pharaoh ;" or," I have hardened or I will harden Pharaoh's heart;" for it does not by any means follow that Pharaoh did not, on this account, harden his own heart. For this, too, is said of him, after the removal of the fly-plague from the Egyptians, in these words of the Scripture: "And Pharaoh hardened his heart at this time also;

neither would he let the people go." Thus it was that both God hardened him by His just judgment, and Pharaoh by his own free will. Be ye then well assured that your labour will never be in vain, if, setting before you a good purpose, you persevere in it to the last. For God, who fails to render, according to their deeds, only to those whom He liberates, will then "recompense every man according to his works." God will, therefore, certainly recompense both evil for evil, because He is just; and good for evil, because He is good; and good for good, because He is good and just; only, evil for good He will never recompense, because He is not unjust. He will, therefore, recompense evil for evil--punishment for un-righteousness; and He will recompense good for evil--grace for unrighteousness; and He will recompense good for good--grace for grace.

CHAP. 46 [XXIV.] --UNDERSTANDING AND WISDOM MUST BE SOUGHT FROM GOD.

Peruse attentively this treatise, and if you understand it, give God the praise; but where you fail to understand it, pray for understanding, for God will give you understanding. Remember what the Scriptures say: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given to him." Wisdom itself cometh down from above, as the Apostle James himself tells us. There is, however, another wisdom, which you must repel from you, and pray against its remaining in you; this the same apostle expressed his detestation of when he said, "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, . . . this is not the wisdom which descendeth from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For wherever there is envying and strife, there is also confusion, and every evil work. But the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good works, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." What

blessing, then, will that man not have who has prayed for this wisdom and obtained it of the Lord? And from this you may understand what grace is; because if this wisdom were of ourselves, it would not be from above; nor would it be an object to be asked for of the God who created us. Brethren, pray ye for us also, that we may live "soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," to whom belong the honour, and the glory, and the kingdom, with the Father and the Holy Ghost, for ever and ever. Amen.



**A TREATISE ON NATURE AND GRACE,  
AGAINST PELAGIUS;  
BY AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF  
HIPPO;**

CONTAINED IN ONE BOOK, ADDRESSED TO TIMASIUS AND JACOBUS.

WRITTEN IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD 415.

HE BEGINS WITH A STATEMENT OF WHAT IS TO BE INVESTIGATED CONCERNING NATURE AND GRACE; HE SHOWS THAT NATURE, AS PROPAGATED FROM THE FLESH OF THE SINFUL ADAM, BEING NO LONGER WHAT GOD MADE IT AT FIRST, -- FAULTLESS AND SOUND, -- REQUIRES THE AID OF GRACE, IN ORDER THAT IT MAY BE REDEEMED FROM THE WRATH OF GOD AND REGULATED FOR THE PERFECTION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS: THAT THE PENAL FAULT OF NATURE LEADS TO A MOST RIGHTEOUS RETRIBUTION: WHILST GRACE ITSELF IS NOT RENDERED TO ANY DESERTS OF OURS, BUT IS GIVEN GRATUITOUSLY; AND THEY WHO ARE NOT DELIVERED BY IT ARE JUSTLY CONDEMNED. HE AFTERWARDS REFUTES, WITH ANSWERS ON EVERY SEVERAL POINT, A WORK BY PELAGIUS, WHO SUPPORTS THIS SELF-SAME NATURE IN OPPOSITION TO GRACE; AMONG OTHER THINGS ESPECIALLY, IN HIS DESIRE TO RECOMMEND THE OPINION THAT A MAN CAN LIVE WITHOUT SIN, HE CONTENDED THAT NATURE HAD NOT BEEN WEAKENED AND CHANGED BY SIN; FOR, OTHERWISE, THE MATTER OF SIN (WHICH HE THINKS ABSURD) WOULD BE ITS PUNISHMENT, IF THE SINNER WERE

WEAKENED TO SUCH A DEGREE THAT HE COMMITTED MORE SIN. HE GOES ON TO ENUMERATE SUNDRY RIGHTEOUS MEN BOTH OF THE OLD AND OF THE NEW TESTAMENTS: DEEMING THESE TO HAVE BEEN FREE FROM SIN, HE ALLEGED THE POSSIBILITY OF NOT SINNING TO BE INHERENT IN MAN; AND THIS HE ATTRIBUTED TO GOD'S GRACE, ON THE GROUND THAT GOD IS THE AUTHOR OF THAT NATURE IN WHICH IS INSEPARABLY INHERENT THIS POSSIBILITY OF AVOIDING SIN. TOWARDS THE END OF THIS TREATISE THERE IS AN EXAMINATION OF SUNDRY EXTRACTS FROM OLD WRITERS, WHICH PELAGIUS ADDUCED IN SUPPORT OF HIS VIEWS, AND EXPRESSLY FROM HILARY, AMBROSE, AND EVEN AUGUSTIN HIMSELF.

CHAP. 1 [I.]--THE OCCASION OF PUBLISHING THIS WORK; WHAT GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS IS.

THE book which you sent to me, my beloved sons, Timasius and Jacobus, I have read through hastily, but not indifferently, omitting only the few points which are plain enough to everybody; and I saw in it a man inflamed with most ardent zeal against those, who, when in their sins they ought to censure human will, are more forward in accusing the nature of men, and thereby endeavour to excuse themselves. He shows too great a fire against this evil, which even authors of secular literature have severely censured with the exclamation: "The human race falsely complains of its own nature!" This same sentiment your author also has strongly insisted upon, with all the powers of his talent. I fear, however, that he will chiefly help those "who have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge," who, "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." Now, what the

righteousness of God is, which is spoken of here, he immediately afterwards explains by adding: "For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." This righteousness of God, therefore, lies not in the commandment of the law, which excites fear, but in the aid afforded by the grace of Christ, to which alone the fear of the law, as of a schoolmaster, usefully conducts. Now, the man who understands this understands why he is a Christian. For "If righteousness came by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." If, however He did not die in vain, in Him only is the ungodly man justified, and to him, on believing in Him who justifies the ungodly, faith is reckoned for righteousness. For all men have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His blood. But all those who do not think themselves to belong to the "all who have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," have of course no need to become Christians, because "they that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick;" whence it is, that He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

#### CHAP. 2 [II.]--FAITH IN CHRIST NOT NECESSARY TO SALVATION, IF A MAN WITHOUT IT CAN LEAD A RIGHTEOUS LIFE.

Therefore the nature of the human race, generated from the flesh of the one transgressor, if it is self-sufficient for fulfilling the law and for perfecting righteousness, ought to be sure of its reward, that is, of everlasting life, even if in any nation or at any former time faith in the blood of Christ was unknown to it. For God is not so unjust as to defraud righteous persons of the reward of righteousness, because there has not been announced to them the mystery of Christ's divinity and humanity, which was manifested in the flesh. For how could they believe what they had not heard of; or how could they hear without a preacher? ' For "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing

by the word of Christ." But I say (adds he): Have they not heard? "Yea, verily; their sound went out into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." Before, however, all this had been accomplished, before the actual preaching of the gospel reaches the ends of all the earth--because there are some remote nations still (although it is said they are very few) to whom the preached gospel has not found its way,--what must human nature do, or what has it done--for it had either not heard that all this was to take place, or has not yet learnt that it was accomplished--but believe in God who made heaven and earth, by whom also it perceived by nature that it had been itself created, and lead a right life, and thus accomplish His will, uninstructed with any faith in the death and resurrection of Christ? Well, if this could have been done, or can still be done, then for my part I have to say what the apostle said in regard to the law: "Then Christ died in vain." For if he said this about the law, which only the nation of the Jews received, how much more justly may it be said of the law of nature, which the whole human race has received, "If righteousness come by nature, then Christ died in vain." If, however, Christ did not die in vain, then human nature cannot by any means be justified and redeemed from God's most righteous wrath--in a word, from punishment--except by faith and the sacrament of the blood of Christ.

### CHAP. 3 [III.]--NATURE WAS CREATED SOUND AND WHOLE; IT WAS AFTERWARDS CORRUPTED BY SIN.

Man's nature, indeed, was created at first faultless and without any sin; but that nature of man in which every one is born from Adam, now wants the Physician, because it is not sound. All good qualities, no doubt, which it still possesses in its make, life, senses, intellect, it has of the Most High God, its Creator and Maker. But the flaw, which darkens and weakens all those natural goods, so that it has need of

illumination and healing, it has not contracted from its blameless Creator--but from that original sin, which it committed by free will. Accordingly, criminal nature has its part in most righteous punishment. For, if we are now newly created in Christ, we were, for all that, children of wrath, even as others, "but God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, by whose grace we were saved."

#### CHAP. 4 [IV.]--FREE GRACE.

This grace, however, of Christ, without which neither infants nor adults can be saved, is not rendered for any merits, but is given gratis, on account of which it is also called grace. "Being justified," says the apostle, "freely through His blood." Whence they, who are not liberated through grace, either because they are not yet able to hear, or because they are unwilling to obey; or again because they did not receive, at the time when they were unable on account of youth to hear, that bath of regeneration, which they might have received and through which they might have been saved, are indeed justly condemned; because they are not without sin, either that which they have derived from their birth, or that which they have added from their own misconduct. "For all have sinned"--whether in Adam or in themselves--"and come short of the glory of God."

#### CHAP. 5 [V.]--IT WAS A MATTER OF JUSTICE THAT ALL SHOULD BE CONDEMNED.

The entire mass, therefore, incurs penalty and if the deserved punishment of condemnation were rendered to all, it would without doubt be righteously rendered. They, therefore, who are delivered therefrom by grace are called, not vessels of their own merits, but "vessels of mercy." But of whose mercy, if not His who sent Christ

Jesus into the world to save sinners, whom He foreknew, and foreordained, and called, and justified, and glorified? Now, who could be so madly insane as to fail to give ineffable thanks to the Mercy which liberates whom it would? The man who correctly appreciated the whole subject could not possibly blame the justice of God in wholly condemning all men whatsoever.

#### CHAP. 6 [VI.]--THE PELAGIANS HAVE VERY STRONG AND ACTIVE MINDS.

If we are simply wise according to the Scriptures, we are not compelled to dispute against the grace of Christ, and to make statements attempting to show that human nature both requires no Physician,--in infants, because it is whole and sound; and in adults, because it is able to suffice for itself in attaining righteousness, if it will. Men no doubt seem to urge acute opinions on these points, but it is only word-wisdom, by which the cross of Christ is made of none effect. This, however, "is not the wisdom which descendeth from above." The words which follow in the apostle's statement I am unwilling to quote; for we would rather not be thought to do an injustice to our friends, whose very strong and active minds we should be sorry to see running in a perverse, instead of an upright, course.

#### CHAP. 7 [VII.]--HE PROCEEDS TO CONFUTE THE WORK OF PELAGIUS; HE REFRAINS AS YET FROM MENTIONING PELAGIUS' NAME.

However ardent, then, is the zeal which the author of the book you have forwarded to me entertains against those who find a defence for their sins in the infirmity of human nature; not less, nay even much greater, should be our eagerness in preventing all attempts to render the cross of Christ of none effect. Of none effect, however, it is

rendered, if it be contended that by any other means than by Christ's own sacrament it is possible to attain to righteousness and everlasting life. This is actually done in the book to which I refer--I will not say by its author wittingly, lest I should express the judgment that he ought not to be accounted even a Christian, but, as I rather believe, unconsciously. He has done it, no doubt, with much power; I only wish that the ability he has displayed were sound and less like that which insane persons are accustomed to exhibit.

#### CHAP. 8.--A DISTINCTION DRAWN BY PELAGIUS BETWEEN THE POSSIBLE AND ACTUAL.

For he first of all makes a distinction: "It is one thing," says he, "to inquire whether a thing can be, which has respect to its possibility only; and another thing, whether or not it is." This distinction, nobody doubts, is true enough; for it follows that whatever is, was able to be; but it does not therefore follow that what is able to be, also is. Our Lord, for instance, raised Lazarus; He unquestionably was able to do so. But inasmuch as He did not raise up Judas? must we therefore contend that He was unable to do so? He certainly was able, but He would not. For if He had been willing, He could have effected this too. For the Son quickeneth whomsoever He will. Observe, however, what he means by this distinction, true and manifest enough in itself, and what he endeavours to make out of it. "We are treating," says he, "of possibility only; and to pass from this to something else, except in the case of some certain fact, we deem to be a very serious and extraordinary process." This idea he turns over again and again, in many ways and at great length, so that no one would suppose that he was inquiring about any other point than the possibility of not committing sin. Among the many passages in which he treats of this subject, occurs the following: "I once more repeat my position: I say that it is possible for a man to be without sin. What do

you say? That it is impossible for a man to be without sin? But I do not say," he adds, "that there is a man without sin; nor do you say, that there is not a man without sin. Our contention is about what is possible, and not possible; not about what is, and is not." He then enumerates certain passages of Scripture, which are usually alleged in opposition to them, and insists that they have nothing to do with the question, which is really in dispute, as to the possibility or impossibility of a man's being without sin. This is what he says: "No man indeed is clean from pollution; and, There is no man that sinneth not; and, There is not a just man upon the earth; and, There is none that doeth good. There are these and similar passages in Scripture," says he, "but they testify to the point of not being, not of not being able; for by testimonies of this sort it is shown what kind of persons certain men were at such and such a time, not that they were unable to be something else. Whence they are justly found to be blameworthy. If, however, they had been of such a character, simply because they were unable to be anything else, they are free from blame."

#### CHAP. 9 [VIII.]--EVEN THEY WHO WERE NOT ABLE TO BE JUSTIFIED ARE CONDEMNED.

See what he has said. I, however, affirm that an infant born in a place where it was not possible for him to be admitted to the baptism of Christ, and being overtaken by death, was placed in such circumstances, that is to say, died without the bath of regeneration, because it was not possible for him to be otherwise. He would therefore absolve him, and, in spite of the Lord's sentence, open to him the kingdom of heaven. The apostle, however, does not absolve him, when he says: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; by which death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rightly, therefore, by virtue of that condemnation which



runs throughout the mass, is he not admitted into the kingdom of heaven, although he was not only not a Christian, but was unable to become one.

CHAP. 10 [IX.]--HE COULD NOT BE JUSTIFIED, WHO HAD NOT HEARD OF THE NAME OF CHRIST; RENDERING THE CROSS OF CHRIST OF NONE EFFECT.

But they say: "He is not condemned; because the statement that all sinned in Adam, was not made because of the sin which is derived from one's birth, but because of imitation of him." If, therefore, Adam is said to be the author of all the sins which followed his own, because he was the first sinner of the human race, then how is it that Abel, rather than Christ, is not placed at the head of all the righteous, because he was the first righteous man? But I am not speaking of the case of an infant. I take the instance of a young man, or an old man, who has died in a region where he could not hear of the name of Christ. Well, could such a man have become righteous by nature and free will; or could he not? If they contend that he could, then see what it is to render the cross of Christ of none effect, to contend that any man without it, can be justified by the law of nature and the power of his will. We may here also say, then is Christ dead in vain? forasmuch as all might accomplish so much as this, even if He had never died; and if they should be unrighteous, they would be so because they wished to be, not because they were unable to be righteous. But even though a man could not be justified at all without the grace of Christ, he would absolve him, if he dared, in accordance with his words, to the effect that, "if a man were of such a character, because he could not possibly have been of any other, he would be free from all blame."

CHAP. 11 [X.]--GRACE SUBTLY ACKNOWLEDGED BY PELAGIUS.

He then starts an objection to his own position, as if, indeed, another person had raised it, and says: "'A man,' you will say, 'may possibly be [without sin]; but it is by the grace of God.'" He then at once subjoins the following, as if in answer to his own suggestion: "I thank you for your kindness, because you are not merely content to withdraw your opposition to my statement, which you just now opposed, or barely to acknowledge it; but you actually go so far as to approve it. For to say, 'A man may possibly, but by this or by that,' is in fact nothing else than not only to assent to its possibility, but also to show the mode and condition of its possibility. Nobody, therefore, gives a better assent to the possibility of anything than the man who allows the condition thereof; because, without the thing itself, it is not possible for a condition to be." After this he raises another objection against himself: "'But, you will say, 'you here seem to reject the grace of God, inasmuch as you do not even mention it;'" and he then answers the objection: "Now, is it I that reject grace, who by acknowledging the thing must needs also confess the means by which it may be effected, or you, who by denying the thing do undoubtedly also deny whatever may be the means through which the thing is accomplished?" He forgot that he was now answering one who does not deny the thing, and whose objection he had just before set forth in these words: "A man may possibly be [without sin]; but it is by the grace of God." How then does that man deny the possibility, in defence of which his opponent earnestly contends, when he makes the admission to that opponent that "the thing is possible, but only by the grace of God?" That, however, after he is dismissed who already acknowledges the essential thing, he still has a question against those who maintain the impossibility of a man's being without sin, what is it to us? Let him ply his questions against any opponents he pleases, provided he only confesses this, which cannot be denied without the most criminal impiety, that without the grace of God a man cannot be without sin. He says, indeed: "Whether

he confesses it to be by grace, or by aid, or by mercy, whatever that be by which a man can be without sin,--every one acknowledges the thing itself."

CHAP. 12 [XI.]--IN OUR DISCUSSIONS ABOUT GRACE, WE DO NOT SPEAK OF THAT WHICH RELATES TO THE CONSTITUTION OF OUR NATURE, BUT TO ITS RESTORATION.

I confess to your love, that when I read those words I was filled with a sudden joy, because he did not deny the grace of God by which alone a man can be justified; for it is this which I mainly detest and dread in discussions of this kind But when I went on to read the rest, I began to have my suspicions, first of all, from the similes he employs. For he says: "If I were to say, man is able to dispute; a bird is able to fly; a hare is able to run; without mentioning at the same time the instruments by which these acts can be accomplished--that is, the tongue, the wings, and the legs; should I then have denied the conditions of the various offices, when I acknowledged the very offices themselves?" It is at once apparent that he has here instanced such things as are by nature efficient; for the members of the bodily structure which are here mentioned are created with natures of such a kind--the tongue, the wings, the legs. He has not here posited any such thing as we wish to have understood by grace, without which no man is justified; for this is a topic which is concerned about the cure, not the constitution, of natural. functions. Entertaining, then, some apprehensions, I proceeded to read all the rest, and I soon found that my suspicions had not been unfounded.

CHAP. 13 [XII.]--THE SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE LAW'S THREATENINGS; "PERFECT WAYFARERS."

But before I proceed further, see what he has said. When treating the question about the difference of sins, and starting as an objection to

himself, what certain persons allege, "that some sins are light by their very frequency, their constant irruption making it impossible that they should be all of them avoided;" he thereupon denied that it was "proper that they should be censured even as light offences, if they cannot possibly be wholly avoided." He of course does not notice the Scriptures of the New Testament, wherein we learn that the intention of the law in its censure is this, that, by reason of the transgressions which men commit, they may flee for refuge to the grace of the Lord, who has pity upon them--"the schoolmaster" "shutting them up unto the same faith which should afterwards be revealed;" that by it their transgressions may be forgiven, and then not again be committed, by God's assisting grace. The road indeed belongs to all who are progressing in it; although it is they who make a good advance that are called "perfect travellers." That, however, is the height of perfection which admits of no addition, when the goal to which men tend has begun to be possessed.

#### CHAP. 14 [XIII.]--REFUTATION OF PELAGIUS.

But the truth is, the question which is proposed to him--"Are you even yourself without sin?"--does not really belong to the subject in dispute. What, however, he says,--that "it is rather to be imputed to his own negligence that he is not without sin," is no doubt well spoken; but then he should deem it to be his duty even to pray to God that this faulty negligence get not the dominion over him,--the prayer that a certain man once put up, when he said: "Order my steps according to Thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me," --lest, whilst relying on his own diligence as on strength of his own, he should fail to attain to the true righteousness either by this way, or by that other method in which, no doubt, perfect righteousness is to be desired and hoped for.

CHAP. 15 [XIV.]--NOT EVERYTHING [OF DOCTRINAL TRUTH] IS WRITTEN IN SCRIPTURE IN SO MANY WORDS.

That, too, which is said to him, "that it is nowhere written in so many words, A man can be without sin," he easily refutes thus: "That the question here is not in what precise words each doctrinal statement is made." It is perhaps not without reason that, while in several passages of Scripture we may find it said that men are without excuse, it is nowhere found that any man is described as being without sin, except Him only, of whom it is plainly said, that "He knew no sin." Similarly, we read in the passage where the subject is concerning priests: "He was in all points tempted like as we are, only without sin," --meaning, of course, in that flesh which bore the likeness of sinful flesh, although it was not sinful flesh; a likeness, indeed, which it would not have borne if it had not been in every other respect the same as sinful flesh. How, however, we are to understand this: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; neither can he sin, for his seed remaineth in him;" while the Apostle John himself, as if he had not been born of God, or else were addressing men who had not been born of God, lays down this position: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," --I have already explained, with such care as I was able, in those books which I wrote to Marcellinus on this very subject. It seems, moreover, to me to be an interpretation worthy of acceptance to regard the clause of the above quoted passage: "Neither can he sin," as if it meant: He ought not to commit sin. For who could be so foolish as to say that sin ought to be committed, when, in fact, sin is sin, for no other reason than that it ought not to be committed?

CHAP. 16 [XV.]--PELAGIUS CORRUPTS A PASSAGE OF THE APOSTLE JAMES BY ADDING A NOTE OF INTERROGATION.

Now that passage, in which the Apostle James says: "But the tongue can no man tame," does not appear to me to be capable of the interpretation which he would put upon it, when he expounds it, "as if it were written by way of reproach; as much as to say: Can no man then, tame the tongue? As if in a reproachful tone, which would say: You are able to tame wild beasts; cannot you tame the tongue? As if it were an easier thing to tame the tongue than to subjugate wild beasts." I do not think that this is the meaning of the passage. For, if he had meant such an opinion as this to be entertained of the facility of taming the tongue, there would have followed in the sequel of the passage a comparison of that member with the beasts. As it is, however, it simply goes on to say: "The tongue is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison," --such, of course, as is more noxious than that of beasts and creeping things. For while the one destroys the flesh, the other kills the soul. For, "The mouth that believeth slayeth the soul." It is not, therefore, as if this is an easier achievement than the taming of beasts that St. James pronounced the statement before us, or would have others utter it; but he rather aims at showing what a great evil in man his tongue is--so great, indeed, that it cannot be tamed by any man, although even beasts are tameable by human beings. And he said this, not with a view to our permitting, through our neglect, the continuance of so great an evil to ourselves, but in order that we might be induced to request the help of divine grace for the taming of the tongue. For he does not say: "None can tame the tongue;" but "No man;" in order that, when it is tamed, we may acknowledge it to be effected by the mercy of God, the help of God, the grace of God. The soul, therefore, should endeavour to tame the tongue, and while endeavouring should pray for assistance; the tongue, too, should beg for the taming of the tongue,--He being the tamer who said to His disciples: "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Thus, we are warned by the

precept to do this,--namely, to make the attempt, and, failing in our own strength, to pray for the help of God.

#### CHAP. 17 [XVI.]--EXPLANATION OF THIS TEXT CONTINUED.

Accordingly, after emphatically describing the evil of the tongue--saying, among other things: "My brethren, these things ought not so to be" 4--he at once, after finishing some remarks which arose out of his subject, goes on to add I this advice, showing by what help those things would not happen, which (as he said) ought not: "Who is a wise man and endowed with knowledge among you? Let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where there is envying and strife, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." This is the wisdom which tames the tongue; it descends from above, and springs from no human heart. Will any one, then, dare to divorce it from the grace of God, and with most arrogant vanity place it in the power of man? Why should I pray to God that it be accorded me, if it may be had of man? Ought we not to object to this prayer lest injury be done to free will which is self-sufficient in the possibility of nature for discharging all the duties of righteousness? We ought, then, to object also to the Apostle James himself, who admonishes us in these words: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him; but let him ask in faith, nothing doubting." This is the faith to which the commandments drive us, in order that the law may prescribe our duty and faith accomplish it. For through the tongue, which no man can tame, but only the wisdom which comes down from above, "in

many things we all of us offend." For this truth also the same apostle pronounced in no other sense than that in which he afterwards declares: "The tongue no man can tame."

#### CHAP. 18 [XVII.]--WHO MAY BE SAID TO BE IN THE FLESH.

There is a passage which nobody could place against these texts with the similar purpose of showing the impossibility of not sinning: "The wisdom of the flesh is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be; so then they that are in the flesh cannot please God;" for he here mentions the wisdom of the flesh, not the wisdom which cometh from above: moreover, it is manifest, that in this passage, by the phrase, "being in the flesh," are signified, not those who have not yet quitted the body, but those who live according to the flesh. The question, however, we are discussing does not lie in this point. But what I want to hear from him, if I can, is about those who live according to the Spirit, and who on this account are not, in a certain sense, in the flesh, even while they still live here, -- whether they, by God's grace, live according to the Spirit, or are sufficient for themselves, natural capability having been bestowed on them when they were created, and their own proper will besides. Whereas the fulfilling of the law is nothing else than love; and God's love is shed abroad in our hearts, not by our own selves, but by the Holy Ghost which is given to us.

#### CHAP. 19. -- SINS OF IGNORANCE; TO WHOM WISDOM IS GIVEN BY GOD ON THEIR REQUESTING IT.

He further treats of sins of ignorance, and says that "a man ought to be very careful to avoid ignorance; and that ignorance is blameworthy for this reason, because it is through his own neglect that a man is ignorant of that which he certainly must have known if he had only applied diligence;" whereas he prefers disputing all things



rather than to pray, and say: "Give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments." It is, indeed, one thing to have taken no pains to know what sins of negligence were apparently expiated even through divers sacrifices of the law; it is another thing to wish to understand, to be unable, and then to act contrary to the law, through not understanding what it would have done. We are accordingly enjoined to ask of God wisdom, "who giveth to all men liberally;" that is, of course, to all men who ask in such a manner, and to such an extent, as so great a matter requires in earnestness of petition.

#### CHAP. 20 [XVIII.] -- WHAT PRAYER PELAGIUS WOULD ADMIT TO BE NECESSARY.

He confesses that "sins which have been committed do notwithstanding require to be divinely expiated, and that the Lord must be entreated because of them," -- that is, for the purpose, of course, of obtaining pardon; "because that which has been done cannot," it is his own admission, "be undone," by that "power of nature and will of man" which he talks about so much. From this necessity, therefore, it follows that a man must pray to be forgiven. That a man, however, requires to be helped not to sin, he has nowhere admitted; I read no such admission in this passage; he keeps a strange silence on this subject altogether; although the Lord's Prayer enjoins upon us the necessity of praying both that our debts may be remitted to us, and that we may not be led into temptation, -- the one petition entreating that past offences may be atoned for; the other, that future ones may be avoided. Now, although this is never done unless our will be assistant, yet our will alone is not enough to secure its being done; the prayer, therefore, which is offered up to God for this result is neither superfluous nor

offensive to the Lord. For what is more foolish than to pray that you may do that which you have it in your own power to do.

CHAP. 21 [XIX.] -- PELAGIUS DENIES THAT HUMAN NATURE HAS BEEN DEPRAVED OR CORRUPTED BY SIN.

You may now see (what bears very closely on our subject) how he endeavours to exhibit human nature, as if it were wholly without fault, and how he struggles against the plainest of God's Scriptures with that "wisdom of word" which renders the cross of Christ of none effect. That cross, however, shall certainly never be made of none effect; rather shall such wisdom be subverted. Now, after we shall have demonstrated this, it may be that God's mercy may visit him, so that he may be sorry that he ever said these things: "We have," he says, "first of all to discuss the position which is maintained, that our nature has been weakened and changed by sin. I think," continues he, "that before all other things we have to inquire what sin is, -- some substance, or wholly a name without substance, whereby is expressed not a thing, not an existence, not some sort of a body, but the doing of a wrongful deed." He then adds: "I suppose that this is the case; and if so," he asks, "how could that which lacks all substance have possibly weakened or changed human nature?" Observe, I beg of you, how in his ignorance he struggles to overthrow the most salutary words of the remedial Scriptures: "I said, O Lord, be merciful unto me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee." Now, how can a thing be healed, if it is not wounded nor hurt, nor weakened and corrupted? But, as there is here something to be healed, whence did it receive its injury? You hear [the Psalmist] confessing the fact; what need is there of discussion? He says: "Heal my soul." Ask him how that which he wants to be healed became injured, and then listen to his following words: "Because I have sinned against Thee."

Let him, however, put a question, and ask what he deemed a suitable inquiry, and say: "O you who exclaim, Heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee! pray tell me what sin is? Some substance, or wholly a name without substance, whereby is expressed, not a thing, not an existence, not some sort of a body, but merely the doing of a wrongful deed?" Then the other returns for answer: "It is even as you say; sin is not some substance; but under its name there is merely expressed the doing of a wrongful deed." But he rejoins: "Then why cry out, Heal my soul, for I have sinned against Thee? How could that have possibly corrupted your soul which lacks all substance?" Then would the other, worn out with the anguish of his wound, in order to avoid being diverted from prayer by the discussion, briefly answer and say: "Go from me, I beseech you; rather discuss the point, if you can, with Him who said: 'They that are whole need no physician, but they that are sick; I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners,'" -- in which words, of course, He designated the righteous as the whole, and sinners as the sick.

#### CHAP. 22 [XX.] -- HOW OUR NATURE COULD BE VITIATED BY SIN, EVEN THOUGH IT BE NOT A SUBSTANCE.

Now, do you not perceive the tendency and direction of this controversy? Even to render of none effect the Scripture where it is said "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." For how is He to save where there is no malady? For the sins, from which this gospel says Christ's people have to be saved, are not substances, and according to this writer are incapable of corrupting. O brother, how good a thing it is to remember that you are a Christian! To believe, might perhaps be enough; but still, since you persist in discussion, there is no harm, nay there is even benefit, if a firm faith precede it; let us not suppose, then, that human nature cannot be corrupted by sin, but rather, believing, from the inspired

Scriptures, that it is corrupted by sin, let our inquiry be how this could possibly have come about. Since, then, we have already learnt that sin is not a substance, do we not consider, not to mention any other example, that not to eat is also not a substance? Because such abstinence is withdrawal from a substance, inasmuch as food is a substance. To abstain, then, from food is not a substance; and yet the substance of our body, if it does altogether abstain from food, so languishes, is so impaired by broken health, is so exhausted of strength, so weakened and broken with very weariness, that even if it be in any way able to continue alive, it is hardly capable of being restored to the use of that food, by abstaining from which it became so corrupted and injured. In the same way sin is not a substance; but God is a substance, yea the height of substance and only true sustenance of the reasonable creature. The consequence of departing from Him by disobedience, and of inability, through infirmity, to receive what one ought really to rejoice in, you hear from the Psalmist, when he says: "My heart is smitten and withered like grass, since I have forgotten to eat my bread."

#### CHAP. 23 [XXI.] -- ADAM DELIVERED BY THE MERCY OF CHRIST.

But observe how, by specious arguments, he continues to oppose the truth of Holy Scripture. The Lord Jesus, who is called Jesus because He saves His people from their sins, in accordance with this His merciful character, says: "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick; I am come not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Accordingly, His apostle also says: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." This man, however, contrary to the "faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation," declares that "this sickness ought not to have been contracted by sins, lest the

punishment of sin should amount to this, that more sins should be committed." Now even for infants the help of the Great Physician is sought. This writer asks: "Why seek Him? They are whole for whom you seek the Physician. Not even was the first man condemned to die for any such reason, for he did not sin afterwards." As if he had ever heard anything of his subsequent perfection in righteousness, except so far as the Church commends to our faith that even Adam was delivered by the mercy of the Lord Christ. "As to his posterity also," says he, "not only are they not more infirm than he, but they actually fulfilled more commandments than he ever did, since he neglected to fulfil one," -- this posterity which he sees so born (as Adam certainly was not made), not only incapable of commandment, which they do not at all understand, but hardly capable of sucking the breast, when they are hungry! Yet even these would He have to be saved in the bosom of Mother Church by His grace who saves His people from their sins; but these men gainsay such grace, and, as if they had a deeper insight into the creature than ever He possesses who made the creature, they pronounce [these infants] sound with an assertion which is anything but sound itself.

#### CHAP. 24 [XXII.] -- SIN AND THE PENALTY OF SIN THE SAME.

"The very matter," says he, "of sin is its punishment, if the sinner is so much weakened that he commits more sins." He does not consider how justly the light of truth forsakes the man who transgresses the law. When thus deserted he of course becomes blinded, and necessarily offends more; and by so falling is embarrassed and being embarrassed fails to rise, so as to hear the voice of the law, which admonishes him to beg for the Saviour's grace. Is no punishment due to them of whom the apostle says: "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was

darkened?" This darkening was, of course, already their punishment and penalty; and yet by this very penalty -- that is, by their blindness of heart, which supervenes on the withdrawal of the light of wisdom -- they fell into more grievous sins still. "For giving themselves out as wise, they became fools." This is a grievous penalty, if one only understands it; and from such a penalty only see to what lengths they ran: "And they changed," he says, "the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things." All this they did owing to that penalty of their sin, whereby "their foolish heart was darkened." And yet, owing to these deeds of theirs, which, although coming in the way of punishment, were none the less sins (he goes on to say): "Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness, through the lusts of their own hearts." See how severely God condemned them, giving them over to uncleanness in the very desires of their heart. Observe also the sins they commit owing to such condemnation: "To dishonour," says he, "their own bodies among themselves." Here is the punishment of iniquity, which is itself iniquity; a fact which sets forth in a clearer light the words which follow: "Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen." "For this cause," says he, "God gave them up unto vile affections." See how often God inflicts punishment; and out of the self-same punishment sins, more numerous and more severe, arise. "For even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature; and likewise the men also, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly." Then, to show that these things were so sins themselves, that they were also the penalties of sins, he further says: "And receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet." Observe how often it happens that the very punishment which God inflicts begets other sins as its natural offspring. Attend still further: "And

even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge," says he, "God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient; being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, odious to God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful." Here, now, let our opponent say: "Sin ought not so to have been punished, that the sinner, through his punishment, should commit even more sins."

CHAP. 25 [XXIII.] -- GOD FORSAKES ONLY THOSE WHO DESERVE TO BE FORSAKEN. WE ARE SUFFICIENT OF OURSELVES TO COMMIT SIN; BUT NOT TO RETURN TO THE WAY OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. DEATH IS THE PUNISHMENT, NOT THE CAUSE OF SIN.

Perhaps he may answer that God does not compel men to do these things, but only forsakes those who deserve to be forsaken. If he does say this, he says what is most true. For, as I have already remarked, those who are forsaken by the light of righteousness, and are therefore groping in darkness, produce nothing else than those works of darkness which I have enumerated, until such time as it is said to them, and they obey the command: "Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." The truth designates them as dead; whence the passage: "Let the dead bury their dead." The truth, then, designates as dead those whom this man declares to have been unable to be damaged or corrupted by sin, on the ground, forsooth, that he has discovered sin to be no substance! Nobody tells him that "man was so formed as to be able to pass from righteousness to sin, and yet not able to return from sin to righteousness." But that free will, whereby man

corrupted his own self, was sufficient for his passing into sin; but to return to righteousness, he has need of a Physician, since he is out of health; he has need of a Vivifier, because he is dead. Now about such grace as this he says not a word, as if he were able to cure himself by his own will, since this alone was able to ruin him. We do not tell him that the death of the body is of efficacy for sinning, because it is only its punishment; for no one sins by undergoing the death of his body but the death of the soul is conducive to sin, forsaken as it is by its life, that is, its God; and it must needs produce dead works, until it revives by the grace of Christ. God forbid that we should assert that hunger and thirst and other bodily sufferings necessarily produce sin. When exercised by such vexations, the life of the righteous only shines out with greater lustre, and procures a greater glory by overcoming them through patience; but then it is assisted by the grace, it is assisted by the Spirit, it is assisted by the mercy of God; not exalting itself in an arrogant will, but earning fortitude by a humble confession. For it had learnt to say unto God: "Thou art my hope; Thou art my trust." Now, how it happens that concerning this grace, and help and mercy, without which we cannot live, this man has nothing to say, I am at a loss to know; but he goes further, and in the most open manner gainsays the grace of Christ whereby we are justified, by insisting on the sufficiency of nature to work righteousness, provided only the will be present. The reason, however, why, after sin has been released to the guilty one by grace, for the exercise of faith, there should still remain the death of the body, although it proceeds from sin, I have already explained, according to my ability, in those books which I wrote to Marcellinus of blessed memory.

CHAP. 26 [XXIV.] -- CHRIST DIED OF HIS OWN POWER AND CHOICE.



As to his statement, indeed, that "the Lord was able to die without sin;" His being born also was of the ability of His mercy, not the demand of His nature: so, likewise, did He undergo death of His own power; and this is our price which He paid to redeem us from death. Now, this truth their contention labours hard to make of none effect; for human nature is maintained by them to be such, that with free will it wants no such ransom in order to be translated from the power of darkness and of him who has the power of death, into the kingdom of Christ the Lord. And yet, when the Lord drew near His passion, He said, "Behold, the prince of this world cometh and shall find nothing in me," -- and therefore no sin, of course, on account of which he might exercise dominion over Him, so as to destroy Him. "But," added He, "that the world may know that I do the will of my Father, arise, let us go hence;" as much as to say, I am going to die, not through the necessity of sin, but in voluntariness of obedience.

#### CHAP. 27. -- EVEN EVILS, THROUGH GOD'S MERCY, ARE OF USE.

He asserts that "no evil is the cause of anything good;" as if punishment, forsooth, were good, although thereby many have been reformed. There are, then, evils which are of use by the wondrous mercy of God. Did that man experience some good thing, when he said, "Thou didst hide Thy face from me, and I was troubled?" Certainly not; and yet this very trouble was to him in a certain manner a remedy against his pride. For he had said in his prosperity, "I shall never be moved;" and so was ascribing to himself what he was receiving from the Lord. "For what had he that he did not receive?" It had, therefore, become necessary to show him whence he had received, that he might receive in humility what he had lost in pride. Accordingly, he says, "In Thy good pleasure, O Lord, Thou didst add strength to my beauty." In this abundance of mine I once

used to say, "I shall not be moved;" whereas it all came from Thee, not from myself. Then at last Thou didst turn away Thy face from me, and I became troubled.

CHAP. 28 [XXV.] -- THE DISPOSITION OF NEARLY ALL WHO GO ASTRAY. WITH SOME HERETICS OUR BUSINESS OUGHT NOT TO BE DISPUTATION, BUT PRAYER.

Man's proud mind has no relish at all for this; God, however, is great, in persuading even it how to find it all out. We are, indeed, more inclined to seek how best to reply to such arguments as oppose our error, than to experience how salutary would be our condition if we were free from error. We ought, therefore, to encounter all such, not by discussions, but rather by prayers both for them and for ourselves. For we never say to them, what this opponent has opposed to himself, that "sin was necessary in order that there might be a cause for God's mercy." Would there had never been misery to render that mercy necessary! But the iniquity of sin, -- which is so much the greater in proportion to the ease wherewith man might have avoided sin, whilst no infirmity did as yet beset him, -- has been followed closely up by a most righteous punishment; even that [offending man] should receive in himself a reward in kind of his sin, losing that obedience of his body which had been in some degree put under his own control, which he had despised when it was the right of his Lord. And, inasmuch as we are now born with the self-same law of sin, which in our members resists the law of our mind, we ought never to murmur against God, nor to dispute in opposition to the clearest fact, but to seek and pray for His mercy instead of our punishment.

CHAP. 29 [XXVI.] -- A SIMILE TO SHOW THAT GOD'S GRACE IS NECESSARY FOR DOING ANY] GOOD WORK WHATEVER. GOD

NEVER FORSAKES THE JUSTIFIED MAN IF HE BE NOT HIMSELF FORSAKEN.

Observe, indeed, how cautiously he expresses himself: "God, no doubt, applies His mercy even to this office, whenever it is necessary because man after sin requires help in this way, not because God wished there should be a cause for such necessity." Do you not see how he does not say that God's grace is necessary to prevent us from sinning, but because we have sinned? Then he adds: "But just in the same way it is the duty of a physician to be ready to cure a man who is already wounded; although he ought not to wish for a man who is sound to be wounded." Now, if this simile suits the subject of which we are treating, human nature is certainly incapable of receiving a wound from sin, inasmuch as sin is not a substance. As therefore, for example's sake, a man who is lamed by a wound is cured in order that his step for the future may be direct and strong, its past infirmity being healed, so does the Heavenly Physician cure our maladies, not only that they may cease any longer to exist, but in order that we may ever afterwards be able to walk aright, -- to which we should be unequal, even after our healing, except by His continued help. For after a medical man has administered a cure, in order that the patient may be afterwards duly nourished with bodily elements and ailments, for the completion and continuance of the said cure by suitable means and help, he commends him to God's good care, who bestows these aids on all who live in the flesh, and from whom proceeded even those means which [the physician] applied during the process of the cure. For it is not out of any resources which he has himself created that the medical man effects any cure, but out of the resources of Him who creates all things which are required by the whole and by the sick. God, however, whenever He -- through "the one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" -- spiritually heals the sick or raises the dead,

that is, justifies the ungodly, and when He has brought him to perfect health, in other words, to the fulness of life and righteousness, does not forsake, if He is not forsaken, in order that life may be passed in constant piety and righteousness. For, just as the eye of the body, even when completely sound, is unable to see unless aided by the brightness of light, so also man, even when most fully justified, is unable to lead a holy life, if he be not divinely assisted by the eternal light of righteousness. God, therefore, heals us not only that He may blot out the sin which we have committed, but, furthermore, that He may enable us even to avoid sinning.

CHAP. 30 [XXVII.] -- SIN IS REMOVED BY SIN.

He no doubt shows some acuteness in handling, and turning over and exposing, as he likes, and refuting a certain statement, which is made to this effect, that "it was really necessary to man, in order to take from him all occasion for pride and boasting, that he should be unable to exist without sin." He supposes it to be "the height of absurdity and folly, that there should have been sin in order that sin might not be; inasmuch as pride is itself, of course, a sin." As if a sore were not attended with pain, and an operation did not produce pain, that pain might be taken away by pain. If we had not experienced any such treatment, but were only to hear about it in some parts of the world where these things had never happened, we might perhaps use this man's words, and say, It is the height of absurdity that pain should have been necessary in order that a sore should have no pain.

CHAP. 31. -- THE ORDER AND PROCESS OF HEALING OUR HEAVENLY PHYSICIAN DOES NOT ADOPT FROM THE SICK PATIENT, BUT DERIVES FROM HIMSELF. WHAT CAUSE THE RIGHTEOUS HAVE FOR FEARING.

"But God," they say, "is able to heal all things." Of course His purpose in acting is to heal all things; but He acts on His own judgment, and does not take His procedure in healing from the sick man. For undoubtedly it was His wish to endow His apostle with very great power and strength, and yet He said to him: "My strength is made perfect in weakness;" nor did He remove from him, though he so often entreated Him to do so, that mysterious "thorn in the flesh," which He told him had been given to him" lest he should be unduly exalted through the abundance of the revelation." For all other sins only prevail in evil deeds; pride only has to be guarded against in things that are rightly done. Whence it happens that those persons are admonished not to attribute to their own power the gifts of God, nor to plume themselves thereon, lest by so doing they should perish with a heavier perdition than if they had done no good at all, to whom it is said: "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Why, then, must it be with fear and trembling, and not rather with security, since God is working; except it be because there so quickly steals over our human soul, by reason of our will (without which we can do nothing well), the inclination to esteem simply as our own accomplishment whatever good we do; and so each one of us says in his prosperity: "I shall never be moved?" Therefore, He who in His good pleasure had added strength to our beauty, turns away His face, and the man who had made his boast becomes troubled, because it is by actual sorrows that the swelling pride must be remedied.

CHAP. 32 [XXVIII.] -- GOD FORSAKES US TO SOME EXTENT THAT WE MAY NOT GROW PROUD.

Therefore it is not said to a man: "It necessary for you to sin that you may not sin;" but it is said to a man: "God in some degree forsakes

you, in consequence of which you grow proud, that you may know that you are 'not your own,' but are His, and learn not to be proud." Now even that incident in the apostle's life, of this kind, is so wonderful, that were it not for the fact that he himself is the voucher for it whose truth it is impious to contradict, would it not be incredible? For what believer is there who is ignorant that the first incentive to sin came from Satan, and that he is the first author of all sins? And yet, for all that, some are "delivered over unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." How comes it to pass, then, that Satan's work is prevented by the work of Satan? These and such like questions let a man regard in such a light that they seem not to him to be too acute; they have somewhat of the sound of acuteness, and yet when discussed are found to be obtuse. What must we say also to our author's use of similes whereby he rather suggests to us the answer which we should give to him? "What" (asks he) "shall I say more than this, that we may believe that fires are quenched by fires, if we may believe that sins are cured by sins?" What if one cannot put out fires by fires: but yet pains can, for all that, as I have shown, be cured by pains? Poisons can also, if one only inquire and learn the fact, be expelled by poisons. Now, if he observes that the heats of fevers are sometimes subdued by certain medicinal warmths, he will perhaps also allow that fires may be extinguished by fires.

CHAP. 33 [XXIX.] -- NOT EVERY SIN IS PRIDE. HOW PRIDE IS THE COMMENCEMENT OF EVERY SIN.

"But how," asks he, "shall we separate pride itself from sin?" Now, why does he raise such a question, when it is manifest that even pride itself is a sin? "To sin," says he, "is quite as much to be proud, as to be proud is to sin; for only ask what every sin is, and see whether you can find any sin without the designation of pride." Then he thus pursues this opinion, and endear-ours to prove it thus:

"Every sin," says he, "if I mistake not, is a contempt of God, and every contempt of God is pride. For what is so proud as to despise God? All sin, then, is also pride, even as Scripture says, Pride is the beginning of all sin." Let him seek diligently, and he will find in the law that the sin of pride is quite distinguished from all other sins. For many sins are committed through pride; but yet not all things which are wrongly done are done proudly, -- at any rate, not by the ignorant, not by the infirm, and not, generally speaking, by the weeping and sorrowful. And indeed pride, although it be in itself a great sin, is of such sort in itself alone apart from others, that, as I have already remarked, it for the most part follows after and steals with more rapid foot, not so much upon sins as upon things which are actually well done. However, that which he has understood in another sense, is after all most truly said: "Pride is the commencement of all sin;" because it was this which overthrew the devil, from whom arose the origin of sin; and afterwards, when his malice and envy pursued man, who was yet standing in his uprightness, it subverted him in the same way in which he himself fell. For the serpent, in fact, only sought for the door of pride whereby to enter when he said, "Ye shall be as gods." Truly then is it said, "Pride is the commencement of all sin;" and, "The beginning of pride is when a man departeth from God."

**CHAP. 34 [XXX.] -- A MAN'S SIN IS HIS OWN, BUT HE NEEDS GRACE FOR HIS CURE.**

Well, but what does he mean when he says: "Then again, how can one be subjected to God for the guilt of that sin, which he knows is not his own? For," says he, "his own it is not, if it is necessary. Or, if it is his own, it is voluntary: and if it is voluntary, it can be avoided." We reply: It is unquestionably his own. But the fault by which sin is committed is not yet in every respect healed, and the fact of its

becoming permanently fixed in us arises from our not rightly using the healing virtue; and so out of this faulty condition the man who is now growing strong in depravity commits many sins, either through infirmity or blindness. Prayer must therefore be made for him, that he may be healed, and that he may thenceforward attain to a life of uninterrupted soundness of health; nor must pride be indulged in, as if any man were healed by the self-same power whereby he became corrupted.

CHAP. 35 [XXXI.] -- WHY GOD DOES NOT IMMEDIATELY CURE PRIDE ITSELF. THE SECRET AND INSIDIOUS GROWTH OF PRIDE. PREVENTING AND SUBSEQUENT GRACE.

But I would indeed so treat these topics, as to confess myself ignorant of God's deeper counsel, why He does not at once heal the very principle of pride, which lies in wait for man's heart even in deeds rightly done; and for the cure of which pious souls, with tears and strong crying, beseech Him that He would stretch forth His right hand and help their endeavours to overcome it, and somehow tread and crush it under foot. Now when a man has felt glad that he has even by some good work overcome pride, from the very joy he lifts up his head and says: "Behold, I live; why do you triumph? Nay, I live because you triumph." Premature, however, this forwardness of his to triumph over pride may perhaps be, as if it were now vanquished, whereas its last shadow is to be swallowed up, as I suppose, in that noontide which is promised in the scripture which says, "He shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday;" 'provided that be done which was written in the preceding! verse: "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him, and He shall bring it to pass," -- not, as some suppose, that they themselves bring it to pass. Now, when he said, "And He shall bring it to pass," he evidently had none other in mind but those who say,



We ourselves bring it to pass; that is to say, we ourselves justify our own selves. In this matter, no doubt, we do ourselves, too, work; but we are fellow-workers with Him who does the work, because His mercy anticipates us. He anticipates us, however, that we may be healed; but then He will also follow us, that being healed we may grow healthy and strong. He anticipates us that we may be called; He will follow us that we may be glorified. He anticipates us that we may lead godly lives; He will follow us that we may always live with Him, because without Him we can do nothing. Now the Scriptures refer to both these operations of grace. There is both this: "The God of my mercy shall anticipate me," and again this: "Thy mercy shall follow me all the days of my life." Let us therefore unveil to Him our life by confession, not praise it with a vindication. For if it is not His way, but our own, beyond doubt it is not the right one. Let us therefore reveal this by making our confession to Him; for however much we may endeavour to conceal it, it is not hid from Him. It is a good thing to confess unto the Lord.

CHAP. 36 [XXXII.] -- PRIDE EVEN IN SUCH THINGS AS ARE DONE ARIGHT MUST BE AVOIDED. FREE WILL IS NOT TAKEN AWAY WHEN GRACE IS PREACHED.

So will He bestow on us whatever pleases Him, that if there be anything displeasing to Him in us, it will also be displeasing to us. "He will," as the Scripture has said, "turn aside our paths from His own way," and will make that which is His own to be our way; because it is by Himself that the favour is bestowed on such as believe in Him and hope in Him that we will do it. For there is a way of righteousness of which they are ignorant "who have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge," and who, wishing to frame a righteousness of their own, "have not submitted themselves to the righteousness of God." "For Christ is the end of the law for

righteousness to every one that believeth;" and He has said, "I am the way." Yet God's voice has alarmed those who have already begun to walk in this way, lest they should be lifted up, as if it were by their own energies that they were walking therein. For the same persons to whom the apostle, on account of this danger, says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure," are likewise for the self-same reason admonished in the psalm: "Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice in Him with trembling. Accept correction, lest at any time the Lord be angry, and ye perish from the righteous way, when His wrath shall be suddenly kindled upon you." He does not say, "Lest at any time the Lord be angry and refuse to show you the righteous way," or, "refuse to lead you into the way of righteousness;" but even after you are walking therein, he was able so to terrify as to say, "Lest ye perish from the righteous way." Now, whence could this arise if not from pride, which (as I have so often said, and must repeat again and again) has to be guarded against even in things which are rightly done, that is, in the very way of righteousness, lest a man, by regarding as his own that which is really God's, lose what is God's and be reduced merely to what is his own? Let us then carry out the concluding injunction of this same psalm, "Blessed are all they that trust in Him," so that He may Himself indeed effect and Himself show His own way in us, to whom it is said, "Show us Thy mercy, O Lord;" and Himself bestow on us the pathway of safety that we may walk therein, to whom the prayer is offered, "And grant us Thy salvation;" and Himself lead us in the self-same way, to whom again it is said, "Guide me, O Lord, in Thy way, and in Thy truth will I walk;" Himself, too, conduct us to those promises whither His way leads, to whom it is said, "Even there shall Thy hand lead me and Thy right hand shall hold me;" Himself pasture therein those who sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of whom it is said, "He shall make them sit down to meat, and will come forth and serve them."

Now we do not, when we make mention of these things, take away freedom of will, but we preach the grace of God. For to whom are those gracious gifts of use, but to the man who uses, but humbly uses, his own will, and makes no boast of the power and energy thereof, as if it alone were sufficient for perfecting him in righteousness?

CHAP. 37 [XXXIII.] -- BEING WHOLLY WITHOUT SIN DOES NOT PUT MAN ON AN EQUALITY WITH GOD.

But God forbid that we should meet him with such an assertion as he says certain persons advance against him: "That man is placed on an equality with God, if he is described as being without sin;" as if indeed an angel, because he is without sin, is put in such an equality. For my own part, I am of this opinion that the creature will never become equal with God, even when so perfect a holiness shall be accomplished in us, that it shall be quite incapable of receiving any addition. No; all who maintain that our progress is to be so complete that we shall be changed into the substance of God, and that we shall thus become what He is, should look well to it how they build up their opinion; for myself I must confess that I am not persuaded of this.

CHAP. 38 [XXXIV.] -- WE MUST NOT LIE, EVEN FOR THE SAKE OF MODERATION. THE PRAISE OF HUMILITY MUST NOT BE PLACED TO THE ACCOUNT OF FALSEHOOD.

I am favourably disposed, indeed, to the view of our author, when he resists those who say to him, "What you assert seems indeed to be reasonable, but it is an arrogant thing to allege that any man can be without sin," with this answer, that if it is at all true, it must not on any account be called an arrogant statement; for with very great truth and acuteness he asks, "On what side must humility be placed?"

No doubt on the side of falsehood, if you prove arrogance to exist on the side of truth." And so he decides, and rightly decides, that humility should rather be ranged on the side of truth, not of falsehood. Whence it follows that he who said, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," must without hesitation be held to have spoken the truth, and not be thought to have spoken falsehood for the sake of humility. Therefore he added the words, "And the truth is not in us;" whereas it might perhaps have been enough if he merely said, "We deceive ourselves," if he had not observed that some were capable of supposing that the clause "we deceive ourselves" is here employed on the ground that the man who praises himself is even extolled for a really good action. So that, by the addition of "the truth is not in us," he clearly shows (even as our author most correctly observes) that it is not at all true if we say that we have no sin, lest humility, if placed on the side of falsehood, should lose the reward of truth.

#### CHAP. 39. -- PELAGIUS GLORIFIES GOD AS CREATOR AT THE EXPENSE OF GOD AS SAVIOUR.

Beyond this, however, although he flatters himself that he vindicates the cause of God by defending nature, he forgets that by predicating soundness of the said nature, he rejects the Physician's mercy. He, however, who created him is also his Saviour. We ought not, therefore, so to magnify the Creator as to be compelled to say, nay, rather as to be convicted of saying, that the Saviour is superfluous. Man's nature indeed we may honour with worthy praise, and attribute the praise to the Creator's glory; but at the same time, while we show our gratitude to Him for having created us, let us not be ungrateful to Him for healing us. Our sins which He heals we must undoubtedly attribute not to God's operation, but to the wilfulness of man, and submit them to His righteous punishment; as, however, we

acknowledge that it was in our power that they should not be committed, so let us confess that it lies in His mercy rather than in our own power that they should be healed. But this mercy and remedial help of the Saviour, according to this writer, consists only in this, that He forgives the transgressions that are past, not that He helps us to avoid such as are to come. Here he is most fatally mistaken; here, however unwittingly -- here he hinders us from being watchful, and from praying that "we enter not into temptation," since he maintains that it lies entirely in our own control that this should not happen to us.

CHAP. 40 [XXXV.] -- WHY THERE IS A RECORD IN SCRIPTURE OF CERTAIN MEN'S SINS, RECKLESSNESS IN SIN ACCOUNTS IT TO BE SO MUCH LOSS WHENEVER IT FALLS SHORT IN GRATIFYING LUST.

He who has a sound judgment says soundly, "that the examples of certain persons, of whose sinning we read in Scripture, are not recorded for this purpose, that they may encourage despair of not sinning, and seem somehow to afford security in committing sin," -- but that we may learn the humility of repentance, or else discover that even in such falls salvation ought not to be despaired of. For there are some who, when they have fallen into sin, perish rather from the recklessness of despair, and not only neglect the remedy of repentance, but become the slaves of lusts and wicked desires, so far as to run all lengths in gratifying these depraved and abandoned dispositions, -- as if it were a loss to them if they failed to accomplish what their lust impelled them to, whereas all the while there awaits them a certain condemnation. To oppose this morbid recklessness, which is only too full of danger and ruin, there is great force in the record of those sins into which even just and holy men have before now fallen.

CHAP. 41. -- WHETHER HOLY MEN HAVE DIED WITHOUT SIN.

But there is clearly much acuteness in the question put by our author," How must we suppose that those holy men quitted this life, -- with sin, or without sin?" For if we answer, "With sin," condemnation will be supposed to have been their destiny, which it is shocking to imagine; but if it be said that they departed this life "without sin," then it would be a proof that man had been without sin in his present life, at all events, when death was approaching. But, with all his acuteness, he overlooks the circumstance that even righteous persons not without good reason offer up this prayer: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors;" and that the Lord Christ, after explaining the prayer in His teaching, most truly added: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your Father will also forgive you your trespasses." Here, indeed, we have the daily incense, so to speak, of the Spirit, which is offered to God on the altar of the heart, which we are bidden "to lift up," -- implying that, even if we cannot live here without sin, we may yet die without sin, when in merciful forgiveness the sin is blotted out which is committed in ignorance or infirmity.

CHAP. 42 [XXXVI.] -- THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY MAY HAVE LIVED WITHOUT SIN. NONE OF THE SAINTS BESIDES HER WITHOUT SIN.

He then enumerates those "who not only lived without sin, but are described as having led holy lives, -- Abel, Enoch, Melchizedek, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joshua the son of Nun, Phinehas, Samuel, Nathan, Elijah, Joseph, Elisha, Micaiah, Daniel, Hananiah, Azariah, Mishael, Mordecai, Simeon, Joseph to whom the Virgin Mary was espoused, John." And he adds the names of some women, -- "Deborah, Anna the mother of Samuel, Judith, Esther, the other

Anna, daughter of Phanuel, Elisabeth, and also the mother of our Lord and Saviour, for of her," he says, "we must needs allow that her piety had no sin in it." We must except the holy Virgin Mary, concerning whom I wish to raise no question when it touches the subject of sins, out of honour to the Lord; for from Him we know what abundance of grace for overcoming sin in every particular was conferred upon her who had the merit to conceive and bear Him who undoubtedly had no sin. Well, then, if, with this exception of the Virgin, we could only assemble together all the forementioned holy men and women, and ask them whether they lived without sin whilst they were in this life, what can we suppose would be their answer? Would it be in the language of our author, or in the words of the Apostle John? I put it to you, whether, on having such a question submitted to them, however excellent might have been their sanctity in this body, they would not have exclaimed with one voice: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us?" But perhaps this their answer would have been more humble than true! Well, but our author has already determined, and rightly determined, "not to place the praise of humility on the side of falsehood." If, therefore, they spoke the truth in giving such an answer, they would have sin, and since they humbly acknowledged it, the truth would be in them; but if they lied in their answer, they would still have sin, because the truth would not be in them.

#### CHAP. 43 [XXXVII.] -- WHY SCRIPTURE HAS NOT MENTIONED THE SINS OF ALL.

"But perhaps," says he, "they will ask me: Could not the Scripture have mentioned sins of all of these?" And surely they would say the truth, whoever should put such a question to him; and I do not discover that he has anywhere given a sound reply to them, although I perceive that he was unwilling to be silent.

What he has said, I beg of you to observe: "This," says he, "might be rightly asked of those whom Scripture mentions neither as good nor as bad; but of those whose holiness it commemorates, it would also without doubt have commemorated the sins likewise, if it had perceived that they had sinned in anything." Let him say, then, that their great faith did not attain to righteousness in the case of those who comprised "the multitudes that went before and that followed" the colt on which the Lord rode, when "they shouted and said, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord," even amidst the malignant men who with murmurs asked why they were doing all this! Let him then boldly tell us, if he can, that there was not a man in all that vast crowd who had any sin at all. Now, if it is most absurd to make such a statement as this, why has not the Scripture mentioned any sins in the persons to whom reference has been made, especially when it has carefully recorded the eminent goodness of their faith?

#### CHAP. 44. -- PELAGIUS ARGUES THAT ABEL WAS SINLESS.

This, however, even he probably observed, and therefore he went on to say: "But, granted that it has sometimes abstained, in a numerous crowd, from narrating the sins of all; still, in the very beginning of the world, when there were only four persons in existence, what reason (asks he) have we to give why it chose not to mention the sins of all? Was it in consideration of the vast multitude, which had not yet come into existence? or because, having mentioned only the sins of those who had transgressed, it was unable to record any of him who had not yet committed sin?" And then he proceeds to add some words, in which he unfolds this idea with a fuller and more explicit illustration. "It is certain," says he, "that in the earliest age Adam and Eve, and Cain and Abel their sons, are mentioned as being the only four persons then in being. Eve sinned, -- the Scripture distinctly



says so much; Adam also transgressed, as the same Scripture does not fail to inform us; whilst it affords us an equally clear testimony that Cain also sinned: and of all these it not only mentions the sins, but also indicates the character of their sins. Now if Abel had likewise sinned, Scripture would without doubt have said so. But it has not said so, therefore he committed no sin; nay, it even shows him to have been righteous. What we read, therefore, let us believe; and what we do not read, let us deem it wicked to add."

CHAP. 45 [XXXVIII.] -- WHY CAIN HAS BEEN BY SOME THOUGHT TO HAVE HAD CHILDREN BY HIS MOTHER EVE. THE SINS OF RIGHTEOUS MEN. WHO CAN BE BOTH RIGHTEOUS, AND YET NOT WITHOUT SIN.

When he says this, he forgets what he had himself said not long before: "After the human race had multiplied, it was possible that in the crowd the Scripture may have neglected to notice the sins of all men." If indeed he had borne this well in mind, he would have seen that even in one man there was such a crowd and so vast a number of slight sins, that it would have been impossible (or, even if possible, not desirable ) to describe them. For only such are recorded as the due bounds allowed, and as would, by few examples, serve for instructing the reader in the many cases where he needed warning. Scripture has indeed omitted to mention concerning the few persons who were then in existence, either how many or who they were, -- in other words, how many sons and daughters Adam and Eve begat, and what names they gave them; and from this circumstance some, not considering how many things are quietly passed over in Scripture, have gone so far as to suppose that Cain cohabited with his mother, and by her had the children which are mentioned, thinking that Adam's sons had no sisters, because Scripture failed to mention them in the particular place, although it afterwards, in the way of

recapitulation, implied what it had previously omitted, -- that "Adam begat sons and daughters," without, however, dropping a syllable to intimate either their number or the time when they were born. In like manner it was unnecessary to state whether Abel, notwithstanding that he is rightly styled "righteous," ever indulged in immoderate laughter, or was ever jocose in moments of relaxation, or ever looked at an object with a covetous eye, or ever plucked fruit to extravagance, or ever suffered indigestion from too much eating, or ever in the midst of his prayers permitted his thoughts to wander and call him away from the purpose of his devotion; as well as how frequently these and many other similar failings stealthily crept over his mind. And are not these failings sins, about which the apostle's precept gives us a general admonition that we should avoid and restrain them, when he says: "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof?" To escape from such an obedience, we have to struggle in a constant and daily conflict against unlawful and unseemly inclinations. Only let the eye be directed, or rather abandoned, to an object which it ought to avoid, and let the mischief strengthen and get the mastery, and adultery is consummated in the body, which is committed in the heart only so much more quickly as thought is more rapid than action and there is no impediment to retard and delay it. They who in a great degree have curbed this sin, that is, this appetite of a corrupt affection, so as not to obey its desires, nor to "yield their members to it as instruments of unrighteousness," have fairly deserved to be called righteous persons, and this by the help of the grace of God. Since, however, sin often stole over them in very small matters, and when they were off their guard, they were both righteous, and at the same time not sinless. To conclude, if there was in righteous Abel that love of God whereby alone he is truly righteous who is righteous, to enable him, and to lay him under a moral obligation, to advance in holiness, still in whatever degree he fell short therein was of sin. And

who indeed can help thus falling short, until he come to that mighty power thereof, in which man's entire infirmity shall be swallowed up?

CHAP. 46 [XXXIX.] -- SHALL WE FOLLOW SCRIPTURE, OR ADD TO ITS DECLARATIONS?

It is, to be sure, a grand sentence with which he concluded this passage, when he says: "What we read, therefore, let us believe; and what we do not read, let us deem it wicked to add; and let it suffice to have said this of all cases." On the contrary, I for my part say that we ought not to believe even everything that we read, on the sanction of the apostle's advice: "Read all things; hold fast that which is good." Nor is it wicked to add something which we have not read; for it is in our power to add something which we have bona fide experienced as witnesses, even if it so happens that we have not read about it. Perhaps he will say in reply: "When I said this, I was treating of the Holy Scriptures." Oh how I wish that he were never willing to add, I will not say anything but what he reads in the Scriptures, but in opposition to what he reads in them; that he would only faithfully and obediently hear that which is written there: "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men; in which all have sinned;" and that he would not weaken the grace of the great Physician, -- all by his unwillingness to confess that human nature is corrupted! Oh how I wish that he would, as a Christian, read the sentence, "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved;" and that he would not so uphold the possibility of human nature, as to believe that man can be saved by free will without that Name!

CHAP. 47 [XL.] -- FOR WHAT PELAGIUS THOUGHT THAT CHRIST IS NECESSARY TO US.

Perhaps, however, he thinks the name of Christ to be necessary on this account, that by His gospel we may learn how we ought to live; but not that we may be also assisted by His grace, in order withal to lead good lives. Well, even this consideration should lead him at least to confess that there is a miserable darkness in the human mind, which knows how it ought to tame a lion, but knows not how to live. To know this, too, is it enough for us to have free will and natural law? This is that wisdom of word, whereby "the cross of Christ is rendered of none effect." He, however, who said, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise," since that cross cannot be made of none effect, in very deed overthrows that wisdom by the foolishness of preaching whereby believers are healed. For if natural capacity, by help of free will, is in itself sufficient both for discovering how one ought to live, and also for leading a holy life, then "Christ died in vain," and therefore also "the offence of the cross is ceased." Why also may I not myself exclaim? -- nay, I will exclaim, and chide them with a Christian's sorrow, -- "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by nature; ye are fallen from grace;" for, "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and wishing to establish your own righteousness, you have not submitted yourselves to the righteousness of God." For even as "Christ is the end of the law," so likewise is He the Saviour of man's corrupted nature, "for righteousness to every one that believeth."

#### CHAP. 48 [XLI.] -- HOW THE TERM "ALL" IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD,

His opponents adduced the passage, "All have sinned," and he met their statement founded on this with the remark that "the apostle was manifestly speaking of the then existing generation, that is, the Jews and the Gentiles;" but surely the passage which I have quoted, "By one man sin entered the world, and death by sin, and so death

passed upon all men; in which all have sinned," embraces in its terms the generations both of old and of modern times, both ourselves and our posterity. He adduces also this passage, whence he would prove that we ought not to understand all without exception, when "all" is used: -- "As by the offence of one," he says, "upon all men to condemnation, even so by the righteousness of One, upon all men unto justification of life." "There can be no doubt," he says, "that not all men are sanctified by the righteousness of Christ, but only those who are willing to obey Him, and have been cleansed in the washing of His baptism." Well, but he does not prove what he wants by this quotation. For as the clause, "By the offence of one, upon all men to condemnation," is so worded that not one is omitted in its sense, so in the corresponding clause, "By the righteousness of One, upon all men unto justification of life," no one is omitted in its sense, -- not, indeed, because all men have faith and are washed in His baptism, but because no man is justified unless he believes in Christ and is cleansed by His baptism. The term "all" is therefore used in a way which shows that no one whatever can be supposed able to be saved by any other means than through Christ Himself. For if in a city there be appointed but one instructor, we are most correct in saying: That man teaches all in that place; not meaning, indeed, that all who live in the city take lessons of him, but that no one is instructed unless taught by him. In like manner no one is justified unless Christ has justified him.

CHAP. 49 [XLII.] -- A MAN CAN BE SINLESS, BUT ONLY BY THE HELP OF GRACE. IN THE SAINTS THIS POSSIBILITY ADVANCES AND KEEPS PACE WITH THE REALIZATION.

"Well, be it so," says he, "I agree; he testifies to the fact that all were sinners. He says, indeed, what they have been, not that they might

not have been something else. Wherefore," he adds, "if all then could be proved to be sinners, it would not by any means prejudice our own definite position, in insisting not so much on what men are, as on what they are able to be." He is right for once to allow that no man living is justified in God's sight. He contends, however, that this is not the question, but that the point lies in the possibility of a man's not sinning, -- on which subject it is unnecessary for us to take ground against him; for, in truth, I do not much care about expressing a definite opinion on the question, whether in the present life there ever have been, or now are, or ever can be, any persons who have had, or are having, or are to have, the love of God so perfectly as to admit of no addition to it (for nothing short of this amounts to a most true, full, and perfect righteousness). For I ought not too sharply to contend as to when, or where, or in whom is done that which I confess and maintain can be done by the will of man, aided by the grace of God. Nor do I indeed contend about the actual possibility, forasmuch as the possibility under dispute advances with the realization in the saints, their human will being healed and helped; whilst "the love of God," as fully as our healed and cleansed nature can possibly receive it, "is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given to us." In a better way, therefore, is God's cause promoted (and it is to its promotion that our author professes to apply his warm defence of nature) when He is acknowledged as our Saviour no less than as our Creator, than when His succour to us as Saviour is impaired and dwarfed to nothing by the defence of the creature, as if it were sound and its resources entire.

#### CHAP. 50 [XLIII.] -- GOD COMMANDS NO IMPOSSIBILITIES.

What he says, however, is true enough, "that God is as good as just, and made man such that he was quite able to live without the evil of sin, if only he had been willing." For who does not know that man

was made whole and faultless, and endowed with a free will and a free ability to lead a holy life? Our present inquiry, however, is about the man whom "the thieves" left half dead on the road, and who, being disabled and pierced through with heavy wounds, is not so able to mount up to the heights of righteousness as he was able to descend therefrom; who, moreover, if he is now in "the inn," is in process of cure. God therefore does not command impossibilities; but in His command He counsels you both to do what you can for yourself, and to ask His aid in what you cannot do. Now, we should see whence comes the possibility, and whence the impossibility. This man says: "That proceeds not from a man's will which he can do by nature." I say: A man is not righteous by his will if he can be by nature. He will, however, be able to accomplish by remedial aid what he is rendered incapable of doing by his flaw.

CHAP. 51 [XLIV.] -- STATE OF THE QUESTION BETWEEN THE PELAGIANS AND THE CATHOLICS. HOLY MEN OF OLD SAVED BY THE SELF-SAME FAITH IN CHRIST WHICH WE EXERCISE.

But why need we tarry longer on general statements? Let us go into the core of the question, which we have to discuss with our opponents solely, or almost entirely, on one particular point. For inasmuch as he says that "as far as the present question is concerned, it is not pertinent to inquire whether there have been or now are any men in this life without sin, but whether they had or have the ability to be such persons;" so, were I even to allow that there have been or are any such, I should not by any means therefore affirm that they had or have the ability, unless justified by the grace of God through our Lord "Jesus Christ and Him crucified." For the same faith which healed the saints of old now heals us, -- that is to say, faith "in the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," -- faith in His blood, faith in His cross, faith in His death and resurrection.

As we therefore have the same spirit of faith, we also believe, and on that account also speak.

#### CHAP. 52. -- THE WHOLE DISCUSSION IS ABOUT GRACE.

Let us, however, observe what our author answers, after laying before himself the question wherein he seems indeed so intolerable to Christian hearts. He says: "But you will tell me this is what disturbs a great many, -- that you do not maintain that it is by the grace of God that a man is able to be without sin." Certainly this is what causes us disturbance; this is what we object to him. He touches the very point of the case. This is what causes us such utter pain to endure it; this is why we cannot bear to have such points debated by Christians, owing to the love which we feel towards others and towards themselves. Well, let us hear how he clears himself from the objectionable character of the question he has raised. "What blindness of ignorance," he exclaims, "what sluggishness of an uninstructed mind, which supposes that that is maintained and held to be without God's grace which it only hears ought to be attributed to God!" Now, if we knew nothing of what follows this outburst of his, and formed our opinion on simply hearing these words, we might suppose that we had been led to a wrong view of our opponents by the spread of report and by the asseveration of some suitable witnesses among the brethren. For how could it have been more pointedly and truly stated that the possibility of not sinning, to whatever extent it exists or shall exist in man, ought only to be attributed to God? This too is our own affirmation. We may shake hands.

#### CHAP. 53 [XLV.] -- PELAGIUS DISTINGUISHES BETWEEN A POWER AND ITS USE.



Well, are there other things to listen to? Yes, certainly; both to listen to, and correct and guard against. "Now, when it is said," he says, "that the very ability is not at all of man's will, but of the Author of nature, -- that is, God, -- how can that possibly be understood to be without the grace of God which is deemed especially to belong to God?" Already we begin to see what he means; but that we may not lie under any mistake, he explains himself with greater breadth and clearness: "That this may become still plainer, we must," says he, "enter on a somewhat fuller discussion of the point. Now we affirm that the possibility of anything lies not so much in the ability of a man's will as in the necessity of nature." He then proceeds to illustrate his meaning by examples and similes. "Take," says he, "for instance, my ability to speak. That I am able to speak is not my own; but that I do speak is my own, -- that is, of my own will. And because the act of my speaking is my own, I have the power of alternative action, -- that is to say, both to speak and to refrain from speaking. But because my ability to speak is not my own, that is, is not of my own determination and will, it is of necessity that I am always able to speak; and though I wished not to be able to speak, I am unable, nevertheless, to be unable to speak, unless perhaps I were to deprive myself of that member whereby the function of speaking is to be performed." Many means, indeed, might be mentioned whereby, if he wish it, a man may deprive himself of the possibility of speaking, without removing the organ of speech. If, for instance, anything were to happen to a man to destroy his voice, he would be unable to speak, although the members remained; for a man's voice is of course no member. There may, in short, be an injury done to the member internally, short of the actual loss of it. I am, however, unwilling to press the argument for a word; and it may be replied to me in the contest, Why, even to injure is to lose. But yet we can so contrive matters, by closing and shutting the mouth with bandages, as to be quite incapable of opening it, and to put the opening of it out of our

power, although it was quite in our own power to shut it while the strength and healthy exercise of the limbs remained.

CHAP. 54 [XLVI.] -- THERE IS NO INCOMPATIBILITY BETWEEN NECESSITY AND FREE WILL.

Now how does all this apply to our subject? Let us see what he makes out of it. "Whatever," says he, "is fettered by natural necessity is deprived of determination of will and deliberation." Well, now, here lies a question; for it is the height of absurdity for us to say that it does not belong to our will that we wish to be happy, on the ground that it is absolutely, impossible for us to be unwilling to be happy, by reason of some indescribable but amiable coercion of our nature; nor dare we maintain that God has not the will but the necessity of righteousness, because He cannot will to sin.

CHAP. 55 [XLVII.] -- THE SAME CONTINUED.

Mark also what follows. "We may perceive," says he, "the same thing to be true of heating, smelling, and seeing, -- that to hear, and to smell, and to see is of our own power, while the ability to hear, and to smell, and to see is not of our own power, but lies in a natural necessity." Either I do not understand what he means, or he does not himself. For how is the possibility of seeing not in our own power, if the necessity of not seeing is in our own power because blindness is in our own power, by which we can deprive ourselves, if we will, of this very ability to see? How, moreover, is it in our own power to see whenever we will, when, without any loss whatever to our natural structure of body in the organ of sight, we are unable, even though we wish, to see, -- either by the removal of all external lights during the night, or by our being shut up in some dark place? Likewise, if our ability or our inability to hear is not in our own power, but lies in the necessity of nature, whereas our actual hearing or not hearing is

of our own will, how comes it that he is inattentive to the fact that there are so many things which we hear against our will, which penetrate our sense even when our ears are stopped, as the creaking of a saw near to us, or the grunt of a pig? Although the said stopping of our ears shows plainly enough that it does not lie within our own power not to hear so long as our ears are open; perhaps, too, such a stopping of our ears as shall deprive us of the entire sense in question proves that even the ability not to hear lies within our own power. As to his remarks, again, concerning our sense of smell, does he not display no little carelessness when he says "that it is not in our own power to be able or to be unable to smell, but that it is in our own power" -- that is to say, in our free will -- "to smell or not to smell?" For let us suppose some one to place us, with our hands firmly tied, but yet without any injury to our olfactory members, among some bad and noxious smells; in such a case we altogether lose the power, however strong may be our wish, not to smell, because every time we are obliged to draw breath we also inhale the smell which we do not wish.

CHAP. 56 [XLVIII.] -- THE ASSISTANCE OF GRACE IN A PERFECT NATURE.

Not only, then, are these similes employed by our author false, but so is the matter which he wishes them to illustrate. He goes on to say: "In like manner, touching the possibility of our not sinning, we must understand that it is of us not to sin, but yet that the ability to avoid sin is not of us." If he were speaking of man's whole and perfect nature, which we do not now possess ("for we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope. But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" ), his language even in that case would not be correct to the effect that to avoid sinning would be of us alone, although to sin would be of us, for even then there must be the

help of God, which must shed itself on those who are willing to receive it, just as the light is given to strong and healthy eyes to assist them in their function of sight. Inasmuch, however, as it is about this present life of ours that he raises the question, wherein our corruptible body weighs down the soul, and our earthly tabernacle depresses our sense with all its many thoughts, I am astonished that he can with any heart suppose that, even without the help of our Saviour's healing balm, it is in our own power to avoid sin, and the ability not to sin is of nature, which gives only stronger evidence of its own corruption by the very fact of its failing to see its taint.

CHAP. 57 [XLIX.] -- IT DOES NOT DETRACT FROM GOD'S ALMIGHTY POWER, THAT HE IS INCAPABLE OF EITHER SINNING, OR DYING, OR DESTROYING HIMSELF.

"Inasmuch," says he, "as not to sin is ours, we are able to sin and to avoid sin." What, then, if another should say: "Inasmuch as not to wish for unhappiness is ours, we are able both to wish for it and not to wish for it?" And yet we are positively unable to wish for it. For who could possibly wish to be unhappy, even though he wishes for something else from which unhappiness will ensue to him against his will? Then again, inasmuch as, in an infinitely greater degree, it is God's not to sin, shall we therefore venture to say that He is able both to sin and to avoid sin? God forbid that we should ever say that He is able to sin! For He cannot, as foolish persons suppose, therefore fail to be almighty, because He is unable to die, or because He cannot deny Himself. What, therefore, does he mean? by what method of speech does he try to persuade us on a point which he is himself loth to consider? For he advances a step further, and says: "Inasmuch as, however, it is not of us to be able to avoid sin; even if we were to wish not to be able to avoid sin, it is not in our power to be unable to avoid sin." It is an involved sentence, and therefore a

very obscure one. It might, however, be more plainly expressed in some such way as this: "Inasmuch as to be able to avoid sin is not of us, then, whether we wish it or do not wish it, we are able to avoid sin!" He does not say, "Whether we wish it or do not wish it, we do not sin," -- for we undoubtedly do sin, if we wish; -- but yet he asserts that, whether we will or not, we have the capacity of not sinning, -- a capacity which he declares to be inherent in our nature. Of a man, indeed, who has his legs strong and sound, it may be said admissibly enough, "whether he will or not he has the capacity of walking;" but if his legs be broken, however much he may wish, he has not the capacity. The nature of which our author speaks is corrupted. "Why is dust and ashes proud?" It is corrupted. It implores the Physician's help. "Save me, O Lord," is its cry; "Heal my soul," it exclaims. Why does he check such cries so as to hinder future health, by insisting, as it were, on its present capacity?

#### CHAP. 58 [L.] -- EVEN PIOUS AND GOD-FEARING MEN RESIST GRACE.

Observe also what remark he adds, by which he thinks that his position is confirmed: "No will," says he, "can take away that which is proved to be inseparably implanted in nature." Whence then comes that utterance: "So then ye cannot do the things that ye would?" Whence also this: "For what good I would, that I do not; but what evil I hate, that do I?" Where is that capacity which is proved to be inseparably implanted in nature? See, it is human beings who do not what they will; and it is about not sinning, certainly, that he was treating, -- not about not flying, because it was men not birds, that formed his subject. Behold, it is man who does not the good which he would, but does the evil which he would not: "to will is present with him, but how to perform that which is good is not present." Where is the capacity which is proved to be inseparably implanted in nature?

For whomsoever the apostle represents by himself, if he does not speak these things of his own self, he certainly represents a man by himself. By our author, however, it is maintained that our human nature actually possesses an inseparable capacity of not at all sinning. Such a statement, however, even when made by a man who knows not the effect of his words (but this ignorance is hardly attributable to the man who suggests these statements for unwary though God-fearing men), causes the grace of Christ to be "made of none effect," since it is pretended that human nature is sufficient for its own holiness and justification.

CHAP. 59 [LI.] -- IN WHAT SENSE PELAGIUS ATTRIBUTED TO GOD'S GRACE THE CAPACITY OF NOT SINNING.

In order, however, to escape from the odium wherewith Christians guard their salvation, he parries their question when they ask him, "Why do you affirm that man without the help of God's grace is able to avoid sin?" by saying, "The actual capacity of not sinning lies not so much in the power of will as in the necessity of nature. Whatever is placed in the necessity of nature undoubtedly appertains to the Author of nature, that is, God. How then," says he, "can that be regarded as spoken without the grace of God which is shown to belong in an especial manner to God?" Here the opinion is expressed which all along was kept in the background; there is, in fact, no way of permanently concealing such a doctrine. The reason why he attributes to the grace of God the capacity of not sinning is, that God is the Author of nature, in which, he declares, this capacity of avoiding sin is inseparably implanted. Whenever He wills a thing, no doubt He does it; and what He wills not, that He does not. Now, wherever there is this inseparable capacity, there cannot accrue any infirmity of the will; or rather, there cannot be both a presence of will and a failure in "performance." This, then, being the case, how comes

it to pass that "to will is present, but how to perform that which is good" is not present? Now, if the author of the work we are discussing spoke of that nature of man, which was in the beginning created faultless and perfect, in whatever sense his dictum be taken, "that it has an inseparable capacity," -- that is, so to say, one which cannot be lost, -- then that nature ought not to have been mentioned at all which could be corrupted, and which could require a physician to cure the eyes of the blind, and restore that capacity of seeing which had been lost through blindness. For I suppose a blind man would like to see, but is unable; but, whenever a man wishes to do a thing and cannot, there is present to him the will, but he has lost the capacity.

CHAP. 60 [LII.] -- PELAGIUS ADMITS "CONTRARY FLESH" IN THE UNBAPTIZED.

See what obstacles he still attempts to break through, if possible, in order to introduce his own opinion. He raises a question for himself in these terms: "But you will tell me that, according to the apostle, the flesh is contrary to us;" and then answers it in this wise: "How can it be that in the case of any baptized person the flesh is contrary to him, when according to the same apostle he is understood not to be in the flesh? For he says, 'But ye are not in the flesh.' " Very well; we shall soon see whether it be really true that this says that in the baptized the flesh cannot be contrary to them; at present, however, as it was impossible for him quite to forget that he was a Christian (although his reminiscence on the point is but slight), he has quitted his defence of nature. Where then is that inseparable capacity of his? Are those who are not yet baptized not a part of human nature? Well, now, here by all means, here at this point, he might find his opportunity of awaking out of his sleep; and he still has it if he is careful. "How can it be," he asks, "that in the case of a baptized

person the flesh is contrary to him?" Therefore to the unbaptized the flesh can be contrary! Let him tell us how; for even in these there is that nature which has been so stoutly defended by him. However, in these he does certainly allow that nature is corrupted, inasmuch as it was only among the baptized that the wounded traveller left his inn sound and well, or rather remains sound in the inn whither the compassionate Samaritan carried him that he might become cured. Well, now, if he allows that the flesh is contrary even in these, let him tell us what has happened to occasion this, since the flesh and the spirit alike are the work of one and the same Creator, and are therefore undoubtedly both of them good, because He is good, -- unless indeed it be that damage which has been inflicted by man's own will. And that this may be repaired in our nature, there is need of that very Saviour from whose creative hand nature itself proceeded. Now, if we acknowledge that this Saviour, and that healing remedy of His by which the Word was made flesh in order to dwell among us, are required by small and great, -- by the crying infant and the hoary-headed man alike, -- then, in fact, the whole controversy of the point between us is settled.

CHAP. 61 [LIII.] -- PAUL ASSERTS THAT THE FLESH IS CONTRARY EVEN IN THE BAPTIZED.

Now let us see whether we anywhere read about the flesh being contrary in the baptized also. And here, I ask, to whom did the apostle say, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye do not the things that ye would?" He wrote this, I apprehend, to the Galatians, to whom he also says, "He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?" It appears, therefore, that it is to Christians that he speaks, to whom, too, God had given



His Spirit: therefore, too, to the baptized. Observe, therefore, that even in baptized persons the flesh is found to be contrary; so that they have not that capacity which, our author says, is inseparably implanted in nature. Where then is the ground for his assertion, "How can it be that in the case of a baptized person the flesh is contrary to him?" in whatever sense he understands the flesh? Because in very deed it is not its nature that is good, but it is the carnal defects of the flesh which are expressly named in the passage before us. Yet observe, even in the baptized, how contrary is the flesh. And in what way contrary? So that, "They do not the things which they would." Take notice that the will is present in a man; but where is that "capacity of nature?" Let us confess that grace is necessary to us; let us cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" And let our answer be, "The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord!"

CHAP. 62. -- CONCERNING WHAT GRACE OF GOD IS HERE UNDER DISCUSSION. THE UNGODLY MAN, WHEN DYING, IS NOT DELIVERED FROM CONCUPISCENCE.

Now, whereas it is most correctly asked in those words put to him, "Why do you affirm that man without the help of God's grace is able to avoid sin?" yet the inquiry did not concern that grace by which man was created, but only that whereby he is saved through Jesus Christ our Lord. Faithful men say in their prayer, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil." But if they already have capacity, why do they pray? Or, what is the evil which they pray to be delivered from, but, above all else, "the body of this death?" And from this nothing but God's grace alone delivers them, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Not of course from the substance of the body, which is good; but from its carnal offences, from which a man is not liberated except by the grace of the Saviour, -- not even when he

quits the body by the death of the body. If it was this that the apostle meant to declare, why had he previously said, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members?" Behold what damage the disobedience of the will has inflicted on man's nature! Let him be permitted to pray that he may be healed! Why need he presume so much on the capacity of his nature? It is wounded, hurt, damaged, destroyed. It is a true confession of its weakness, not a false defence of its capacity, that it stands in need of. It requires the grace of God, not that it may be made, but that it may be re-made. And this is the only grace which by our author is proclaimed to be unnecessary; because of this he is silent! If, indeed, he had said nothing at all about God's grace, and had not proposed to himself that question for solution, for the purpose of removing from himself the odium of this matter, it might have been thought that his view of the subject was consistent with the truth, only that he had refrained from mentioning it, on the ground that not on all occasions need we say all we think. He proposed the question of grace, and answered it in the way that he had in his heart; the question has been defined, -- not in the way we wished, but according to the doubt we entertained as to what was his meaning.

#### CHAP. 63 [LIV.] -- DOES GOD CREATE CONTRARIES?

He next endeavours, by much quotation from the apostle, about which there is no controversy, to show "that the flesh is often mentioned by him in such a manner as proves him to mean not the substance, but the works of the flesh." What is this to the point? The defects of the flesh are contrary to the will of man; his nature is not accused; but a Physician is wanted for its defects. What signifies his question, "Who made man's spirit?" and his own answer thereto, "God, without a doubt?" Again he asks, "Who created the flesh?" and

again answers, "The same God, I suppose." And yet a third question, "Is the God good who created both?" and the third answer, "Nobody doubts it." Once more a question, "Are not both good, since the good Creator made them?" and its answer, "It must be confessed that they are." And then follows his conclusion: "If, therefore, both the spirit is good, and the flesh is good, as made by the good Creator, how can it be that the two good things should be contrary to one another?" I need not say that the whole of this reasoning would be upset if one were to ask him, "Who made heat and cold?" and he were to say in answer, "God, without a doubt." I do not ask the string of questions. Let him determine himself whether these conditions of climate may either be said to be not good, or else whether they do not seem to be contrary to each other. Here he will probably object, "These are not substances, but the qualities of substances." Very true, it is so. But still they are natural qualities, and undoubtedly belong to God's creation; and substances, indeed, are not said to be contrary to each other in themselves, but in their qualities, as water and fire. What if it be so too with flesh and spirit? We do not affirm it to be so; but, in order to show that his argument terminates in a conclusion which does not necessarily follow, we have said so much as this. For it is quite possible for contraries not to be reciprocally opposed to each other, but rather by mutual action to temper health and render it good; just as, in our body, dryness and moisture, cold and heat, -- in the tempering of which altogether consists our bodily health. The fact, however, that "the flesh is contrary to the Spirit, so that we cannot do the things that we would," is a defect, not nature. The Physician's grace must be sought, and their controversy must end.

CHAP. 64. -- PELAGIUS' ADMISSION AS REGARDS THE UNBAPTIZED, FATAL.

Now, as touching these two good substances which the good God created, how, against the reasoning of this man, in the case of unbaptized persons, can they be contrary the one to the other? Will he be sorry to have said this too, which he admitted out of some regard to the Christians' faith? For when he asked, "How, in the case of any person who is already baptized, can it be that his flesh is contrary to him?" he intimated, of course, that in the case of unbaptized persons it is possible for the flesh to be contrary. For why insert the clause, "who is already baptized," when without such an addition he might have put his question thus: "How in the case of any person can the flesh be contrary?" and when, in order to prove this, he might have subjoined that argument of his, that as both body and spirit are good (made as they are by the good Creator), they therefore cannot be contrary to each other? Now, suppose unbaptized persons (in whom, at any rate, he confesses that the flesh is contrary) were to ply him with his own arguments, and say to him, Who made man's spirit? he must answer, God. Suppose they asked him again, Who created the flesh? and he answers, The same God, I believe. Suppose their third question to be, Is the God good who created both? and his reply to be, Nobody doubts it. Suppose once more they put to him his yet remaining inquiry, Are not both good, since the good Creator made them? and he confesses it. Then surely they will cut his throat with his own sword, when they force home his conclusion on him, and say: Since therefore the spirit of man is good, and his flesh good, as made by the good Creator, how can it be that the two being good should be contrary to one another? Here, perhaps, he will reply: I beg your pardon, I ought not to have said that the flesh cannot be contrary to the spirit in any baptized person, as if I meant to imply that it is contrary in the unbaptized; but I ought to have made my statement general, to the effect that the flesh in no man's case is contrary. Now see into what a corner he drives himself. See what a man will say, who is unwilling to cry out with the

apostle, "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. "But why," he asks, "should I so exclaim, who am already baptized in Christ? It is for them to cry out thus who have not yet received so great a benefit, whose words the apostle in a figure transferred to himself, -- if indeed even they say so much." Well, this defence of nature does not permit even these to utter this exclamation! For in the baptized, there is no nature; and in the unbaptized, nature is not! Or if even in the one class it is allowed to be corrupted, so that it is not without reason that men exclaim, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?" to the other, too, help is brought in what follows: "The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord;" then let it at last be granted that human nature stands in need of Christ for its Physician.

CHAP. 65 [LV.] -- "THIS BODY OF DEATH," SO CALLED FROM ITS DEFECT, NOT FROM ITS SUBSTANCE.

Now, I ask, when did our nature lose that liberty, which he craves to be given to him when he says: "Who shall liberate me?" For even he finds no fault with the substance of the flesh when he expresses his desire to be liberated from the body of this death, since the nature of the body, as well as of the soul, must be attributed to the good God as the author thereof. But what he speaks of undoubtedly concerns the offences of the body. Now from the body the death of the body separates us; Whereas the offences contracted from the body remain, and their just punishment awaits them, as the rich man found in held From these it was that he was unable to liberate himself, who said: "Who shall liberate me from the body of this death?" But whensoever it was that he lost this liberty, at least there remains that "inseparable capacity" of nature, -- he has the ability from natural resources, -- he has the volition from free will. Why does he seek the

sacrament of baptism? Is it because of past sins, in order that they may be forgiven, since they cannot be undone? Well, suppose you acquit and release a man on these terms, he must still utter the old cry; for he not only wants to be mercifully let off from punishment for past offences, but to be strengthened and fortified against sinning for the time to come. For he "delights in the law of God, after the inward man; but then he sees another law in his members, warring against the law of his mind." Observe, he sees that there is, not recollects that there was. It is a present pressure, not a past memory. And he sees the other law not only "warring," but even "bringing him into captivity to the law of sin, which is" (not which was) "in his members." Hence comes that cry of his: "O wretched man that I am! who shall liberate me from the body of this death?" Let him pray, let him entreat for the help of the mighty Physician. Why gainsay that prayer? Why cry down that entreaty? Why shall the unhappy suitor be hindered from begging for the mercy of Christ, -- and that too by Christians? For, it was even they who were accompanying Christ that tried to prevent the blind man, by clamouring him down, from begging for light; but even amidst the din and throng of the gainsayers He hears the suppliant; whence the response: "The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

#### CHAP. 66. -- THE WORKS, NOT THE SUBSTANCE, OF THE "FLESH" OPPOSED TO THE "SPIRIT."

Now if we secure even this concession from them, that unbaptized persons may implore the assistance of the Saviour's grace, this is indeed no slight point against that fallacious assertion of the self-sufficiency of nature and of the power of free will. For he is not sufficient to himself who says, "O wretched man that I am! who shall liberate me?" Nor can he be said to have full liberty who still asks for liberation. [LVI.] But let us, moreover, see to this point also, whether

they who are baptized do the good which they would, without any resistance from the lust of the flesh. That, however, which we have to say on this subject, our author himself mentions, when concluding this topic he says: "As we remarked, the passage in which occur the words, 'The flesh lusteth against the Spirit,' must needs have reference not to the substance, but to the works of the flesh." We too allege that this is spoken not of the substance of the flesh, but of its works, which proceed from carnal concupiscence, -- in a word, from sin, concerning which we have this precept: "Not to let it reign in our mortal body, that we should obey it in the lusts thereof."

#### CHAP. 67 [LVII.] -- WHO MAY BE SAID TO BE UNDER THE LAW.

But even our author should observe that it is to persons who have been already baptized that it was said: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." And lest he should make them slothful for the actual conflict, and should seem by this statement to have given them laxity in sinning, he goes on to tell them: "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are no longer under the law." For that man is under the law, who, from fear of the punishment which the law threatens, and not from any love for righteousness, obliges himself to abstain from the work of sin, without being as yet free and removed from the desire of sinning. For it is in his very will that he is guilty, whereby he would prefer, if it were possible, that what he dreads should not exist, in order that he might freely do what he secretly desires. Therefore he says, "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law,"--even the law which inspires fear, but gives not love. For this "love is shed abroad in our hearts," not by the letter of the law, but "by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." This is the law of liberty, not of bondage; being the law of love, not of fear; and concerning it the Apostle James says: "Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty." Whence he, too, no

longer indeed felt terrified by God's law as a slave, but delighted in it in the inward man, although still seeing another law in his members warring against the law of his mind. Accordingly he here says: "If ye be led of the Spirit, he is not under the law; because, so far he rejoices in the law of God, he lives not in fear of the law, since fear has torment," not joy and delight.

CHAP. 68 [LVIII.]--DESPITE THE DEVIL, MAN MAY, BY GOD'S HELP, BE PERFECTED.

If, therefore, we feel rightly on this matter, it is our duty at once to be thankful for what is already healed within us, and to pray for such further healing as shall enable us to enjoy full liberty, in that most absolute state of health which is incapable of addition, the perfect pleasure of God. For we do not deny that human nature can be without sin; nor ought we by any means to refuse to it the ability to become perfect, since we admit its capacity for progress,--by God's grace, however, through our Lord Jesus Christ. By His assistance we aver that it becomes holy and happy, by whom it was created in order to be so. There is accordingly an easy refutation of the objection which our author says is alleged by some against him: "The devil opposes us." This objection we also meet in entirely identical language with that which he uses in reply: "We must resist him, and he will flee. 'Resist the devil,' says the blessed apostle, 'and he will flee from you.' From which it may be observed, what his harming amounts to against those whom he tees; or what power he is to be understood as possessing, when he prevails only against those who do not resist him." Such language is my own also; for it is impossible to employ truer words. There is, however, this difference between us and them, that we, whenever the devil has to be resisted, not only do not deny, but actually teach, that God's help must be sought; whereas they attribute so much power to will as to take away prayer from



religious duty. Now it is certainly with a view to resisting the devil and his fleeing from us that we say when we pray, "Lead us not into temptation;" to the same end also are we warned by our Captain, exhorting us as soldiers in the words: "Watch ye and pray, lest ye enter into temptation."

#### CHAP. 69 [LIX.]--PELAGIUS PUTS NATURE IN THE PLACE OF GRACE.

In opposition, however, to those who ask, "And who would be unwilling to be without sin, if it were put in the power of a man?" he tightly contends, saying "that by this very question they acknowledge that the thing is not impossible; because so much as this, many, if not all men, certainly desire." Well then, let him only confess the means by which this is possible, and then our controversy is ended. Now the means is "the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ;" by which he nowhere has been willing to allow that we are assisted when we pray, for the avoidance of sin. If indeed he secretly allows this, he must forgive us if we suspect this subject, wishes to entertain the secret opinion, and yet is unwilling to confess or profess it. It would surely be no great matter were he to speak out, especially since he has undertaken to handle and open this point, as if it had been objected against him on the side of opponents. Why on such occasions did he choose only to defend nature, and assert that man was so created as to have it in his power not to sin if he wished not to sin; and, from the fact that he was so created, definitely say that the power was owing to God's grace which enabled him to avoid sin, if he was unwilling to commit it; and yet refuse to say anything concerning the fact that even nature itself is either, because disordered, healed by God's grace through our Lord Jesus Christ or rise assisted by it, because in itself it is so insufficient?

CHAP. 70 [LX.]--WHETHER ANY MAN IS WITH OUT SIN IN THIS LIFE.

Now, whether there ever has been, or is, or ever can be, a man living so righteous a life in this world as to have no sin at all, may be an open question among true and pious Christians; but whoever doubts the possibility of this sinless state after this present life; is foolish. For my own part, indeed, I am unwilling to dispute the point even as respects this life. For although that passage seems to me to be incapable of bearing any doubtful sense, wherein it is written, "In thy sight shall no man living be justified" (and so of similar passages), yet I could wish it were possible to show either that such quotations were capable of bearing a better signification, or that a perfect and plenary righteousness, to which it were impossible for any accession to be made, had been realized at some former time in some one whilst passing through this life in the flesh, or was now being realized, or would be hereafter. They, however, are in a great majority, who, while not doubting that to the last day of their life it will be needful to them to resort to the prayer which they can so truthfully utter, "Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us," still trust that in Christ and His promises they possess a true, certain, and unfailing hope. There is, however, no method whereby any persons arrive at absolute perfection, or whereby any man makes the slightest progress to true and godly righteousness, but the assisting grace of our crucified Saviour Christ, and the gift of His Spirit; and whosoever shall deny this cannot rightly, I almost think, be reckoned in the number of any kind of Christians at all.

CHAP. 71 [LXI.]--AUGUSTIN REPLIES AGAINST THE QUOTATIONS WHICH PELAGIUS HAD ADVANCED OUT OF THE CATHOLIC WRITERS. LACTANTIUS.

Accordingly, with respect also to the passages which he has adduced,--not indeed from the canonical Scriptures, but out of certain treatises of catholic writers,--I wish to meet the assertions of such as say that the said quotations make for him. The fact is, these passages are own opinion nor his. Amongst them he wanted to class something out of my own books, thus accounting me to be a person who seemed worthy of being ranked with them. For this I must not be ungrateful, and I should be sorry--so I say with unaffected friendliness--for him to be in error, since he has conferred this honour upon me. As for his first quotation, indeed, why need I examine it largely, since I do not see here the authors name, either because he has not given it, or because from some casual mistake the copy which you forwarded to me did not contain it? Especially as in writings of such authors I feel myself free to use my own judgment (owing unhesitating assent to nothing but the canonical Scriptures), whilst in fact there is not a passage which he has quoted from the works of this anonymous author that disturbs me. "It behooved, " says he, "for the Master and Teacher of virtue to become most like to man, that by conquering sin He might show that man is able to conquer sin." Now, however this passage may be expressed, its author must see to it as to what explanation it is capable of bearing. We, indeed, on our part, could not possibly doubt that in Christ there was no sin to conquer,--born as He was in the likeness of sinful flesh, not in sinful flesh itself. Another passage is adduced from the same author to this effect: "And again, that by subduing the desires of the flesh He might teach us that it is not of necessity that one sins, but of set purpose and will." For my own part, I understand these desires of the flesh (if it is not of its unlawful lusts that the writer here speaks) to be such as hunger, thirst, refreshment after fatigue, and the like. For it is through these, however faultless they be in themselves, that some men fall into sin,--a result which was far from our blessed Saviour, even though, as we see from the evidence of the gospel,

these affections were natural to Him owing to His likeness to sinful flesh.

CHAP. 72 [LXI.]--HILARY. THE PURE IN HEART BLESSED. THE DOING AND PERFECTING OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

He quotes the following words from the blessed Hilary: "It is only when we shall be perfect in spirit and changed in our immortal state, which blessedness has been appointed only for the pure in heart, that we shall see that which is immortal in God." Now I am reply not aware what is here said contrary to our own statement, or in what respect this passage is of any use to our opponent, unless it be that it testifies to the possibility of a man's being "pure in heart." But who denies such possibility? Only it must be by the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, and not merely by our freedom of will. He goes on to quote also this passage: "This Job had so effectually read these Scriptures, that cause he worshipped God purely with a mind unmixed with offences: now such worship of God is the proper work of righteousness." It is what not what he had brought to perfection in this world,--much less what he had done or perfected without the grace of that Saviour whom he had actually foretold. For that man, indeed, abstains from every wicked work, who does not allow the sin which he has within him to have dominion over him; and who, whenever an unworthy thought stole over him, suffered it not to come to a head in actual deed. It is, however, one thing not to have sin, and another to refuse obedience to its desires. It is one thing to fulfil the command, "Thou shalt not covet;" and another thing, by an endeavour at any rate after abstinence, to do that which is also written, "Thou shalt not go after thy lusts." And yet one is quite aware that he can do nothing of all this without the Saviour's grace. It is to work righteousness, therefore, to fight in an internal struggle with the internal evil of concupiscence in the true worship of God;

whilst to perfect it means to have no adversary at all. Now he who has to fight is still in danger, and is sometimes shaken, even if he is not overthrown; whereas he who has no enemy at all rejoices in perfect peace. He, moreover, is in the highest truth said to be without sin in whom no sin has an indwelling,--not he who, abstaining from evil deeds, uses such language as "Now it is no longer I that do it, but the sin that dwelleth in me."

CHAP. 73.--HE MEETS PELAGIUS WITH ANOTHER PASSAGE FROM HILARY.

Now even Job himself is not silent respecting his own sins; and your friend, of course, is justly of opinion that humility must not by any means "be put on the side of falsehood?" Whatever confession, therefore, Job makes, inasmuch as he is a true worshipper of God, he undoubtedly makes it in truth. Hilary, likewise, while expounding that passage of the psalm in which it is written, "Thou hast despised all those who turn aside from Thy commandments," says: "If God were to despise sinners, He would despise indeed all men, because no man is without sin; but it is those who turn away from Him, whom they call apostates, that He despises." You observe his statement: it is not to the effect that no man was without sin, as if he spoke of the past; but no man is without sin; and on this point, as I have already remarked, I have no contention with him. But if one refuses to submit to the Apostle John,--who does not himself declare, "If we were to say we have had no sin," but "If we say we have no sin," --how is he likely to show deference to Bishop Hilary? It is in defence of the grace of Christ that I lift up my voice, without which grace no man is justified,--just as if natural free will were sufficient. Nay, He Himself lifts up His own voice in defence of the same. Let us submit to Him when He says: "Without me ye can do nothing."

CHAP. 74 [LXIII.]--AMBROSE.

St. Ambrose, however, really opposes those who say that man cannot exist without sin in the present life. For, in order to support his statement, he avails himself of the instance of Zacharias and Elisabeth, because they are mentioned as "having walked in all the commandments and ordinances "of the law "blameless." Well, but does he for all that deny that it was by God's grace that they did this through our Lord Jesus Christ? It was undoubtedly by such faith in Him that holy men lived of old, even before His death. It is He who sends the Holy Ghost that is given to us, through whom that love is shed abroad in our hearts whereby alone whosoever are righteous are righteous. This same Holy Ghost the bishop expressly mentioned when he reminds us that He is to be obtained by prayer (so that the will is not sufficient unless it be aided by Him); thus in his hymn he says:

"Votisque praestat sedulis,  
Sanctum mereri Spiritum," --

"To those who sedulously seek He gives to gain the Holy Spirit."

CHAP. 75.--AUGUSTIN ADDUCES IN REPLY SOME OTHER PASSAGES OF AMBROSE.

I, too, will quote a passage out of this very work of St. Ambrose, from which our opponent has taken the statement which he deemed favourable for citation: "' It seemed good to me,' " he says; "but what he declares seemed good to him cannot have seemed good to him alone. For it is not simply to his human will that it seemed good, but also as it pleased Him, even Christ, who, says he, speaketh in me, who it is that causes that which is good in itself to seem good to ourselves also. For him on whom He has mercy He also calls. He,

therefore, who follows Christ, when asked why he wished to be a Christian, can answer: 'It seemed good to me.' In saying this he does not deny that it also pleased God; for from God proceeds the preparation of man's will inasmuch as it is by God's grace that God is honoured by His saint" See now what your author must learn, if he takes pleasure in the words of Ambrose, how that man's will is prepared by God, and that it is of no importance, or, at any rate, does not much matter, by what means or at what time the preparation is accomplished, provided no doubt is raised as to whether the thing itself be capable of accomplishment without the grace of Christ. Then, again, how important it was that he should observe one line from the words of Ambrose which he quoted! For after that holy man had said, "Inasmuch as the Church has been gathered out of the world, that is, out of sinful men, how can it be unpolluted when composed of such polluted material, except that, in the first place, it be washed of sins by the grace of Christ, and then, in the next place, abstain from sins through its nature of avoiding sin?"--he added the following sentence, which your author has refused to quote for a self-evident reason; for [Ambrose] says: "It was not from the first unpolluted, for that was impossible for human nature: but it is through God's grace and nature that because it no longer sins, it comes to pass that it seems unpolluted." Now who does not understand the reason why your author declined adding these words? It is, of course, so contrived in the discipline of the present life, that the holy Church shall arrive at last at that condition of most immaculate purity which all holy men desire; and that it may in the world to come, and in a state unmixed with anything of evil men, and undisturbed by any law of sin resisting the law of the mind, lead the purest life in a divine eternity. Still he should well observe what Bishop Ambrose says, --and his statement exactly tallies with the Scriptures: "It was not from the first unpolluted, for that condition was impossible for human nature." By his phrase, "from the first," he

means indeed from the time of our being born of Adam. Adam no doubt was himself created immaculate; in the case, however, of those who are by nature children of wrath, deriving from him what in him was corrupted, he distinctly averred that it was an impossibility in human nature that they should be immaculate from the first.

CHAP. 76 [LXIV.]--JOHN OF CONSTANTINOPLE.

He quotes also John, bishop of Constantinople, as saying "that sin is not a substance, but a wicked act." Who denies this? "And because it is not natural, therefore the law was given against it, and because it proceeds from the liberty of our will." Who, too, denies this? However, the present question concerns our human nature in its corrupted state; it is a further question also concerning that grace of God whereby our nature is healed by the great Physician, Christ, whose remedy it would not need if it were only whole. And yet your author defends it as capable of not sinning, as if it were sound, or as if its freedom of will were self-sufficient.

CHAP. 77.--XYSTUS.

What Christian, again, is unaware of what he quotes the most blessed Xystus, bishop of Rome and martyr of Christ, as having said, "God has conferred upon men liberty of their own will, in order that by purity and sinlessness of life they may become like unto God?" But the man who appeals to free will ought to listen and believe, and ask Him in whom he believes to give him His assistance not to sin. For when he speaks of "becoming like unto God," it is indeed through God's love that men are to be like unto God,--even the love which is "shed abroad in our hearts," not by any ability of nature or the free will within us, but "by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." Then, in respect of what the same martyr further says, "A pure mind is a holy temple for God, and a heart clean and without sin is His best



altar" who knows not that the dean heart must be brought to this perfection, whilst "the inward man is renewed day by day," but yet not without the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord? Again, when he says, "A man of chastity and without sin has receded power from God to be a son of God," he of course meant it as an admonition that on a man's becoming so chaste and sinless (without raising any question as to where and when this perfection was to be obtained by him,--although in fact it is quite an interesting question among godly men, who are notwithstanding agreed as to the possibility of such perfection on the one hand, and on the other hand its impossibility except through "the one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus"); --nevertheless, as I began to say, Xystus designed his words to be an admonition that, on any man's attiring such a high character, and thereby being rightly reckoned to be among the sons of God, the attainment must not be thought to have been the work of his own power. This indeed he, through grace, received from God, since he did not have it in a nature which had become corrupted and depraved,--even as we read in the Gospel, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God;" which they were not by nature, nor could at all become, unless by receiving Him they also received power through His grace. This is the power that love which is only communicated to us by the Holy Ghost bestowed upon us.

#### CHAP. 78 [LXV.]--JEROME.

We have next a quotation of some words of the venerable presbyter Jerome, from his exposition of the passage where it is written: " 'Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.' These are they whom no consciousness of sin reproves," he says, and adds: "The pure man is seen by his purity of heart; the temple of God cannot be defiled." This perfection is, to be sure, wrought in us by endeavour,

by labour, by prayer, by effectual importunity therein that we may be brought to the perfection in which we may be able to look upon God with a pure heart, by His grace through our Lord Jesus Christ. As to his quotation, that the forementioned presbyter said, "God created us with free will; we are drawn by necessity neither to virtue nor to vice; otherwise, where there is necessity there is no crown;" --who would it? Who would deny that human nature was so created? The reason, however, why in doing a right action there is no bondage of necessity, is that liberty comes of love.

CHAP. 79 [LXVI.] --A CERTAIN NECESSITY OF SINNING.

But let us revert to the apostle's assertion: "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." By whom given if not by Him who "ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men?" Forasmuch, however, as there is, owing to the defects that have entered our nature, not to the constitution of our nature, a certain necessary tendency to sin, a man should listen, and in order that the said necessity may cease to exit, learn to say to God, "Bring Thou me out of my necessities;" because in the very offering up of such a prayer there is a struggle against the tempter, who fights against us concerning this very necessity; and thus, by the assistance of grace through our Lord Jesus Christ, both the evil necessity will be removed and full liberty be bestowed.

CHAP. 80 [LXVII.]--AUGUSTIN HIMSELF. TWO METHODS WHEREBY SINS, LIKE DISEASES, ARE GUARDED AGAINST.

Let us now turn to our own case. "Bishop Augustin also," says your author, "in his books on Free Will has these words: ' Whatever the cause itself of volition is, if it is impossible to resist it, submission to it is not sinful; if, however, it may be resisted, let it not be submitted to, and there will be no sin. Does it, perchance, deceive the unwary

man? Let him then beware that he be not deceived. Is the deception, however, so potent that it is not possible to guard against it? If such is the case, then there are no sins. For who sins in a case where precaution is quite impossible? Sin, however, is committed; precaution therefore is possible." I acknowledge it, these are my words; but he, too, should condescend to acknowledge all that was said previously, seeing that the discussion is about the grace of God, which help us as a medicine through the Mediator; not about the impossibility of righteousness. Whatever, then, may be the cause, it can be resisted. Most certainly it can. Now it is because of this that we pray for help, saying, "Lead us not into temptation," and we should not ask for help if we supposed that the resistance were quite impossible. It is possible to guard against sin, but by the help of Him who cannot be decayed. For this very circumstance has much to do with guarding against sin that we can unfeignedly say, "Forgive us our debt, as we forgive our debtors" Now there are two ways whereby, even in bodily maladies, the evil is guarded against,--to prevent its occurrence, and, if it happen, to secure a speedy cure. To prevent its occurrence, we may find precaution in the prayer, "Lead us not into temptation;" to secure the prompt remedy, we have the resource in the prayer, "Forgive us our debts." Whether then the danger only threaten or be inherent, it may be guarded against.

#### CHAP. 81. -- AUGUSTIN QUOTES HIMSELF ON FREE WILL.

In order, however, that my meaning on this subject may be dear not merely to him, but also to such persons as have not read those treatises of mine on Free Will, which your author has read, and who have not only not read them, but perchance do read him; I must go on to quote out of my books what he has omitted but which, if he had perceived and quoted in his book, no controversy would be left between us on this subject. For immediately after those words of

mine which he has quoted, I expressly added, and (as fully as I could) worked out, the train of thought which might occur to any one's mind, to the following effect: "And yet some actions are disapproved of, even when they are done in ignorance, and are judged deserving of chastisement, as we read in the inspired authorities." After taking some examples out of these, I went on to speak also of infirmity as follows: "Some actions also deserve disapprobation, that are done from necessity; as when a man wishes to act rightly and cannot. For whence arise those utterances: 'For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do'?" Then, after quoting some other passages of the Holy Scriptures to the same effect, I say: "But all these are the sayings of persons who are coming out of that condemnation of death; for if this is not man's punishment, but his nature, then those are no sins." Then, again, a little afterwards I add: "It remains, therefore, that this just punishment come of man's condemnation. Nor ought it to be wondered at, that either by ignorance man has not free determination of will to choose what he will rightly do, or that by the resistance of carnal habit (which by force of mortal transmission has, in a certain sense, become engrafted into his nature), though seeing what ought rightly to be done and wishing to do it, he yet is unable to accomplish it. For this is the most just penalty of sin, that a man should lose what he has been unwilling to make good use of, when he might with ease have done so if he would; which, however, amounts to this, that the man who knowingly does not do what is right loses the ability to do it when he wishes. For, in truth, to every soul that sins there accrue these two penal consequences--ignorance and difficulty. Out of the ignorance springs the error which disgraces; out of the difficulty arises the pain which afflicts. But to approve of falsehoods as if they were true, so as to err involuntarily, and to be unable, owing to the resistance and pain of carnal bondage, to refrain from deeds of lust, is not the nature of man as he was created, but the punishment of

man as under condemnation. When, however, we speak of a free will to do what is right, we of course mean that liberty in which man was created." Some men at once deduce from this what seems to them a just objection from the transfer and transmission of sins of ignorance and difficulty from the first man to his posterity. My answer to such objectors is this: "I tell them, by way of a brief reply, to be silent and to cease from murmuring against God. Perhaps their complaint might have been a proper one, if no one from among men had stood forth a vanquisher of error and of lust; but when there is everywhere present One who calls off from himself, through the creature by so many means, the man who serves the Lord, teaches him when believing, consoles him when hoping, encourages him when loving, helps him when endeavouring, hears him when praying,--it is not reckoned to you as a fault that you are involuntarily ignorant, but that you neglect to search out what you are ignorant of; nor is it imputed to you in censure that you do not bind up the limbs that are wounded, but that you despise him who wishes to heal them." In such terms did I exhort them, as well as I could, to live righteously; nor did I make the grace of God of none effect, without which the now obscured and tarnished nature of man can neither be enlightened nor putted. Our whole discussion with them on this subject turns upon this, that we frustrate not the grace of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord by a perverted assertion of nature. In a passage occurring shortly after the last quoted one, I said in reference to nature: "Of nature itself we speak in one sense, when we properly describe it as that human nature in which man was created faultless after his kind; and in another sense as that nature in which we are born ignorant and carnally minded, owing to the penalty of condemnation, after the manner of the apostle, 'We ourselves likewise were by nature children of wrath, even as others.' "

CHAP. 82 [LXVIII.]--HOW TO EXHORT MEN TO FAITH, REPENTANCE, AND ADVANCEMENT.

If, therefore, we wish "to rouse and kindle cold and sluggish souls by Christian exhortations to lead righteous lives," we must first of all exhort them to that faith whereby they may become Christians, and be subjects of His name and authority, without whom they cannot be saved. If, however, they are already Christians but neglect to lead holy lives, they must be chastised with alarms and be aroused by the praises of reward,--in such a manner, indeed, that we must not forget to urge them to godly prayers as well as to virtuous actions, and furthermore to instruct them in such wholesome doctrine that they be induced thereby to return thanks for being able to accomplish any step in that holy life which they have entered upon, without difficulty, and whenever they do experience such "difficulty," that they then wrestle with God in most faithful and persistent prayer and ready works of mercy to obtain from Him facility. But provided they thus progress, I am not over-anxious as to the where and the when of their perfection in fulness of righteousness; only I solemnly assert, that wheresoever and whensoever they become perfect, it cannot be but by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ. When, indeed, they have attained to the clear knowledge that they have no sin, let them not say they have sin, lest the truth be not in them; even as the truth is not in those persons who, though they have sin, yet say that they have it not.

CHAP. 83 [LXIX.]--GOD ENJOINS NO IMPOSSIBILITY, BECAUSE ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE AND EASY TO LOVE.

But "the precepts of the law are very good," if we use them lawfully. Indeed, by the very fact (of which we have the firmest conviction) "that the just and good God could not possibly have enjoined

impossibilities," we are admonished both what to do in easy paths and what to ask for when they are difficult. Now all things are easy for love to effect, to which (and which alone) "Christ's burden is light," --or rather, it is itself alone the burden which is light. Accordingly it is said, "And His commandments are not grievous;" so that whoever finds them grievous must regard the inspired statement about their "not being grievous" as having been capable of only this meaning, that there may be a state of heart to which they are not burdensome, and he must pray for that disposition which he at present wants, so as to be able to fulfil all that is commanded him. And this is the purport of what is said to Israel in Deuteronomy, if understood in a godly, sacred and spiritual sense, since the apostle, after quoting the passage, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart" (and, as the verse also has it, in thine hands, for in man's heart are his spiritual hands), adds in explanation, "This is the word of faith which we preach." No man, therefore, who "returns to the Lord his God," as he is there commanded, "with all his heart and with all his soul," will find God's commandment "grievous." How, indeed, can it be grievous, when it is the precept of love? Either, therefore, a man has not love, and then it is grievous; or he has love, and then it is not grievous. But he possesses love if he does what is there enjoined on Israel, by returning to the Lord his God with all his heart and with all his soul. "A new commandment" says He, "do I give unto you, that ye love one another; " and "He that loveth his neighbour hath fulfilled the law;" and again, "Love is the fulfilling of the law." In accordance with these sayings is that passage, "Had they trodden good paths, they would have found, indeed, the ways of righteousness easy." How then is it written, "Because of the words of Thy lips, I have kept the paths of difficulty," except it be that both statements are true: These paths are paths of difficulty to fear; but to love they are easy?

CHAP. 84 [LXX.]--THE DEGREES OF LOVE ARE ALSO DEGREES OF HOLINESS.

Inchoate love, therefore, is inchoate holiness; advanced love is advanced holiness; great love is great holiness; "perfect love is perfect holiness,"--but this "love is out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned," which in this life is then the greatest, when life itself is contemned in comparison with it." I wonder, however, whether it has not a soil in which to grow after it has quitted this mortal life ! But in what place and at what time soever shall reach that state of absolute perfection, which shall admit of no increase, it is certainly not "shed abroad in our hearts" by any energies either of the nature or the volition that are within us, but "by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us," "and which both helps our infirmity and co-operates with our strength. For it is itself indeed the grace of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to whom, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, appertaineth eternity, and all goodness, for ever and ever. Amen.

**A TREATISE ON REBUKE AND GRACE.**

**EXTRACT FROM AUGUSTIN'S  
"RETRACTATIONS"**

**Book II. CHAP. 67,**



ON THE FOLLOWING TREATISE,

"DE CORREPTIONE ET GRATIA."

I wrote again to the same persons[1] another treatise, which I entitled On Rebuke and Grace, because I had been told that some one there had said that no man ought to be rebuked for not doing God's commandments, but that prayer only should be made on his behalf, that he may do them. This book begins on this wise, "I have read your letters, dearly beloved brother Valentine."

TREATISE ON REBUKE AND GRACE.

BY AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF HIPPO;

In One BOOK,

ADDRESSED TO VALENTINE, AND WITH HIM TO THE MONKS OF ADRUMETUM.

A.D. 426 OR 427.

IN THE BEGINNING THE WRITER SETS FORTH WHAT IS THE CATHOLIC FAITH CONCERNING LAW, CONCERNING FREE WILL, AND CONCERNING GRACE. HE TEACHES THAT THE GRACE OF GOD BY JESUS CHRIST IS THAT BY WHICH ALONE MEN ARE DELIVERED FROM EVIL, AND WITHOUT WHICH THEY DO ABSOLUTELY NO GOOD; AND THIS NOT ONLY BY THE FACT THAT IT POINTS OUT WHAT IS TO BE DONE, BUT THAT IT ALSO SUPPLIES THE MEANS OF DOING IT WITH LOVED SINCE GOD BESTOWS ON MEN THE INSPIRATION OF A GOOD WILL AND DEED. HE TEACHES THAT THE REBUKE OF EVIL MEN WHO HAVE NOT RECEIVED THIS GRACE IS NEITHER UNJUST--SINCE THEY ARE EVIL BY THEIR OWN

WILL--NOR USELESS, ALTHOUGH IT MUST BE CONFESSED THAT IT IS ONLY BY GOD'S AGENCY THAT IT CAN AVAIL. THAT PERSEVERANCE IN GOOD IS TRULY A GREAT GIFT OF GOD, BUT THAT STILL THE REBUKE OF ONE WHO HAS NOT PERSEVERED MUST NOT ON THAT ACCOUNT BE NEGLECTED; AND THAT IF A MAN WHO HAS NOT RECEIVED THIS GIFT SHOULD RELAPSE OF HIS OWN WILL INTO SIN, HE IS NOT ONLY DESERVING OF REBUKE, BUT IF HE SHOULD CONTINUE IN EVIL UNTIL HIS DEATH, HE IS MOREOVER WORTHY OF ETERNAL DAMNATION. THAT IT IS INSCRUTABLE WHY ONE SHOULD RECEIVE THIS GIFT AND ANOTHER SHOULD NOT RECEIVE IT. THAT OF THOSE WHO ARE PREDESTINATED NONE CAN PERISH. AND THAT THE PERSEVERANCE, WHICH ALL DO NOT RECEIVE WHO ARE HERE CALLED CHILDREN OF GOD, IS CONSTANTLY GIVEN TO ALL THOSE WHO ARE TRULY CHILDREN BY GOD'S FOREKNOWLEDGE AND PREDESTINATION. HE ANSWERS THE QUESTION WHICH SUGGESTS ITSELF CONCERNING ADAM--IN WHAT WAY HE SINNED BY NOT PERSEVERING, SINCE HE DID NOT RECEIVE PERSEVERANCE. HE SHOWS THAT SUCH ASSISTANCE WAS AT THE FIRST GIVEN TO HIM, AS THAT WITHOUT IT HE COULD NOT CONTINUE IF HE WOULD, NOT AS THAT WITH IT MUST RESULT THAT HE WOULD. BUT THAT NOW THROUGH CHRIST IS GIVEN US NOT ONLY SUCH HELP AS THAT WITHOUT IT WE CANNOT CONTINUE EVEN IF WE WILL, BUT MOREOVER SUCH AND SO GREAT AS THAT BY IT WE WILL. HE PROVES THAT THE NUMBER OF THE PREDESTINATED, TO WHOM A GIFT OF THIS KIND IS APPROPRIATED, IS CERTAIN, AND CAN NEITHER BE INCREASED NOR DIMINISHED. AND SINCE IT IS UNKNOWN WHO BELONGS TO THAT NUMBER, AND WHO DOES NOT, THAT MEDICINAL REBUKE MUST BE APPLIED TO ALL WHO SIN, LEST THEY SHOULD EITHER THEMSELVES PERISH, OR

BE THE RUIN OF OTHERS. FINALLY, HE CONCLUDES THAT NEITHER IS REBUKE PROHIBITED BY GRACE, NOR IS GRACE DENIED BY REBUKE.

CHAP. 1 [i.]--INTRODUCTORY.

I HAVE read your letter--Valentine, my dearly beloved brother, and you who are associated with him in the service of God--which your Love sent by brother Florus and those who came to us with him; and I gave God thanks that I have known your peace in the Lord and agreement in the truth and ardour in love, by your discourse delivered to us. But that an enemy has striven among you to the subversion of some, has, by the mercy of God and His marvellous goodness in turning his arts to the advantage[1] of His servants, rather availed to this result, that while none of you were cast down for the worse, some were built up for the better. There is therefore no need to reconsider again and again all that I have already transmitted to you, sufficiently argued out in a lengthy treatise;[2] for your replies indicate how you have received this. Nevertheless, do not in any wise suppose that, when once read, it can have become sufficiently well known to you. Therefore if you desire to have it exceedingly productive, do not count it a grievance by re-perusal to make it thoroughly familiar; so that you may most accurately[3] know what and what kind of questions they are, for the solution and satisfaction of which there arises an authority not human but divine, from which we ought not to depart if we desire to attain to the point whither we are tending.

CHAP. 2.--THE CATHOLIC FAITH CONCERNING LAW, GRACE, AND FREE WILL.

Now the Lord Himself not only shows us what evil we should shun, and what good we should do, which is all that the letter of the law is

able to effect; but He moreover helps us that we may shun evil and do good,[4] which none can do without the Spirit of grace; and if this be wanting, the law comes in merely to make us guilty and to slay us. It is on this account that the apostle says, "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." [5] He, then, who lawfully uses the law learns therein evil and good, and, not trusting in his own strength, flees to grace, by the help of which he may shun evil and do good. But who is there who flees to grace except when "the steps of a man are ordered by the Lord, and He shall determine his way"? [6] And thus also to desire the help of grace is the beginning of grace; of which, says he, "And I said, Now I have begun; this is the change of the right hand of the Most High." [7] It is to be confessed, therefore, that we have free choice to do both evil and good; but in doing evil every one is free from righteousness and a servant of sin, while in doing good no one can be free, unless he have been made free by Him who said, "If the Son shall make you free, then you shall be free indeed." [8] Neither is it thus, that when any one has been made free from the dominion of sin, he no longer needs the help of his Deliverer; but rather thus, that hearing from Him, "Without me ye can do nothing," [9] he himself also says to Him, "Be thou my helper! Forsake me not." [10] I rejoice that I have found in our brother Florus also this faith, which without doubt is the true and prophetic and apostolic and catholic faith; whence those are the rather to be corrected--whom indeed I now think to have been corrected by the favour of God--who did not understand him.

### CHAP. 3 [II.]--WHAT THE GRACE OF GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST IS.

For the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord must be apprehended,--as that by which alone men are delivered from evil, and without which they do absolutely no good thing, whether in

thought, or will and affection, or in action; not only in order that they may know, by the manifestation of that grace, what should be done, but moreover in order that, by its enabling, they may do with love what they know. Certainly the apostle asked for this inspiration of good will and work on behalf of those to whom he said, "Now we pray to God that ye do no evil, not that we should appear approved, but that ye should do that which is good." [11] Who can hear this and not awake and confess that we have it from the Lord God that we turn aside from evil and do good?--since the apostle indeed says not, We admonish, we teach, we exhort, we rebuke; but he says, "We pray to God that ye do no evil, but that ye should do that which is good." [11] And yet he was also in the habit of speaking to them, and doing all those things which I have mentioned,--he admonished, he taught, he exhorted, he rebuked. But he knew that all these things which he Was doing in the way of planting and watering openly [1] were of no avail unless He who giveth the increase in secret should give heed to his prayer on their behalf. Because, as the same teacher of the Gentiles says, "Neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." [2]

#### CHAP. 4--THE CHILDREN OF GOD ARE LED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD.

Let those, therefore, not deceive themselves who ask, "Wherefore is it preached and prescribed to us that we should turn away from evil and do good, if it is not we that do this, but 'God who worketh in us to will and to do it'?" [3] But let them rather understand that if they are the children of God, they are led by the Spirit of God [4] to do that which should be done; and when they have done it, let them give thanks to Him by whom they act. For they are acted upon that they may act, not that they may themselves do nothing; and in addition to this, it is shown them what they ought to do, so that when they have

done it as it ought to be done--that is, with the love and the delight of righteousness--they may rejoice in having received "the sweetness which the Lord has given, that their[5] land should yield her increase." [6] But when they do not act, whether by not doing at all or by not doing from love, let them pray that what as yet they have not, they may receive. For what shall they have which they shall not receive? or what have they which they have not received? [7]

#### CHAP. 5 [III.]--REBUKE MUST NOT BE NEGLECTED.

"Then," say they, "let those who are over us only prescribe to us what we ought to do, and pray for us that we may do it; but let them not rebuke and censure us if we should not do it." Certainly let all be done, since the teachers of the churches, the apostles, were in the habit of doing all,--as well prescribing what things should be done, as rebuking if they were not done, and praying that they might be done. The apostle prescribes, saying, "Let all your things be done with love." [8] He rebukes, saying, "Now therefore there is utterly a fault among you, because ye have judgments among yourselves. For why do ye not rather suffer wrong? Why are ye not rather defrauded? Nay, ye do wrong and defraud; and that, your brethren. Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not possess the kingdom of God?" [9] Let us hear him also praying: "And the Lord," says he, "multiply you, and make you to abound in love one towards another and towards all men." [10] He prescribes, that love should be maintained; he rebukes, because love is not maintained; he prays, that love may abound. O man! learn by his precept what you ought to have; learn by his rebuke that it is by your own fault that you have it not; learn by his prayer whence you may receive what you desire to have.

#### CHAP. 6 [IV.] --OBJECTIONS TO THE USE OF REBUKE.

"How," says he, "is it my fault that I have not what I have not received from Him, when unless it is given by Him, there is no other at all whence such and so great a gift can be had?" Suffer me a little, my brethren, not as against you whose heart is right with God, but as against those who mind earthly things, or as against those human modes of thinking themselves, to contend for the truth, of the heavenly and divine grace. For they who say this are such as in their wicked works are unwilling to be rebuked by those who proclaim this grace. "Prescribe to me what I shall do, and if I should do it, give thanks to God for me who has given me to do it; but if I do it not, I must not be rebuked, but He must be besought to give what He has not given; that is, that very believing love of God and of my neighbour by which His precepts are<sup>[12]</sup> observed. Pray, then, for me that I may receive this, and may by its means do freely and with good will that which He commands. But I should be justly rebuked if by my own fault I had it not; that is, if I myself could give it to myself, or could receive it, and did not do so, or if He should give it and I should be unwilling to receive it. But since even the will itself is prepared<sup>[13]</sup> by the Lord, why dost thou rebuke me because thou seeest me unwilling to do His precepts, and dost not rather ask Him Himself to work in me the will also?"

#### CHAP. 7 [V.]--THE NECESSITY AND ADVANTAGE OF REBUKE.

To this we answer: Whoever you are that do not the commandments of God that are already known to you, and do not wish to be rebuked, you must be rebuked even for that very reason that you do not wish to be rebuked. For you do not wish that your faults should be pointed out to you; you do not wish that they should be touched, and that such a useful pain should be caused you that you may seek the Physician; you do not desire to be shown to yourself, that, when you see yourself to be deformed, you may wish for the Reformer, and

may supplicate Him that you may not continue in that repulsiveness. For it is your fault that you are evil; and it is a greater fault to be unwilling to be rebuked because you are evil, as if faults should either be praised, or regarded with indifference so as neither to be praised nor blamed, or as if, indeed, the dread, or the shame or the mortification of the rebuked man were of no avail, or were of any other avail in healthfully stimulating, except to cause that He who is good may be besought, and so out of evil men who are rebuked may make good men who may be praised. For what he who will not be rebuked desires to be done for him, when he says, "Pray for me rather,"--he must be rebuked for that very reason that he may himself also do for himself; because that mortification with which he is dissatisfied with himself when he feels the sting of rebuke, stirs him up to a desire for more earnest prayer,[1] that, by God's mercy, he may be aided by the increase of love, and cease to do things which are shameful and mortifying, and do things praiseworthy and gladdening. This is the benefit of rebuke that is wholesomely applied, sometimes with greater, sometimes with less severity, in accordance with the diversity of sins; and it is then wholesome when the supreme Physician looks. For it is of no profit unless when it makes a man repent of his sin. And who gives this but He who looked upon the Apostle Peter when he denied,[2] and made him weep? Whence also the Apostle Paul, after he said that they were to be rebuked with moderation who thought otherwise, immediately added, "Lest perchance God give them repentance, to the acknowledging of the truth, and they recover themselves out of the snares of the devil." [3]

#### CHAP. 8.--FURTHER REPLIES TO THOSE WHO OBJECT TO REBUKE.tO

But wherefore do they, who are unwilling be rebuked, say, "Only prescribe to me, and pray for me that I may do what you prescribe?"



Why do they not rather, in accordance with their own evil inclination, reject these things also, and say, "I wish you neither to prescribe to me, nor to pray for me"? For what man is shown to have prayed for Peter, that God should give him the repentance wherewith he bewailed the denial of his Lord? What man instructed Paul in the divine precepts which pertain to the Christian faith? When, therefore, he was heard preaching the gospel, and saying, "For I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it from man, nor did I learn it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ,"[4]--would it be replied to him: "Why are you troubling us to receive and to learn from you that which you have not received nor learnt from man? He who gave to you is able also to give to us in like manner as to you." Moreover, if they dare not say this, but suffer the gospel to be preached to them by man, although it cannot be given to man by man, let them concede also that they ought to be rebuked by those who are set over them, by whom Christian grace is preached; although it is not denied that God is able, even when no man rebukes, to correct whom He will, and to lead him on to the wholesome mortification of repentance by the most hidden and mighty power of His medicine. And as we are not to cease from prayer on behalf of those whom we desire to be corrected,--even although without any man's prayer on behalf of Peter, the Lord looked upon him and caused him to bewail his sin,--so we must not neglect rebuke, although God can make those whom He will to be corrected, even when not rebuked. But a man then profits by rebuke when He pities and aids who makes those whom He will to profit even without rebuke. But wherefore these are called to be reformed in one way, those in another way, and others in still another way, after different and innumerable manners, be it far from us to assert that it is the business of the clay to judge, but of the potter.

CHAP. 9 [VI]--WHY THEY MAY JUSTLY BE REBUKED WHO DO NOT OBEY GOD, ALTHOUGH THEY HAVE NOT YET RECEIVED THE GRACE OF OBEDIENCE.

"The apostle says," say they, "For who maketh thee to differ? And what hast thou that thou hast not received? Now also if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?"[5] Why, then, are we rebuked, censured, reprov'd, accused? What do we do, we who have not received?" They who say this wish to appear without blame in respect of their not obeying God, because assuredly obedience itself is His gift; and that gift must of necessity be in him in whom dwells love, which without doubt is of God,[6] and the Father gives it to His children. "This," say they, "we have not received. Why, then, are we rebuked, as if we were able to give it to ourselves, and of our own choice would not give it?" And they do not observe that, if they are not yet regenerated, the first reason why, when they are reproach'd because they are disobedient to God, they ought to be dissatisfied with themselves is, that God made man upright from the beginning of the human creation,[7] and there is no unrighteousness with God.[8] And thus the first depravity, whereby God is not obeyed, is of man, because, falling by his own evil will from the rectitude in which God at first made him, he became deprav'd. Is, then, that depravity not to be rebuked in a man because it is not peculiar to him who is rebuked, but is common to all? Nay, let that also be rebuked in individuals, which is common to all. For the circumstance that none is altogether free from it is no reason why it should not attach to each man. Those original sins, indeed, are said to be the sins of others, because individuals derived them from their parents; but they are not unreasonably said to be our own also, because in that one, as the apostle says, all have sinned.[1] Let, then, the damnable source be rebuked, that from the mortification of rebuke may spring the will of regeneration,--if, indeed, he who is

rebuked is a child of promise,--in order that, by the noise of the rebuke sounding and lashing from without, God may by His hidden inspiration work in him from within to will also. If, however, being already regenerate and justified, he relapses of his own will into an evil life, assuredly he cannot say, "I have not received," because of his own free choice to evil he has lost the grace of God, that he had received. And if, stung with compunction by rebuke, he wholesomely bewails, and returns to similar good works, or even better, certainly here most manifestly appears the advantage of rebuke. But yet for rebuke by the agency of man to avail, whether it be of love or not, depends only upon God.

#### CHAP. 10--ALL PERSEVERANCE IS GOD'S GIFT.

Is such an one as is unwilling to be rebuked still able to say, "What have I done,--I who have not received?" when it appears plainly that he has received, and by his own fault has lost that which he has received? "I am able," says he, "I am altogether able,--when you reprove me for having of my own will relapsed from a good life into a bad one,--still to say, What have I done,--I who have not received? For I have received faith, which worketh by love, but I have not received perseverance therein to the end. Will any one dare to say that this perseverance is not the gift of God, and that so great a possession as this is ours in such wise that if any one have it the apostle could not say to him, 'For what hast thou which thou hast not received?'[2] since he has this in such a manner as that he has not received it?" To this, indeed, we are not able to deny, that perseverance in good, progressing even to the end, is also a great gift of God; and that it exists not save it come from Him of whom it is written, "Every best gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights."[3] But the rebuke of him who has not persevered must not on that account be neglected, "lest God

perchance give unto him repentance, and he recover from the snares of the devil;"[4] since to the usefulness of rebuke the apostle has subjoined this decision, saying, as I have above mentioned, "Rebuking with moderation those that think differently, lest at any time God give them repentance." [4] For if we should say that such a perseverance, so laudable and so blessed, is man's in such wise as that he has it not from God, we first of all make void that which the Lord says to Peter: "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." [5] For what did He ask for him, but perseverance to the end? And assuredly, if a man could have this from man, it should not have been asked from God. Then when the apostle says, "Now we pray to God that ye do no evil," [6] beyond a doubt he prays to God on their behalf for perseverance. For certainly he does not "do no evil" who forsakes good, and, not persevering in good, turns to the evil, from which he ought to turn aside. [7] In that place, moreover, where he says, "I thank my God in every remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making quest with joy for your fellowship [8] in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ," [9]--what else does he promise to them from the mercy of God than perseverance in good to the end? And again where he says, "Epaphras saluteth you, who is one of you, a servant of Christ Jesus, always striving for you in prayer, that you may stand perfect and fulfilled in all the will of God," [10]--what is "that you may stand" but "that you may persevere"? Whence it was said of the devil, "He stood not in the truth;" [11] because he was there, but he did not continue. For assuredly those were already standing in the faith. And when we pray that he who stands may stand, we do not pray for anything else than that he may persevere. Jude the apostle, again, when he says, "Now unto Him that is able to keep you without offence, and to establish you before the presence of His glory, immaculate in joy," [12] does he not most manifestly show that

perseverance in good unto the end is God's gift? For what but a good perseverance does He give who preserves without offence that He may place before the presence of His glory immaculate in joy? What is it, moreover, that we read in the Acts of the Apostles: "And when the Gentiles heard, they rejoiced and received the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed"?[1] Who could be ordained to eternal life save by the gift of perseverance? And when we read, "He that shall persevere unto the end shall be saved;"[2] with what salvation but eternal? And when, in the Lord's Prayer, we say to God the Father, "Hallowed be Thy name,"[3] what do we ask but that His name may be hallowed in us? And as this is already accomplished by means of the layer of regeneration, why is it daily asked by believers, except that we may persevere in that which is already done in us? For the blessed Cyprian also understands this in this manner, inasmuch as, in his exposition of the same prayer, he says: "We say, 'Hallowed be Thy name,' not that we wish for God that He may be hallowed by our prayers, but that we ask of God that His name may be hallowed in us. But by whom is God hallowed; since He Himself hallows? Well, because He said, 'Be ye holy, since I also am holy;'[4] we ask and entreat that we who have been hallowed in baptism may persevere in that which we have begun to be."[5] Behold the most glorious martyr is of this opinion, that what in these words Christ's faithful people are daily asking is, that they may persevere in that which they have begun to be. And no one need doubt, but that whosoever prays from the Lord that he may persevere in good, confesses thereby that such perseverance is His gift.

CHAP. 11 [VII.]--THEY WHO HAVE NOT RECEIVED THE GIFT OF PERSEVERANCE, AND HAVE RELAPSED INTO MORTAL SIN AND HAVE DIED THEREIN, MUST RIGHTEOUSLY BE CONDEMNED.

If, then, these things be so, we still rebuke those, and reasonably rebuke them, who, although they were living well, have not persevered therein; because they have of their own will been changed from a good to an evil life, and on that account are worthy of rebuke; and if rebuke should be of no avail to them, and they should persevere in their ruined life until death, they are also worthy of divine condemnation for ever. Neither shall they excuse themselves, saying,--as now they say, "Wherefore are we rebuked?"--so then, "Wherefore are we condemned, since indeed, that we might return from good to evil, we did not receive that perseverance by which we should abide in good?" They shall by no means deliver themselves by this excuse from righteous condemnation. For if, according to the word of truth, no one is delivered from the condemnation which was incurred through Adam except through the faith of Jesus Christ, and yet from this condemnation they shall not deliver themselves who shall be able to say that they have not heard the gospel of Christ, on the ground that "faith cometh by hearing,"[6] how much less shall they deliver themselves who shall say, "We have not received perseverance!" For the excuse of those who say, "We have not received hearing," seems more equitable than that of those who say, "We have not received perseverance;" since it may be said, O man, in that which thou hadst heard and kept, in that thou mightest persevere if thou wouldst; but in no wise can it be said, That which thou hadst not heard thou mightest believe if thou wouldst.

**CHAP. 12.--THEY WHO HAVE NOT RECEIVED PERSEVERANCE ARE NOT DISTINGUISHED FROM THE MASS OF THOSE THAT ARE LOST.**

And, consequently, both those who have not heard the gospel, and those who, having heard it and been changed by it for the better, have not received perseverance, and those who, having heard the

gospel, have refused to come to Christ, that is, to believe on Him, since He Himself says, "No man cometh unto me, except it were given him of my Father,"[7] and those who by their tender age were unable to believe, but might be absolved from original sin by the sole laver of regeneration, and yet have not received this laver, and have perished in death: are not made to differ from that lump which it is plain is condemned, as all go from one into condemnation. Some are made to differ, however, not by their own merits, but by the grace of the Mediator; that is to say, they are justified freely in the blood of the second Adam. Therefore, when we hear, "For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou hast not received? Now, if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" [8] we ought to understand that from that mass of perdition which originated through the first Adam, no one can be made to differ except he who has this gift, which whosoever has, has received by the grace of the Saviour. And this apostolical testimony is so great, that the blessed Cyprian writing to Quirinus put it in the place of a title, when he says, "That we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own." [9]

#### CHAP. 13.--ELECTION IS OF GRACE, NOT OF MERIT.

Whosoever, then, are made to differ from that original condemnation by such bounty of divine grace, there is no doubt but that for such it is provided that they should hear the gospel, and when they hear they believe, and in the faith which worketh by love they persevere unto the end; and if, perchance, they deviate from the way, when they are rebuked they are amended and some of them, although they may not be rebuked by men, return into the path which they had left; and some who have received grace in any age whatever are withdrawn from the perils of this life by swiftness of death. For He worketh all these things in them who made them vessels of mercy,

who also elected them in His Son before the foundation of the world by the election of grace: "And if by grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace." [1] For they were not so called as not to be elected, in respect of which it is said, "For many are called but few are elected;" [2] but because they were called according to the purpose, they are of a certainty also elected by the election, as it is said, of grace, not of any precedent merits of theirs, because to them grace is all merit.

#### CHAP. 14.--NONE OF THE ELECT AND PREDESTINATED CAN PERISH.

Of such says the apostle, "We know that to those that love God He worketh together all things for good, to them who are called according to His purpose; because those whom He before foreknew, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified." [3] Of these no one perishes, because all are elected. And they are elected because they were called according to the purpose--the purpose, however, not their own, but God's; of which He elsewhere says, "That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth, it was said unto her that the elder shall serve the younger." [4] And in another place he says, "Not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace." [5] When, therefore, we hear, "Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called," [6] we ought to acknowledge that they were called according to His purpose; since He thence began, saying, "He worketh together all things for good to those who are called according to His purpose," and then added, "Because those whom He before foreknew, He also did predestinate, to be



conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren And to these promises He added, "Moreover, whom, He did predestinate, them He also called." He wishes these, therefore, to be understood whom He called according to His purpose, lest any among them should be thought to be called and not elected, on account of that sentence of the Lord's: "Many the called but few are elected." [2] For whoever are elected are without doubt also called; but not whosoever are called are as a consequence elected. Those, then, are elected, as has often been said, who are called according to the purpose, who also are predestinated and foreknown. If any one of these perishes, God is mistaken; but none of them perishes, because God is not mistaken. If any one of these perish, God is overcome by human sin; but none of them perishes, because God is overcome by nothing. Moreover, they are elected to reign with Christ, not as Judas was elected, to a work for which he was fitted. Because he was chosen by Him who well knew how to make use even of wicked men, so that even by his damnable deed that venerable work, for the sake of which He Himself had come, might be accomplished. When, therefore, we hear, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" [7] we ought to understand that the rest were elected by mercy, but he by judgment; those to obtain His kingdom, he to shed His blood!

#### CHAP. 15.--PERSEVERANCE IS GIVEN TO THE END.

Rightly follows the word to the kingdom of the elect: "If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how has He not also with Him given us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? God who justifieth? Who condemneth? Christ who died? yea, rather who rose again also, who is at the right hand of God, who also soliciteth on our behalf?" [8] And of how steadfast a perseverance even to the

end they have received the gift, let them follow on to say: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, Because for thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. But in all these things we are more than conquerors, through Him that hath loved us. For I am certain, that neither death, nor life, nor angel, nor principality, nor things present, nor things to come, nor power, 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."[9]

CHAP. 16.--WHOSOEVER DO NOT PERSEVERE ARE NOT DISTINGUISHED FROM THE MASS OF PERDITION BY PREDESTINATION.

Such as these were they who were signified to Timothy, where, when it had been said that Hymenaeus and Philetus had subverted the faith of some, it is presently added, "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord has known them that are His." [1] The faith of these, which worketh by love, either actually does not fail at all, or, if there are any whose faith fails, it is restored before their life is ended, and the iniquity which had intervened is done away, and perseverance even to the end is allotted to them. But they who are not to persevere, and who shall so fall away from Christian faith and conduct that the end of this life shall find them in that case, beyond all doubt are not to be reckoned in the number of these, even in that season wherein they are living well and piously. For they are not made to differ from that mass of perdition by the foreknowledge and predestination of God, and therefore are not called according to God's purpose, and thus are not elected; but are called among those of whom it was said, "Many are called," not among those of whom it was said, "But few are elected." And yet who

can deny that they are elect, since they believe and are baptized, and live according to God? Manifestly, they are called elect by those who are ignorant of what they shall be, but not by Him who knew that they would not have the perseverance which leads the elect forward into the blessed life, and knows that they so stand, as that He has foreknown that they will fall.

CHAP. 17 [VIII.]--WHY PERSEVERANCE SHOULD BE GIVEN TO ONE AND NOT ANOTHER IS INSCRUTABLE.

Here, if I am asked why God should not have given them perseverance to whom He gave that love by which they might live Christianly, I answer that I do not know. For I do not speak arrogantly, but with acknowledgment of my small measure, when I hear the apostle saying, "O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"[2] and, "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways untraceable!"[3] So far, therefore, as He condescends to manifest His judgments to us, let us give thanks; but so far as He thinks fit to conceal them, let us not murmur against His counsel, but believe that this also is the most wholesome for us. But whoever you are that are hostile to His grace, and thus ask, what do you yourself say? it is well that you do not deny yourself to be a Christian and boast of being a catholic. If, therefore, you confess that to persevere to the end in good is God's gift, I think that equally with me you are ignorant why one man should receive this gift and another should not receive it; and in this case we are both unable to penetrate the unsearchable judgments of God. Or if you say that it pertains to man's free will--which you defend, not in accordance with God's grace, but in opposition to it--that any one should persevere in good, or should not persevere, and it is not by the gift of God if he persevere, but by the performance of human will, why will you strive

against the words of Him who says, "I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not"?[4] Will you dare to say that even when Christ prayed that Peter's faith might not fail, it would still have failed if Peter had willed it to fail; that is, if he had been unwilling that it should continue even to the end? As if Peter could in any measure will otherwise than Christ had asked for him that he might will. For who does not know that Peter's faith would then have perished if that will by which he was faithful should fail, and that it would have continued if that same will should abide? But because "the will is prepared by the Lord,"[5] therefore Christ's petition on his behalf could not be a vain petition. When, then, He prayed that his faith should not fail, what was it that he asked for, but that in his faith he should have a most free, strong, invincible, persevering will! Behold to what an extent the freedom of the will is defended in accordance with the grace of God, not in opposition to it; because the human will does not attain grace by freedom, but rather attains freedom by grace, and a delightful constancy, and an insuperable fortitude that it may persevere.

#### CHAP. 18.--SOME INSTANCES OF GOD'S AMAZING JUDGMENTS.

It is, indeed, to be wondered at, and greatly to be wondered at, that to some of His own children--whom He has regenerated in Christ--to whom He has given faith, hope, and love, God does not give perseverance also, when to children of another He forgives such wickedness, and, by the bestowal of His grace, makes them His own children. Who would not wonder at this? Who would not be exceedingly astonished at this? But, moreover, it is not less marvellous, and still true, and so manifest that not even the enemies of God's grace can find any means of denying it, that some children of His friends, that is, of regenerated and good believers, departing

this life as infants without baptism, although He certainly might provide the grace of this layer if He willed, since in His power are all things,--He alienates from His kingdom into which He introduces their parents; and some children of His enemies He causes to come into the hands of Christians, and by means of this layer introduces into the kingdom, from which their parents are aliens; although, as well to the former infants there is no evil deserving, as to the latter there is no good, of their own proper will. Certainly, in this case the judgments of God, because they are righteous and deep, may neither be blamed nor penetrated. Among these also is that concerning perseverance, of which we are now discoursing. Of both, therefore, we may exclaim, "O the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments!"[1]

#### CHAP. 19.--GOD'S WAYS PAST FINDING OUT.

Nor let us wonder that we cannot trace His unsearchable ways. For, to say nothing of innumerable other things which are given by the Lord God to some men, and to others are not given, since with Him is no respect of persons; such things as are not conferred on the merits of will, as bodily swiftness, strength, good health, and beauty of body, marvellous intellects and mental natures capable of many arts, or such as fall to man's lot from without, such as are wealth, nobility, honours, and other things of this kind, which it is in the power of God alone that a man should have; not to dwell even on the baptism of infants (which none of those objectors can say does not pertain, as might be said of those other matters, to the kingdom of God), why it is given to this infant and not given to that, since both of them are equally in God's power, and without that sacrament none can enter into the kingdom of God;--to be silent, then, on these matters, or to leave them on one side, let men consider those very special cases of which we are treating. For we are discoursing of such

as have not perseverance in goodness, but die in the decline of their good will from good to evil. Let the objectors answer, if they can, why, when these were living faithfully and piously, God did not then snatch them from the perils of this life, "lest wickedness should change their understanding, and lest deceit should beguile their souls"?[2] Had He not this in His power, or was He ignorant of their future sinfulness? Assuredly, nothing of this kind is said, except most perversely and insanely. Why, then, did He not do this? Let them reply who mock at us when in such matters we exclaim, "How inscrutable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"[1] For either God giveth this to whom He will, or certainly that Scripture is wrong which says concerning the immature death of the righteous man, "He was taken away lest wickedness should change his understanding, or lest deceit should beguile his soul." [2] Why, then, does God give this so great benefit to some, and not give it to others, seeing that in Him is no unrighteousness[3] nor acceptance of persons,[4] and that it is in His power how long every one may remain in this life, which is called a trial upon earth?[5] As, then, they are constrained to confess that it is God's gift for a man to end this life of his before it can be changed from good to evil, but they do not know why it is given to some and not given to others, so let them confess with us that perseverance in good is God's gift, according to the Scriptures, from which I have already set down many testimonies; and let them condescend with us to be ignorant, without a murmur against God, why it is given to some and not given to others.

CHAP. 20 [IX.]--SOME ARE CHILDREN OF GOD ACCORDING TO GRACE TEMPORALLY RECEIVED, SOME ACCORDING TO GOD'S ETERNAL FOREKNOWLEDGE.

Nor let it disturb us that to some of His children God does not give this perseverance. Be this far from being so, however, if these were of those who are predestinated and called according to His purpose,-- who are truly the children of the promise. For the former, while they live piously, are called children of God; but because they will live wickedly, and die in that impiety, the foreknowledge of God does not call them God's children. For they are children of God whom as yet we have not, and God has already, of whom the Evangelist John says, "that Jesus should die for that nation, and not for that nation only, but that also He should gather together in one the children of God which were scattered abroad;"[6] and this certainly they were to become by believing, through the preaching of the gospel. And yet before this had happened they had already been enrolled as sons of God with unchangeable stedfastness in the memorial of their Father. And, again, there are some who are called by us children of God on account of grace received even in temporal things, yet are not so called by God; of whom the same John says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us, because if they had been of us they would, no doubt, have continued with us."[7] He does not say, "They went out from us, but because they did not abide with us they are no longer now of us;" but he says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us,"--that is to say, even when they appeared among us, they were not of us. And as if it were said to him, Whence do you prove this? he says, "Because if they had been of us, they would assuredly have continued with us."[1] It is the word of God's children; John is the speaker, who was ordained to a chief place among the children of God. When, therefore, God's children say of those who had not perseverance, "They went out from us, but they were not of us," and add, "Because if they had been of us, they would assuredly have continued with us," what else do they say than that they were not children, even when they were in the profession and name of children? Not because they simulated righteousness, but because

they did not continue in it. For he does not say, "For if they had been of us, they would assuredly have maintained a real and not a feigned righteousness with us;" but he says, "If they had been of us, they would assuredly have continued with us." Beyond a doubt, he wished them to continue in goodness. Therefore they were in goodness; but because they did not abide in it,--that is, they did not persevere unto the end,--he says, They were not of us, even when they were with us,--that is, they were not of the number of children, even when they were in the faith of children; because they who are truly children are foreknown and predestinated as conformed to the image of His Son, and are called according to His purpose, so as to be elected. For the son of promise does not perish. but the son of perdition.[2]

#### CHAP. 21.--WHO MAY BE UNDERSTOOD AS GIVEN TO CHRIST.

Those, then, were of the multitude of the called, but they were not of the fewness of the elected. It is not, therefore, to His predestinated children that God has not given perseverance for they would have it if they were in that number of children; and what would they have which they had not received, according to the apostolical and true judgment?[3] And thus such children would be given to Christ the Son just as He Himself says to the Father, "That all that Thou hast given me may not perish, but have eternal life." [4] Those, therefore, are understood to be given to Christ who are ordained to eternal life. These are they who are predestinated and called according to the purpose, of whom not one perishes. And therefore none of them ends this life when he has changed from good to evil, because he is so ordained, and for that purpose given to Christ, that he may not perish, but may have eternal life. And again, those whom we call His enemies, or the infant children of His enemies, whomever of them He will so regenerate that they may end this life in that faith which worketh by love, are already, and before this is done, in that



predestination His children, and are given to Christ His Son, that they may not perish, but have everlasting life.

## CHAP. 22.--TRUE CHILDREN OF GOD ARE TRUE DISCIPLES OF CHRIST.

Finally, the Saviour Himself says, "If ye continue in my word, ye are indeed my disciples." [5] Is Judas, then, to be reckoned among them, since he did not continue in His word? Are they to be reckoned among them of whom the gospel speaks in such wise, where, when the Lord had commanded His flesh to be eaten and His blood to be drunk, the Evangelist says, "These things said He in the synagogue as He taught in Capernaum. Many, therefore, of His disciples, when they had heard this, said, This is a hard saying; who can hear it? But Jesus, knowing in Himself that His disciples were murmuring at it, said to them, Doth this offend you? What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascending where He was before? It is the Spirit that quickeneth, but the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and life. But there are some of you who believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who were the believing ones, and who should betray Him; and He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man cometh unto me except it were given of my Father. From this time many of His disciples went away back from Him, and no longer walked with Him." [6] Are not these even in the words of the gospel called disciples? And yet they were not truly disciples, because they did not continue in His word, according to what He says: "If ye continue in my word, then are ye indeed my disciples." [5] Because, therefore, they possessed not perseverance, as not being truly disciples of Christ, so they were not truly children of God even when they appeared to be so, and were so called. We, then, call men elected, and Christ's disciples, and God's children, because they are to be so called whom, being regenerated, we see to live

piously; but they are then truly what they are called if they shall abide in that on account of which they are so called. But if they have not perseverance,--that is, if they continue not in that which they have begun to be,--they are not truly called what they are called and are not; for they are not this in the sight of Him to whom it is known what they are going to be,--that is to say, from good men, bad men.

#### CHAP. 23.--THOSE WHO ARE CALLED ACCORDING TO THE PURPOSE ALONE ARE PREDESTINATED.

For this reason the apostle, when he had said, "We know that to those who love God He worketh all things together for good,"--knowing that some love God, and do not continue in that good way unto the end,--immediately added, "to them who are the called according to His purpose." [1] For these in their love for God continue even to the end; and they who for a season wander from the way return, that they may continue unto the end what they had begun to be in good. Showing, however, what it is to be called according to His purpose, he presently added what I have already quoted above, "Because whom He did before foreknow, He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called," to wit, according to His purpose; "and whom He called, them He also justified; and whom He justified, them He also glorified." [2] All those things are already done: He foreknew, He predestinated, He called, He justified; because both all are already foreknown and predestinated, and many are already called and justified; but that which he placed at the end, "them He also glorified" (if, indeed, that glory is here to be understood of which the same apostle says, "When Christ your life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory" [3]), this is not yet accomplished. Although, also, those two things--that is, He called, and He justified--

-have not been effected in all of whom they are said,--for still, even until the end of the world, there remain many to be called and justified,--nevertheless, He used verbs of the past tense, even concerning things future, as if God had already arranged from eternity that they should come to pass. For this reason, also, the prophet Isaiah says concerning Him, "Who has made the things that shall be." [4] Whosoever, therefore, in God's most providential ordering, are foreknown, predestinated, called, justified, glorified,--I say not, even although not yet born again, but even although not yet born at all, are already children of God, and absolutely cannot perish. These truly come to Christ, because they come in such wise as He Himself says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will not cast out;" [5] and a little after He says, "This is the will of the Father who hath sent me, that of all that He hath given me I shall lose nothing." [6] From Him, therefore, is given also perseverance in good even to the end; for it is not given save to those who shall not perish, since they who do not persevere shall perish.

#### CHAP. 24.--EVEN THE SINS OF THE ELECT ARE TURNED BY GOD TO THEIR ADVANTAGE.

To such as love Him, God co-worketh with all things for good; so absolutely all things, that even if any of them go astray, and break out of the way, even this itself He makes to avail them for good, so that they return more lowly and more instructed. For they learn that in the right way [7] itself they ought to rejoice with trembling; not with arrogation to themselves of confidence of abiding as if by their own strength; not with saying, in their abundance, "We shall not be moved for ever." [8] For which reason it is said to them, "Serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling, lest at any time the Lord should be angry, and ye perish from the right way." [9] For

He does not say, "And ye come not into the right way;" but He says, "Lest ye perish from the right way." And what does this show, but that those who are already walking in the right way are reminded to serve God in fear; that is, "not to be high-minded, but to fear"?[10] which signifies, that they should not be haughty, but humble. Whence also He says in another place, "not minding high things, but consenting with the lowly;"[11] let them rejoice in God, but with trembling; glorying in none, since nothing is ours, so that he who glori-eth may glory in the Lord, lest they perish from the right way in which they have already begun to walk, while they are ascribing to themselves their very presence in it. These words also the apostle made use of when he says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." [12] And setting forth why with fear and trembling, he says, "For it is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do for His good pleasure." [13] For he had not this fear and trembling who said in his abundance, "I shall not be moved for ever." [8] But because he was a child of the promise, not of perdition, he experienced in God's desertion for a little while what he himself was: "Lord," said he, "in Thy favour Thou gavest strength to my honour; Thou turnedst away Thy face from me, and I became troubled." [14] Behold how much better instructed, and for this reason also more humble, he held on his way, at length seeing and confessing that by His will God had endowed his honour with strength; and this he had attributed to himself and presumed to be from himself, in such abundance as God had afforded it, and not from Him who had given it, and so had said, "I shall not be moved for ever!" Therefore he became troubled so that he found himself, and being lowly minded learnt not only of eternal life, but, moreover, of a pious conversation and perseverance in this life, as that in which hope should be maintained. This might moreover be the word of the Apostle Peter, because he also had said in his abundance, "I will lay down my life for Thy sake;" [1] attributing to himself, in his eagerness, what was

afterwards to be bestowed on him by his Lord. But the Lord turned away His face from him, and he became troubled, so that in his fear of dying for Him he thrice denied Him. But the Lord again turned His face to him, and washed away his sin with his tears. For what else is, "He turned and looked upon him,"[2] but, He restored to him the face which, for a little while, He had turned away from him? Therefore he had become troubled; but because he learned not to be confident concerning himself, even this was of excellent profit to him, by His agency who co-works for good with all things to those who love Him; because he had been called according to the purpose, so that no one could pluck him out of the hand of Christ, to whom he had been given.

#### CHAP. 25.--THEREFORE REBUKE IS TO BE USED.

Let no one therefore say that a man must not be rebuked when he deviates from the right way, but that his return and perseverance must only be asked for from the Lord for him. Let no considerate and believing man say this. For if such an one is called according to the purpose, beyond all doubt God is co-working for good to him even in the fact of his being rebuked. But since he who rebukes is ignorant whether he is so called, let him do with love what he knows ought to be done; for he knows that such an one ought to be rebuked. God will show either mercy or judgment; mercy, indeed, if he who is rebuked is "made to differ" by the bestowal of grace from the mass of perdition, and is not found among the vessels of wrath which are completed for destruction, but among the vessels of mercy which God has prepared for glory;[3] but judgment, if among the former he is condemned, and is not predestinated among the latter.

#### CHAP. 26 [X.]--WHETHER ADAM RECEIVED THE GIFT OF PERSEVERANCE.

Here arises another question, not reasonably to be slighted, but to be approached and solved in the help of the Lord in whose hand are both we and our discourses.[4] For I am asked, in respect of this gift of God which is to persevere in good to the end, what I think of the first man himself, who assuredly was made upright without any fault. And I do not say: If he had not perseverance, how was he without fault, seeing that he was in want of so needful a gift of God? For to this interrogatory the answer is easy, that he had not perseverance, because he did not persevere in that goodness in which he was without sin; for he began to have sin from the point at which he fell; and if he began, certainly he was without sin before he had begun. For it is one thing not to have sin, and it is another not to abide in that goodness in which there is no sin. Because in that very fact, that he is not said never to have been without sin, but he is said not to have continued without sin, beyond all doubt it is demonstrated that he was without sin, seeing that he is blamed for not having continued in that goodness. But it should rather be asked and discussed with greater pains in what way we can answer those who say, "If in that uprightness in which he was made without sin he had perseverance, beyond all doubt he persevered in it; and if he persevered, he certainly did not sin, and did not forsake that his uprightness. But that he did sin, and was a forsaker of goodness, the Truth declares. Therefore he had not perseverance in that goodness; and if he had it not, he certainly received it not. For how should he have both received perseverance, and not have persevered? Further, if he had it not because he did not receive it, what sin did he commit by not persevering, if he did not receive perseverance? For it cannot be said that he did not receive it, for the reason that he was not separated by the bestowal of grace from the mass of perdition. Because that mass of perdition did not as yet exist in the human race before he had sinned from whom the corrupted source was derived."

## CHAP. 27.--THE ANSWER.

Wherefore we most wholesomely confess what we most correctly believe, that the God and Lord of all things, who in His strength created all things good, and foreknew that evil things would arise out of good, and knew that it pertained to His most omnipotent goodness even to do good out of evil things rather than not to allow evil things to be at all, so ordained the life of angels and men that in it He might first of all show what their free will was capable of, and then what the kindness of His grace and the judgment of His righteousness was capable of. Finally, certain angels, of whom the chief is he who is called the devil, became by free will outcasts from the Lord God. Yet although they fled from His goodness, wherein they had been blessed, they could not flee from His judgment, by which they were made most wretched. Others, however, by the same free will stood fast in the truth, and merited the knowledge of that most certain truth that they should never fall.[5] For if from the Holy Scriptures we have been able to attain the knowledge that none of the holy angels shall fall evermore, how much more have they themselves attained this knowledge by the truth more sublimely revealed to them! Because to us is promised a blessed life without end, and equality with the angels,[1] from which promise we are certified that when after judgment we shall have come to that life, we shall not fall from it; but if the angels are ignorant of this truth concerning themselves, we shall not be their equals, but more blessed than they. But the Truth has promised us equality with them. It is certain, then, that they have known this by sight, which we have known by faith, to wit, that there shall be now no more any fall of any holy angel. But the devil and his angels, although they were blessed before they fell, and did not know that they should fall unto misery,--there was still something which might be added to their blessedness, if by free will they had stood in the truth, until they should receive that fulness of

the highest blessing as the reward of that continuance; that is, that by the great abundance of the love of God, given by the Holy Spirit, they should absolutely not be able to fall any more, and that they should know this with complete certainty concerning themselves. They had not this plenitude of blessedness; but since they were ignorant of their future misery, they enjoyed a blessedness which was less, indeed, but still without any defect. For if they had known their future fall and eternal punishment, they certainly could not have been blessed; since the fear of so great an evil as this would compel them even then to be miserable.

#### CHAP. 28.--THE FIRST MAN HIMSELF ALSO MIGHT HAVE STOOD BY HIS FREE WILL.

Thus also He made man with free will; and although ignorant of his future fall, yet therefore happy, because he thought it was in his own power both not to die and not to become miserable. And if he had willed by his own free will to continue in this state of uprightness and freedom from sin, assuredly without any experience of death and of unhappiness he would have received by the merit of that continuance the fulness of blessing with which the holy angels also are blessed; that is, the impossibility of falling any more, and the knowledge of this with absolute certainty. For even he himself could not be blessed although in Paradise, nay, he would not be there, where it would not become him to be miserable, if the foreknowledge of his fall had made him wretched with the dread of such a disaster. But because he forsook God of his free will, he experienced the just judgment of God, that with his whole race, which being as yet all placed in him had sinned with him, he should be condemned. For as many of this race as are delivered by God's grace are certainly delivered from the condemnation in which they are already held bound. Whence, even if none should be delivered, no one could justly blame the judgment of



God. That, therefore, in comparison of those that perish few, but in their absolute number many, are delivered, is effected by grace,[2] is effected freely:[2] thanks must be given, because it is effected, so that no one may be lifted up as of his own deservings, but that every mouth may be stopped,[3] and he that glorieth may glory in the Lord.[4]

#### CHAP. 29 [XI.]--DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE GRACE GIVEN BEFORE AND AFTER THE FALL.

What then? Did not Adam have the grace of God? Yes, truly, he had it largely, but of a different kind. He was placed in the midst of benefits which he had received from the goodness of his Creator; for he had not procured those benefits by his own deservings; in which benefits he suffered absolutely no evil. But saints in this life, to whom pertains this grace of deliverance, are in the midst of evils out of which they cry to God, "Deliver us from evil." [5] He in those benefits needed not the death of Christ: these, the blood of that Lamb absolves from guilt, as well inherited as their own. He had no need of that assistance which they implore when they say, "I see another law in my members warring against the law of my mind, and making me captive in the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." [6] Because in them the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and as they labour and are imperilled in such a contest, they ask that by the grace of Christ the strength to fight and to conquer may be given them. He, however, tempted and disturbed in no such conflict concerning himself against himself, in that position of blessedness enjoyed his peace with himself.

#### CHAP. 30.--THE INCARNATION OF THE WORD.

Hence, although these do not now require a grace more joyous for the present, they nevertheless need a more powerful grace; and what grace is more powerful than the only-begotten Son of God, equal to the Father and co-eternal, made man for them, and, without any sin of His own, either original or actual, crucified by men who were sinners? And although He rose again on the third day, never to die any more, He yet bore death for men and gave life to the dead, so that redeemed by His blood, having received so great and such a pledge, they could say, "If God be for us, who is against us? He who spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how has He not with Him also given to us all things?"[1] God therefore took upon Him our nature--that is, the rational soul and flesh of the man Christ--by an undertaking singularly marvellous, or marvellously singular; so that with no preceding merits of His own righteousness He might in such wise be the Son of God from the beginning, in which He had begun to be man, that He, and the Word which is without beginning, might be one person. For there is no one blinded by such ignorance of this matter and the Faith as to dare to say that, although born of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary the Son of man, yet of His own free will by righteous living and by doing good works, without sin, He deserved to be the Son of God; in opposition to the gospel, which says, "The Word was made flesh." [2] For where was this made flesh except in the Virginal womb, whence was the beginning of the man Christ? And, moreover, when the Virgin asked how that should come to pass which was told her by the angel, the angel answered "The Holy Ghost shall come over on to thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore that holy thing that shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." [3] "Therefore," he said; not because of works of which certainly of a yet unborn infant there are none; but "therefore," because "the Holy Ghost shall come over on to thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be

called the Son of God." That nativity, absolutely gratuitous, conjoined, in the unity of the person, man to God, flesh to the Word! Good works followed that nativity; good works did not merit it. For it was in no wise to be feared that the human nature taken up by God the Word in that ineffable manner into a unity of person, would sin by free choice of will, since that taking up itself was such that the nature of man so taken up by God would admit into itself no movement of an evil will. Through this Mediator God makes known that He makes those whom He redeemed by His blood from evil, everlastingly good; and Him He in such wise assumed that He never would be evil, and, not being made out of evil, would always be good. [4]

CHAP. 31.--THE FIRST MAN HAD RECEIVED THE GRACE NECESSARY FOR HIS PERSEVERANCE, BUT ITS EXERCISE WAS LEFT IN HIS FREE CHOICE.

The first man had not that grace by which he should never will to be evil; but assuredly he had that in which if he willed to abide he would never be evil, and without which, moreover, he could not by free will be good, but which, nevertheless, by free will he could forsake. God, therefore, did not will even him to be without His grace, which He left in his free will; because free will is sufficient for evil, but is too little for good, unless it is aided by Omnipotent Good. And if that man had not forsaken that assistance of his free will, he would always have been good; but he forsook it, and he was forsaken. Because such was the nature of the aid, that he could forsake it when he would, and that he could continue in it if he would; but not such that it could be brought about that he would. This first is the grace which was given to the first Adam; but more powerful than this is that in the second Adam. For the first is that whereby it is affected that a man may have righteousness if he will; the second, therefore,

can do more than this, since by it is even effected that he will, and will so much, and love with such ardour, that by the will of the Spirit he overcomes the will of the flesh, that lusteth in opposition to it.[6] Nor was that, indeed. a small grace by which was demonstrated even the power of free will, because man was so assisted that without this assistance he could not continue in good, but could forsake this assistance if he would. But this latter grace is by so much the greater, that it is too little for a man by its means to regain his lost freedom; it is too little, finally, not to be able without it either to apprehend the good or to continue in good if he will, unless he is also made to will.

#### CHAP. 32.--THE GIFTS OF GRACE CONFERRED ON ADAM IN CREATION.

At that time, therefore, God had given to man a good will,[7] because in that will He had made him, since He had made him upright. He had given help without which he could not continue therein if he would; but that he should will, He left in his free will. He could therefore continue if he would, because the help was not wanting whereby he could, and without which he could not, perseveringly hold fast the good which he would. But that he willed not to continue is absolutely the fault of him whose merit it would have been if he had willed to continue; as the holy angels did, who, while others fell by free will, themselves by the same free will stood, and deserved to receive the due reward of this continuance--to wit, such a fulness of blessing that by it they might have the fullest certainty of always abiding in it. If, however, this help had been wanting, either to angel or to man when they were first made, since their nature was not made such that without the divine help it could abide if it would, they certainly would not have fallen by their own fault, because the help would have been wanting without which they could not continue. At the present time, however, to those to whom such assistance is

wanting, it is the penalty of sin; but to those to whom it is given, it is given of grace, not of debt; and by so much the more is given through Jesus Christ our Lord to those to whom it has pleased God to give it, that not only we have that help without which we cannot continue even if we will, but, moreover, we have so great and such a help! as to will. Because by this grace of God there is caused in us, in the reception of good and in the persevering hold of it, not only to be able to do what we will, but even to will to do what we are able. But this was not the case in the first man; for the one of these things was in him, but the other was not. For he did not need grace to receive good, because he had not yet lost it; but he needed the aid of grace to continue in it, and without this aid he could not do this at all; and he had received the ability if he would, but he had not the will for what he could; for if he had possessed it, he would have persevered. For he could persevere if he would; but that he would not was the result of free will, which at that time was in such wise free that he was capable of willing well and ill. For what shall be more free than free will, when it shall not be able to serve sin? and this should be to man also as it was made to the holy angels, the reward of deserving. But now that good deserving has been lost by sin, in those who are delivered that has become the gift of grace which would have been the reward of deserving.

CHAP. 33 [XII.]--WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ABILITY NOT TO SIN, TO DIE, AND FORSAKE GOOD, AND THE INABILITY TO SIN, TO DIE, AND TO FORSAKE GOOD?

On which account we must consider with diligence and attention in what respect those pairs differ from one another,--to be able not to sin, and not to be able to sin; to be able not to die, and not to be able to die; to be able not to forsake good, and not to be able to forsake good. For the first man was able not to sin, was able not to die, was

able not to forsake good. Are we to say that he who had such a free will could not sin? Or that he to whom it was said, "If thou shalt sin thou shalt die by death," could not die? Or that he could not forsake good, when he would forsake this by sinning, and so die? Therefore the first liberty of the will was to be able not to sin, the last will be much greater, not to be able to sin; the first immortality was to be able not to die, the last will be much greater, not to be able to die; the first was the power of perseverance, to be able not to forsake good--the last will be the felicity of perseverance, not to be able to forsake good. But because the last blessings will be preferable and better, were those first ones, therefore, either no blessings at all, or trifling ones?

CHAP. 34.--THE AID WITHOUT WHICH A THING DOES NOT COME TO PASS, AND THE AID WITH WHICH A THING COMES TO PASS.

Moreover, the aids themselves are to be distinguished. The aid without which a thing does not come to pass is one thing, and the aid by which a thing comes to pass is another. For without food we cannot live; and yet although food should be at hand, it would not cause a man to live who should will to die. Therefore the aid of food is that without which it does not come to pass that we live, not that by which it comes to pass that we live. But, indeed, when the blessedness which a man has not is given him, he becomes at once blessed. For the aid is not only that without which that does not happen, but also with which that does happen for the sake of which it is given. Wherefore this is an assistance both by which it comes to pass, and without which it does not come to pass; because, on the one hand, if blessedness should be given to a man, he becomes at once blessed; and, on the other, if it should never be given he will never be so. But food does not of necessity cause a man to live, and

yet without it he cannot live. Therefore to the first man, who, in that good in which he had been made upright, had received the ability not to sin, the ability not to die, the ability not to forsake that good itself, was given the aid of perseverance,--not that by which it should be brought about that he should persevere, but that without which he could not of free will persevere. But now to the saints predestinated to the kingdom of God by God's grace, the aid of perseverance that is given is not such as the former, but such that to them perseverance itself is bestowed; not only so that without that gift they cannot persevere, but, moreover, so that by means of this gift they cannot help persevering. For not only did He say, "Without me ye can do nothing,"[1] but He also said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain."[2] By which words He showed that He had given them not only righteousness, but perseverance therein. For when Christ thus ordained them that they should go and bring forth fruit, and that their fruit should remain, who would dare to say, It shall not remain? Who would dare to say, Perchance it will not remain? "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance;"[1] but the calling is of those who are called according to the purpose. When Christ intercedes, therefore, on behalf of these, that their faith should not fail, doubtless it will not fail unto the end. And thus it shall persevere even unto the end; nor shall the end of this life find it anything but continuing.

#### CHAP. 35.--THERE IS A GREATER FREEDOM NOW IN THE SAINTS THAN THERE WAS BEFORE IN ADAM.

Certainly a greater liberty is necessary in the face of so many and so great temptations, which had no existence in Paradise,--a liberty fortified and confirmed by the gift of perseverance, so that this world, with all its loves, its fears, its errors, may be overcome: the

martyrdoms of the saints have taught this. In fine, he [Adam], not only with nobody to make him afraid, but, moreover, in spite of the authority of God's fear, using free will, did not stand in such a state of happiness, in such a facility[2] of [not] sinning. But these [the saints], I say, not trader the fear of the world, but in spite of the rage of the world lest they should stand, stood firm in the faith; while he could see the good things present which he was going to forsake, they could not see the good things future which they were going to receive. Whence is this, save by the gift of Him from whom they obtained mercy to be faithful; from whom they received the spirit, not of fear, whereby they would yield to the persecutors, but of power, and of love, and of continence, in which they could overcome all threatenings, all seductions, all torments? To him, therefore, without any sin, was given the free will with which he was created; and he made it to serve sin. But although the will of these had been the servant of sin, it was delivered by Him who said, "If the Son shall make you free, then shall ye be free indeed."[3] And by that grace they receive so great a freedom, that although as long as they live here they are fighting against sinful lusts, and some sins creep upon them unawares, on account of which they daily say, "Forgive us our debts,"[4] yet they do not any more obey the sin which is unto death, of which the Apostle John says, "There is a sin unto death: I do not say that he shall pray for it."[5] Concerning which sin (since it is not expressed) many and different notions may be entertained. I, however, say, that sin is to forsake even unto death the faith which worketh by love. This sin they no longer serve who are not in the first condition, as Adam, free; but are freed by the grace of God through the second Adam, and by that deliverance have that free will which enables them to serve God, not that by which they may be made captive by the devil. From being made free from sin they have become the servants of righteousness,[6] in which they will stand till the end, by the gift to them of perseverance from Him who foreknew



them, and predestinated them, and called them according to His purpose, and justified them, and glorified them, since He has even already formed those things that are to come which He promised concerning them. And when He promised, "Abraham believed Him, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." [7] For "he gave glory to God, most fully believing," as it is written, "that what He has promised He is able also to perform." [7]

CHAP. 36.--GOD NOT ONLY FOREKNOWS THAT MEN WILL BE GOOD, BUT HIMSELF MAKES THEM SO.

It is He Himself, therefore, that makes those men good, to do good works. For He did not promise them to Abraham because He foreknew that of themselves they would be good. For if this were the case, what He promised was not His, but theirs. But it was not thus that Abraham believed, but "he was not weak in faith, giving glory to God;" and "most fully believing that what He has promised He is able also to perform." [8] He does not say, "What He foreknew, He is able to promise;" nor "What He fore told, He is able to manifest;" nor "What He promised, He is able to foreknow:" but "What He promised, He is able also to do." It is He, therefore, who makes them to persevere in good, who makes them good. But they who fall and perish have never been in the number of the predestinated. Although, then, the apostle might be speaking of all persons regenerated and living piously when he said, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? To his own master he standeth or falleth;" yet he at once had regard to the predestinated, and said, "But he shall stand;" and that they might not arrogate this to themselves, he says, "For God is able to make him stand." [9] It is He Himself, therefore, that gives perseverance, who is able to establish those who stand, so that they may stand fast with the greatest

perseverance; or to restore those who have fallen, for "the Lord setteth up those who are broken down." [10]

#### CHAP. 37.--TO A SOUND WILL IS COMMITTED THE POWER OF PERSEVERING OR OF NOT PERSEVERING.

As, therefore, the first man did not receive this gift of God,--that is, perseverance in good, but it was left in his choice to persevere or not to persevere, his will had such strength,--inasmuch as it had been created without any sin, and there was nothing in the way of concupis-cence of himself that withstood it,--that the choice of persevering could worthily be entrusted to such goodness and to such facility in living well. But God at the same time foreknew what he would do in unrighteousness; foreknew, however, but did not compel him to this; but at the same time He knew what He Himself would do in righteousness concerning him. But now, since that great freedom has been lost by the desert of sin, our weakness has remained to be aided by still greater gifts. For it pleased God, in order most effectually to quench the pride of human presumption, "that no flesh should glory in His presence"--that is, "no man." [1] But whence should flesh not glory in His presence, save concerning its merits? Which, indeed, it might have had, but lost; and lost by that very means whereby it might have had them, that is, by its free will; on account of which there remains nothing to those who are to be delivered, save the grace of the Deliverer. Thus, therefore, no flesh glories in His presence. For the unrighteous do not glory, since they have no ground of glory; nor the righteous, because they have a ground from Him, and have no glory of theirs, but Himself, to whom they say, "My glory, and the lifter up of my head." [2] And thus it is that what is written pertains to every man, "that no flesh should glory in His presence." To the righteous, however, pertains that Scripture: "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." [3] For this

the apostle most manifestly showed, when, after saying "that no flesh should glory in His presence," lest the saints should suppose that they had been left without any glory, he presently added, "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." [4] Hence it is that in this abode of miseries, where trial is the life of man upon the earth, "strength is made perfect in weakness." [5] What strength, save "that he that glorieth should glory in the Lord"?

#### CHAP. 38.--WHAT IS THE NATURE OF THE GIFT OF PERSEVERANCE THAT IS NOW GIVEN TO THE SAINTS.

And thus God willed that His saints should not--even concerning perseverance in goodness itself--glory in their own strength, but in Himself, who not only gives them aid such as He gave to the first man, without which they cannot persevere if they will, but causes in them also the will; that since they will not persevere unless they both can and will, both the capability and the will to persevere should be bestowed on them by the liberality of divine grace. Because by the Holy Spirit their will is so much enkindled that they therefore can, because they so will; and they therefore so will because God works in them to will. For if in so much weakness of this life (in which weakness, however, for the sake of checking pride, strength behaved to be perfected) their own will should be left to themselves, that they might, if they willed, continue in the help of God, without which they could not persevere, and God should not work in them to will, in the midst of so many and so great weaknesses their will itself would give way, and they would not be able to persevere, for the reason that failing from infirmity they would not will, or in the weakness of will they would not so will that they would be able. Therefore aid is

brought to the infirmity of human will, so that it might be unchangeably and invincibly[6] influenced by divine grace; and thus, although weak, it still might not fail, nor be overcome by any adversity. Thus it happens that man's will, weak and incapable, in good as yet small, may persevere by God's strength; while the will of the first man, strong and healthful, having the power of free choice, did not persevere in a greater good; because although God's help was not wanting, without which it could not persevere if it would, yet it was not such a help as that by which God would work in man to will. Certainly to the strongest He yielded and permitted to do what He willed; to those that were weak He has reserved that by His own gift they should most invincibly will what is good, and most invincibly refuse to forsake this. Therefore when Christ says, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not,"[7] we may understand that it was said to him who is built upon the rock. And thus the man of God, not only because he has obtained mercy to be faithful, but also because faith itself does not fail, if he glories, must glory in the Lord.

#### CHAP. 39 [XIII.]--THE NUMBER OF THE PREDESTINATED IS CERTAIN AND DEFINED.

I speak thus of those who are predestinated to the kingdom of God, whose number is so certain that one can neither be added to them nor taken from them; not of those who, when He had announced and spoken, were multiplied beyond number. For they may be said to be called but not chosen, because they are not called according to the purpose. But that the number of the elect is certain, and neither to be increased nor diminished,--although it is signified by John the Baptist when he says, "Bring forth, therefore, fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham,"[1] to show that they were in such wise to be

cut off if they did not produce fruit, that the number which was promised to Abraham would not be wanting, is yet more plainly declared in the Apocalypse: "Hold fast that which thou hast, lest another take thy crown." [2] For if another would not receive unless one should have lost, the number is fixed.

#### CHAP. 40.--NO ONE IS CERTAIN AND SECURE OF HIS OWN PREDESTINATION AND SALVATION.

But, moreover, that such things as these are so spoken to saints who will persevere, as if it were reckoned uncertain whether they will persevere, is a reason that they ought not otherwise to hear these things, since it is well for them "not to be high-minded, but to fear." [3] For who of the multitude of believers can presume, so long as he is living in this mortal state, that he is in the number of the predestinated? Because it is necessary that in this condition that should be kept hidden; since here we have to beware so much of pride, that even so great an apostle was buffeted by a messenger of Satan, lest he should be lifted up. [4] Hence it was said to the apostles, "If ye abide in me;" [5] and this He said who knew for a certainty that they would abide; and through the prophet, "If ye shall be willing, and will hear me," [6] although He knew in whom He would work to will also. And many similar things are said. For on account of the usefulness of this secrecy, lest, perchance, any one should be lifted up, but that all, even although they are running well, should fear, in that it is not known who may attain,--on account of the usefulness of this secrecy, it must be believed that some of the children of perdition, who have not received the gift of perseverance to the end, begin to live in the faith which worketh by love, and live for some time faithfully and righteously, and afterwards fall away, and are not taken away from this life before this happens to them. If this had happened to none of these, men would have that very

wholesome fear, by which the sin of presumption is kept down, only so long as until they should attain to the grace of Christ by which to live piously, and afterwards would for time to come be secure that they would never fall away from Him. And such presumption in this condition of trials is not fitting, where there is so great weakness, that security may engender pride. Finally, this also shall be the case; but it shall be at that time, in men also as it already is in the angels, when there cannot be any pride. Therefore the number of the saints, by God's grace predestinated to God's kingdom, with the gift of perseverance to the end bestowed on them, shall be guided thither in its completeness, and there shall be at length without end preserved in its fullest completeness, most blessed, the mercy of their Saviour still cleaving to them, whether in their conversion, in their conflict, or in their crown!

#### CHAP. 41.--EVEN IN JUDGMENT GOD'S MERCY WILL BE NECESSARY TO US.

For the Holy Scripture testifies that God's mercy is then also necessary for them, when the Saint says to his soul concerning the Lord its God, "Who crowneth thee in mercy and compassion." [7] The Apostle James also says: "He shall have judgment without mercy who hath showed no mercy;" [8] where he sets forth that even in that judgment in which the righteous are crowned and the unrighteous are condemned, some will be judged with mercy, others without mercy. On which account also the mother of the Maccabees says to her son, "That in that mercy I may receive thee with thy brethren." [9] "For when a righteous king," as it is written, "shall sit on the throne, no evil thing shall oppose itself to him. Who will boast that he has a pure heart? or who will boast that he is pure from sin?" [10] And thus God's mercy is even then necessary, by which he is made "blessed to whom the Lord has not imputed sin." [11] But at that time

even mercy itself shall be allotted in righteous judgment in accordance with the merits of good works. For when it is said, "Judgment without mercy to him that hath showed no mercy," it is plainly shown that in those in whom are found the good works of mercy, judgment shall be executed with mercy; and thus even that mercy itself shall be returned to the merits of good works. It is not so now; when not only no good works, but many bad works precede, His mercy anticipates a man so that he is delivered from evils,--as well from evils which he has done, as from those which he would have done if he were not controlled by the grace of God; and from those, too, which he would have suffered for ever if he were not plucked from the power of darkness, and transferred into the kingdom of the Son of God's love.[12] Nevertheless, since even that life eternal itself, which, it is certain, is given as due to good works, is called by so great an apostle the grace of God, although grace is not rendered to works, but is given freely, it must be confessed without any doubt, that eternal life is called grace for the reason that it is rendered to those merits which grace has conferred upon man. Because that saying is rightly understood which in the gospel is read, "grace for grace,"[1]--that is, for those merits which grace has conferred.

#### CHAP. 42.--THE REPROBATE ARE TO BE PUNISHED FOR MERITS OF A DIFFERENT KIND.

But those who do not belong to this number of the predestinated, whom--whether that they have not yet any free choice of their will, or with a choice of will truly free, because freed by grace itself--the grace of God brings to His kingdom,--those, then, who do not belong to that most certain and blessed number, are most righteously judged according to their deservings. For either they lie under the sin which they have inherited by original generation, and depart hence

with that inherited debt which is not put away by regeneration, or by their free will have added other sins besides; their will, I say, free, but not freed,-- free from righteousness, but enslaved to sin, by which they are tossed about by divers mischievous lusts, some more evil, some less, but all evil; and they must be adjudged to diverse punishments, according to that very diversity. Or they receive the grace of God, but they are only for a season, and do not persevere; they forsake and are forsaken. For by their free will, as they have not received the gift of perseverance, they are sent away by the righteous and hidden judgment of God.

CHAP. 43 [XIV.]--REBUKE AND GRACE DO NOT SET ASIDE ONE ANOTHER.

Let men then suffer themselves to be rebuked when they sin, and not conclude against grace from the rebuke itself, nor from grace against rebuke; because both the righteous penalty of sin is due, and righteous rebuke belongs to it, if it is medicinally applied, even although the salvation of the ailing man is uncertain; so that if he who is rebuked belongs to the number of the predestinated, rebuke may be to him a wholesome medicine; and if he does not belong to that number, rebuke may be to him a penal infliction. Under that very uncertainty, therefore, it must of love be applied, although its result is unknown; and prayer must be made on his behalf to whom it is applied, that he may be healed. But when men either come or return into the way of righteousness by means of rebuke, who is it that worketh salvation in their hearts but that God who giveth the increase, whoever plants and waters, and whoever labours on the fields or shrubs,--that God whom no man's will resists when He wills to give salvation? For so to will or not to will is in the power of Him who willeth or willeth not, as not to hinder the divine will nor



overcome the divine power. For even concerning those who do what He wills not, He Himself does what He will.

#### CHAP. 44.--IN WHAT WAY GOD WILLS ALL MEN TO BE SAVED.

And what is written, that "He wills all men' to be saved,"[2] while yet all men are not saved, may be understood in many ways, some of which I have mentioned in other writings[3] of mine; but here I will say one thing: "He wills all men to be saved," is so said that all the predestinated may be understood by it, because every kind of men is among them. Just as it was said to the Pharisees, "Ye tithe every herb;"[4] where the expression is only to be understood of every herb that they had, for they did not tithe every herb which was found throughout the whole earth. According to the same manner of speaking, it was said, "Even as I also please all men in all things."[5] For did he who said this please also the multitude of his persecutors? But he pleased every kind of men that assembled in the Church of Christ, whether they were already established therein, or were to be introduced into it.

#### CHAP. 45.--SCRIPTURAL INSTANCES WHEREIN IT IS PROVED THAT GOD HAS MEN'S WILLS MORE IN HIS POWER THAN THEY THEMSELVES HAVE.

It is not, then, to be doubted that men's wills cannot, so as to prevent His doing what he wills, withstand the will of God, "who hath done all things whatsoever He pleased in heaven and in earth,"[6] and who also "has done those things that are to come;"[7] since He does even concerning the wills themselves of men what He will, when He will. Unless, perchance (to mention some things among many), when God willed to give the kingdom to Saul, it was so in the power of the Israelites, as it certainly was placed in their will, either to subject themselves or not to the man in question, that they could even

prevail to withstand God. God, however, did not do this, save by the will of the men themselves, because he beyond doubt had the most omnipotent power of inclining men's hearts whither it pleased Him. For thus it is written: "And Samuel sent the people away, and every one went away unto his own place. And Saul went away to his house in Gibeah: and there went away with Saul mighty men, whose hearts the Lord touched. And pestilent children said, Who shall save us? This man? And they despised him, and brought him no presents." [1] Will any one say that any of those whose hearts the Lord touched to go with Saul would not have gone with him, or that any of those pestilent fellows, whose hearts He did not touch to do this, would have gone? Of David also, whom the Lord ordained to the kingdom in a more prosperous succession, we read thus: "And David continued to increase, and was magnified, and the Lord was with him." [2] This having been premised, it is said a little afterwards, "And the Spirit clothed Amasai, chief of the thirty, and he said, We are thine, o David, and we will be with thee, o son of Jesse: Peace, peace be unto thee, and peace be to thy helpers; because the Lord has helped thee." [3] Could he withstand the will of God, and not rather do the will of Him who wrought in his heart by His Spirit, with which he was clothed, to will, speak, and do thus? Moreover, a little afterwards the same Scripture says, "All these warlike men, setting the battle in array, came with a peaceful heart to Hebron to establish David over all Israel." [4] By their own will, certainly, they appointed David king. Who cannot see this? Who can deny it? For they did not do it under constraint or without good-will, since they did it; with a peaceful heart. And yet He wrought this in them who worketh what He will in the hearts of men. For which reason the Scripture premised, "And David continued to increase, and was magnified, and the Lord Omnipotent was with him." And thus the Lord Omnipotent, who was with him, induced these men to appoint him king. And how did He induce them? Did He constrain thereto by any bodily fetters?

He wrought within; He held their hearts; He stirred their hearts, and drew them by their own wills, which He Himself wrought in them. If, then, when God wills to set up kings in the earth, He has the wills of men more in His power than they themselves have, who else causes rebuke to be wholesome and correction to result in the heart of him that is rebuked, that he may be established in the kingdom of heaven?

CHAP. 46 [XV.]--REBUKE MUST BE VARIED ACCORDING TO THE VARIETY OF FAULTS. THERE IS NO PUNISHMENT IN THE CHURCH GREATER THAN EXCOMMUNICATION.

Therefore, let brethren who are subject be rebuked by those who are set over them, with rebukes that spring from love, varied according to the diversity of faults, whether smaller or greater. Because that very penalty that is called condemnation,[5] which episcopal judgment inflicts, than which there is no greater punishment in the Church, may, if God will, result and be of advantage for most wholesome rebuke. For we know not what may happen on the coming day; nor must any one be despaired of before the end of this life; nor can God be contradicted, that He may not look down and give repentance, and receive the sacrifice of a troubled spirit and a contrite heart, and absolve from the guilt of condemnation, however just, and so Himself not condemn the condemned person. Yet the necessity of the pastoral office requires, in order that the terrible contagion may not creep through the many, that the diseased sheep should be separated from the sound ones; perchance, by that very separation, to be healed by Him to whom nothing is impossible. For as we know not who belongs to the number of the predestinated, we ought in such wise to be influenced by the affection of love as to will all men to be saved. For this is the case when we endeavour to lead

every individual to that point where they may meet with those agencies by which we may prevail, to the accomplishment of the result, that being justified by faith they may have peace with God,[6]- - which peace, moreover, the apostle announced when he said, "Therefore, we discharge an embassy for Christ, as though God were exhorting by us, we pray you in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God." [7] For what is "to be reconciled" to Him but to have peace with Him? For the sake of which peace, moreover, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself said to His disciples, "Into whatsoever house ye enter first, say, Peace be to this house; and if the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon it; but if not, it shall return to you again." [8] When they preach the gospel of this peace of whom it is predicted, "How beautiful are the feet of those that publish peace, that announce good things!" [9] to us, indeed, every one then begins to be a son of peace who obeys and believes this gospel, and who, being justified by faith, has begun to have peace towards God; but, according to God's predestination, he was already a son of peace. For it was not said, Upon whomsoever your peace shall rest, he shall become a son of peace; but Christ says, "If the son of peace be there, your peace shall rest upon that house." Already, therefore, and before the announcement of that peace to him, the son of peace was there, as he had been known and foreknown, by--not the evangelist, but--God. For we need not fear lest we should lose it, if in our ignorance he to whom we preach is not a son of peace, for it will return to us again--that is, that preaching will profit us, and not him; but if the peace proclaimed shall rest upon him, it will profit both us and him.

#### CHAP. 47.--ANOTHER INTERPRETATION OF THE APOSTOLIC PASSAGE, "WHO WILL HAVE ALL MEN TO BE SAVED."

That, therefore, in our ignorance of who shall be saved, God commands us to will that all to whom we preach this peace may be

saved, and Himself works this in us by diffusing that love in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who is given to us,--may also thus be understood, that God wills all men to be saved, because He makes us to will this; just as "He sent the Spirit of His Son, crying, Abba, Father;" ' that is, making us to cry, Abba, Father. Because, concerning that same Spirit, He says in another place, "We have received the Spirit of adoption, in whom we cry, Abba, Father! "[2] We therefore cry, but He is said to cry who makes us to cry. If, then, Scripture tightly said that the Spirit was crying by whom we are made to cry, it rightly also says that God wills, when by Him we are made to will. And thus, because by rebuke we ought to do nothing save to avoid departure from that peace which is towards God, or to induce return to it of him who had departed, let us do in hope what we do. If he whom we rebuke is a son of peace, our peace shall rest upon him; but if not, it shall return to us again.

#### CHAP. 48.--THE PURPOSE OF REBUKE.

Although, therefore, even while the faith of some is subverted, the foundation of God standeth sure, since the Lord knoweth them that are His, still, we ought not on that account to be indolent and negligent in rebuking those who should be rebuked. For not for nothing was it said, "Evil communications corrupt good manners;" [3] and, "The weak brother shall perish in thy knowledge, on account of whom Christ died." [4] Let us not, in opposition to these precepts, and to a wholesome fear, pretend to argue, saying, "Well, let evil communications corrupt good manners, and let the weak brother perish. What is that to us? The foundation of God standeth sure, and no one perishes but the son of perdition." [XVI.] Be it far from us to babble in this wise, and think that we ought to be secure in this negligence. For it is true that no one perishes except the son of perdition, but God says by the mouth of the prophet Ezekiel:[5] "He

shall surely die in his sin, but his blood will I require at the hand of the watchman."

#### CHAP. 49.--CONCLUSION.

Hence, as far as concerns us, who are not able to distinguish those who are predestinated from those who are not, we ought on this very account to will all men to be saved. Severe rebuke should be medicinally applied to all by us that they perish not themselves, or that they may not be the means of destroying others. It belongs to God, however, to make that rebuke useful to them whom He Himself has foreknown and predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son. For, if at any time we abstain from rebuking, for fear lest by rebuke a man should perish, why do we not also rebuke, for fear lest a man should rather perish by our withholding it? For we have no greater bowels of love than the blessed apostle who says, "Rebuke those that are unruly; comfort the feeble-minded; support the weak; be patient towards all men. See that none render to any man evil for evil"[6] Where it is to be understood that evil is then rather rendered for evil when one who ought to be rebuked is not rebuked, but by a wicked dissimulation is neglected. He says, moreover, "Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear;"[7] which must be received concerning those sins which are not concealed, lest he be thought to have spoken in opposition to the word of the Lord. For He says, "If thy brother shall sin against thee, rebuke him between thee and him."[8] Notwithstanding, He Himself carries out the severity of rebuke to the extent of saying, "If he will not hear the Church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."[9] And who has more loved the weak than He who became weak for us all, and of that very weakness was crucified for us all? And since these things are so, grace neither restrains rebuke, nor does rebuke restrain grace; and on this account righteousness is so to be prescribed that we may ask

in faithful prayer, that, by God's grace, what is prescribed may be done; and both of these things are in such wise to be done that righteous rebuke may not be neglected. But let all these things be done with love, since love both does not sin, and does cover the multitude of sins.

EXTRACT FROM AUGUSTIN'S "RETRACTATIONS,"

BOOK II. CHAP. 50,

ON THE FOLLOWING TREATISE,

"DE GRATIA CHRISTI, ET DE PECCATO ORIGINALI."

"AFTER the conviction and condemnation of the Pelagian heresy with its authors by the bishops of the Church of Rome,--first Innocent, and then Zosimus,--with the co-operation of letters of African councils, I wrote two books against them: one On the Grace of Christ, and the other On Original Sin. The work began with the following words: 'How greatly we rejoice on account of your bodily, and, above all, because of your Spiritual welfare.'"

**A TREATISE ON THE GRACE OF CHRIST,  
AND ON ORIGINAL SIN.**

**BY AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF  
HIPPO;**

IN TWO BOOKS,

WRITTEN AGAINST PELAGIUS AND COLESTIUS IN THE YEAR  
A.D, 418.

BOOK I.

ON THE GRACE OF CHRIST.

WHEREIN HE SHOWS THAT PELAGIUS IS DISINGENUOUS IN HIS CONFESSION OF GRACE, INASMUCH AS HE PLACES GRACE EITHER IN NATURE AND FREE WILL, OR IN LAW AND TEACHING; AND, MOREOVER, ASSERTS THAT IT IS MERELY THE "POSSIBILITY" (AS HE CALLS IT) OF WILL AND ACTION, AND NOT THE WILL AND ACTION ITSELF, WHICH IS ASSISTED BY DIVINE GRACE; AND THAT THIS ASSISTING GRACE, TOO, IS GIVEN BY GOD ACCORDING TO MEN'S MERITS; WHILST HE FURTHER THINKS THAT THEY ARE SO ASSISTED FOR THE SOLE PURPOSE OF BEING ABLE THE MORE EASILY TO FULFIL THE COMMANDMENTS. AUGUSTIN EXAMINES THOSE PASSAGES OF HIS WRITINGS IN WHICH HE BOASTED THAT HE HAD BESTOWED EXPRESS COMMENDATION ON THE GRACE OF GOD, AND POINTS OUT HOW THEY CAN BE INTERPRETED



AS REFERRING TO LAW AND TEACHING,--IN OTHER WORDS, TO THE DIVINE REVELATION AND THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST WHICH ARE ALIKE INCLUDED IN "THE TEACHING,"--OR ELSE TO THE REMISSION OF SINS; NOR DO THEY AFFORD ANY EVIDENCE WHATEVER THAT PELAGIUS REALLY ACKNOWLEDGED CHRISTIAN GRACE, IN THE SENSE OF HELP RENDERED FOR THE PERFORMANCE OF RIGHT ACTION TO NATURAL FACULTY AND INSTRUCTION, BY THE INSPIRATION OF A MOST GLOWING AND LUMINOUS LOVE; AND HE CONCLUDES WITH A REQUEST THAT PELAGIUS WOULD SERIOUSLY LISTEN TO AMBROSE, WHOM HE IS SO VERY FOND OF QUOTING, IN HIS EXCELLENT EULOGY IN COMMENDATION OF THE GRACE OF GOD.

#### CHAP.I[I.]--INTRODUCTORY.

How greatly we rejoice on account of your bodily, and, above all, your spiritual welfare, my most sincerely attached brethren and beloved of God, Albina, Pinianus, and Melania, we cannot express in words; we therefore leave all this to your own thoughts and belief, in order that we may now rather speak of the matters on which you consulted us. We have, indeed, had to compose these words to the best of the ability which God has vouchsafed to us, while our messenger was in a hurry to be gone, and amidst many occupations, which are much more absorbing to me at Carthage than in any other place whatever.

#### CHAP. 2 [II.]--SUSPICIOUS CHARACTER OF PELAGIUS' CONFESSION AS TO THE NECESSITY OF GRACE FOR EVERY SINGLE ACT OF OURS.

You informed me in your letter, that you had entreated Pelagius to express in writing his condemnation of all that had been alleged

against him; and that he had said, in the audience of you all: "I anathematize the man who either thinks or says that the grace of God, whereby 'Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,' is not necessary not only for ever hour and for every moment, but also for every act of our lives: and those who endeavour to disannul it deserve everlasting punishment." Now, whoever hears these words, and is ignorant of the opinion which he has clearly enough expressed in his books,--not those, indeed, which he declares to have been stolen from him in an incorrect form, nor those which he repudiates, but those even which he mentions in his own letter which he forwarded to Rome,--would certainly suppose that the views he holds are in strict accordance with the truth. But whoever notices what he openly declares in them, cannot fail to regard these statements with suspicion. Because, although he makes that grace of God whereby Christ came into the world to save sinners to consist simply in the remission of sins, he can still accommodate his words to this meaning, by alleging that the necessity of such grace for every hour and for every moment and for every action of our life, comes to this, that while we recollect and keep in mind the forgiveness of our past sins, we sin no more, aided not by any supply of power from without, but by the powers of our own will as it recalls to our mind, in every action we do, what advantage has been conferred upon us by the remission of sins. Then, again, whereas they are accustomed to say that Christ has given us assistance for avoiding sin, in that He has left us an example by living righteously and teaching what is right Himself, they have it in their power here also to accommodate their words, by affirming that this is the necessity of grace to us for every moment and for every action, namely, that we should in all our conversation regard the example of the Lord's conversation. Your own fidelity, however, enables you clearly to perceive how such a profession of opinion as this differs from that true confession of

grace which is now the question before us. And yet how easily can it be obscured and disguised by their ambiguous statements!

#### CHAP. 3 [III.]--GRACE ACCORDING TO THE PELAGIANS.

But why should we wonder at this? For the same Pelagius, who in the Proceedings of the episcopal synod unhesitatingly condemned those who say "that God's grace and assistance are not given for single acts, but consist in free will, or in law and teaching, upon which points we were apt to think that he had expended all his subterfuges; and who also condemned such as affirm that the grace of God is bestowed in proportion to our merits:--is proved, notwithstanding, to hold, in the books which he has published on the freedom of the will, and which he mentions in the letter he sent to Rome, no other sentiments than those which he seemingly condemned. For that grace and help of God, by which we are assisted in avoiding sin, he places either in nature and free will, or else in the gift of the law and teaching; the result of which of course is this, that whenever God helps a man, He must be supposed to help him to turn away from evil and do good, by revealing to him and teaching him what he ought to do, but not with the additional assistance of His co-operation and inspiration of love, that he may accomplish that which he had discovered it to be his duty to do.

#### CHAP. 4.--PELAGIUS' SYSTEM OF FACULTIES.

In his system, he posits and distinguishes three faculties, by which he says God's commandments are fulfilled,--capacity, volition, and action: meaning by "capacity," that by which a man is able to be righteous; by "volition" that by which he wills to be righteous; by "action," that by which he actually is righteous. The first of these, the capacity, he allows to have been bestowed on us by the Creator of our nature; it is not in our power, and we possess it even against our will.

The other two, however, the volition and the action, he asserts to be our own; and he assigns them to us so strictly as to contend that they proceed simply from ourselves. In short, according to his view, God's grace has nothing to do with assisting those two faculties which he will have to be altogether our own, the volition and the action, but that only which is not in our own power and comes to us from God, namely the capacity; as if the faculties which are our own, that is, the volition and the action, have such avail for declining evil and doing good, that they require no divine help, whereas that faculty which we have of God, that is to say, the capacity, is so weak, that it is always assisted by the aid of grace.

#### CHAP. 5 [IV.]--PELAGIUS' OWN ACCOUNT OF THE FACULTIES, QUOTED.

Lest, however, it should chance to be said that we either do not correctly understand what he advances, or malevolently pervert to another meaning what he never meant to bear such a sense, I beg of you to consider his own actual words: "We distinguish," says he, "three things, arranging them in a certain graduated order. We put in the first place 'ability;' in the second, 'volition;' and in the third, 'actuality.' The 'ability' we place in our nature, the 'volition' in our will, and the 'actuality' in the effect. The first, that is, the 'ability,' properly belongs to God, who has bestowed it on His creature; the other two, that is, the 'volition' and the 'actuality,' must be referred to man, because they flow forth from the fountain of the will. For his willing, therefore, and doing a good work, the praise belongs to man; or rather both to man, and to God who has bestowed on him the 'capacity' for his will and work, and who evermore by the help of His grace assists even this capacity. That a man is able to will and effect any good work, comes from God alone. So that this one faculty can exist, even when the other two have no being; but these latter cannot

exist without that former one. I am therefore free not to have either a good volition or action; but I am by no means able not to have the capacity of good. This capacity is inherent in me, whether I will or no; nor does nature at any time receive in this point freedom for itself. Now the meaning of all this will be rendered clearer by an example or two. That we are able to see with our eyes is not of us; but it is our own that we make a good or a bad use of our eyes. So again (that I may, by applying a general case in illustration, embrace all), that we are able to do, say, think, any good thing, comes from Him who has endowed us with this 'ability,' and who also assists this 'ability;' but that we really do a good thing, or speak a good word, or think a good thought, proceeds from our own selves, because we are also able to turn all these into evil. Accordingly,--and this is a point which needs frequent repetition, because of your calumination of us,--whenever we say that a man can live without sin, we also give praise to God by our acknowledgment of the capacity which we have received from Him, who has bestowed such 'ability' upon us; and there is here no occasion for praising the human agent, since it is God's matter alone that is for the moment treated of; for the question is not about 'willing,' or 'effecting,' but simply and solely about that which may possibly be."

#### CHAP. 6 [V.]--PELAGIUS AND PAUL OF DIFFERENT OPINIONS.

The whole of this dogma of Pelagius, observe, is carefully expressed in these words, and none other, in the third book of his treatise in defence of the liberty of the will, in which he has taken care to distinguish with so great subtlety these three things,--the "capacity," the "volition," and the "action," that is, the "ability," the "volition," and the "actuality,"--that, whenever we read or hear of his acknowledging the assistance of divine grace in order to our avoidance of evil and accomplishment of good,--whatever he may

mean by the said assistance of grace, whether law and the teaching or any other thing,--we are sure of what he says; nor can we run into any mistake by understanding him otherwise than he means. For we cannot help knowing that, according to his belief, it is not our "volition" nor our "action" which is assisted by the divine help, but solely our "capacity" to will and act, which alone of the three, as he affirms, we have of God. As if that faculty were infirm which God Himself placed in our nature; while the other two, which, as he would have it, are our own, are so strong and firm and self-sufficient as to require none of His help! so that He does not help us to will, nor help us to act, but simply helps us to the possibility of willing and acting. The apostle, however, holds the contrary, when he says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." And that they might be sure that it was not simply in their being able to work (for this they had already received in nature and in teaching), but in their actual working, that they were divinely assisted, the apostle does not say to them, "For it is God that worketh in you to be able," as if they already possessed volition and operation among their own resources, without requiring His assistance in respect of these two; but he says, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to perform of His own good pleasure;" or, as the reading runs in other copies, especially the Greek, "both to will and to operate." Consider, now, whether the apostle did not thus long before foresee by the Holy Ghost that there would arise adversaries of the grace of God; and did not therefore declare that God works within us those two very things, even "willing" and "operating," which this man so determined to be our own, as if they were in no wise assisted by the help of divine grace.

CHAP. 7 [VI.]--PELAGIUS POSITS GOD'S AID ONLY FOR OUR "CAPACITY."

Let not Pelagius, however, in this way deceive incautious and simple persons, or even himself; for after saying, "Man is therefore to be praised for his willing and doing a good work," he added, as if by way of correcting himself, these words: "Or rather, this praise belongs to man and to God." It was not, however, that he wished to be understood as showing any deference to the sound doctrine, that it is "God which worketh in us both to will and to do," that he thus expressed himself; but it is clear enough, on his own showing, why he added the latter clause, for he immediately subjoins: "Who has bestowed on him the 'capacity' for this very will and work." From his preceding words it is manifest that he places this capacity in our nature. Lest he should seem, however, to have said nothing about grace, he added these words: "And who evermore, by the help of His grace, assists this very capacity,"--"this very capacity," observe; not "very will," or "very action;" for if he had said so much as this, he would clearly not be at variance with the teaching of the apostle. But there are his words: "this very capacity;" meaning that very one of the three faculties which he had placed in our nature. This God "evermore assists by the help of His grace." The result, indeed, is, that "the praise does not belong to man and to God," because man so wills that yet God also inspires his volition with the ardour of love, or that man so works that God nevertheless also cooperates with him,--and without His help, what is man ? But he has associated God in this praise in this wise, that were it not for the nature which God gave us in our creation wherewith we might be able to exercise volition and action, we should neither will nor act.

CHAP. 8.--GRACE, ACCORDING TO THE PELAGIANS, CONSISTS IN THE INTERNAL AND MANIFOLD ILLUMINATION OF THE MIND.

As to this natural capacity which, he allows, is assisted by the grace of God, it is by no means clear from the passage either what grace he means, or to what extent he supposes our nature to be assisted by it. But, as is the case in other passages in which he expresses himself with more clearness and decision, we may here also perceive that no other grace is intended by him as helping natural capacity than the law and the teaching. [VII.] For in one passage he says: "We are supposed by very ignorant persons to do wrong in this matter to divine grace, because we say that it by no means perfects sanctity in us without our will,--as if God could have imposed any command on His grace, without also supplying the help of His grace to those on whom he imposed His commands, so that men might more easily accomplish through grace what they are required to do by their free will." Then, as if he meant to explain what grace he meant, he immediately went on to add these words: "And this grace we for our part do not, as you suppose, allow to consist merely in the law, but also in the help of God." Now who can help wishing that he would show us what grace it is that he would have us understand? Indeed, we have the strongest reason for desiring him to tell us what he means by saying that he does not allow grace merely to consist in the law. Whilst, however, we are in the suspense of our expectation, observe, I pray you, what he has further to tell us: "God helps us," says he, "by His teaching and revelation, whilst He opens the eyes of our heart; whilst He points out to us the future, that we may not be absorbed in the present; whilst He discovers to us the snares of the devil; whilst He enlightens us with the manifold and ineffable gift of heavenly grace." He then concludes his statement with a kind of absolution: "Does the man," he asks, "who says all this appear to you to be a denier of grace? Does he not acknowledge both man's free will and God's grace?" But, after all, he has not got beyond his commendation of the law and of teaching; assiduously inculcating this as the grace that helps us, and so following up the idea with



which he had started, when he said, "We, however, allow it to consist in the help of God." God's help, indeed, he supposed must be recommended to us by manifold lures; by setting forth teaching and revelation, the opening of the eyes of the heart, the demonstration of the future, the discovery of the devil's wiles, and the illumination of our minds by the varied and indescribable gift of heavenly grace,--all this, of course, with a view to our learning the commandments and promises of God. And what else is this than placing God's grace in "the law and the teaching"?

#### CHAP. 9 [VIII.]--THE LAW ONE THING, GRACE ANOTHER. THE UTILITY OF THE LAW.

Hence, then, it is clear that he acknowledges that grace whereby God points out and reveals to us what we are bound to do; but not that whereby He endows and assists us to act, since the knowledge of the law, unless it be accompanied by the assistance of grace, rather avails for producing the transgression of the commandment. "Where there is no law," says the apostle, "there is no transgression;" and again: "I had not known lust except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." Therefore so far are the law and grace from being the same thing, that the law is not only unprofitable, but it is absolutely prejudicial, unless grace assists it; and the utility of the law may be shown by this, that it obliges all whom it proves guilty of transgression to betake themselves to grace for deliverance and help to overcome their evil lusts.

For it rather commands than assists; it discovers disease, but does not heal it; nay, the malady that is not healed is rather aggravated by it, so that the cure of grace is more earnestly and anxiously sought for, inasmuch as "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily

righteousness should have been by the law." To what extent, however, the law gives assistance, the apostle informs us when he says immediately afterwards: "The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." Wherefore, says the apostle, "the law was our schoolmaster in Christ Jesus." Now this very thing is serviceable to proud men, to be more firmly and manifestly "concluded under sin," so that none may pre-sumptuously endeavour to accomplish their justification by means of free will as if by their own resources; but rather "that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Because by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets." How then manifested without the law, if witnessed by the law? For this very reason the phrase is not, "manifested without the law," but "the righteousness without the law," because it is "the righteousness of God;" that is, the righteousness which we have not from the law, but from God,--not the righteousness, indeed, which by reason of His commanding it, causes us fear through our knowledge of it; but rather the righteousness which by reason of His bestowing it, is held fast and maintained by us through our loving it,--"so that he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

#### CHAP. 10 [IX.]--WHAT PURPOSE THE LAW SUBSERVES.

What object, then, can this man gain by accounting the law and the teaching to be the grace whereby we are helped to work righteousness? For, in order that it may help much, it must help us to feel our need of grace. No man, indeed, is able to fulfil the law through the law. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." And the love of God is not shed abroad in our hearts by the law, but by the Holy

Ghost, which is given unto us.<sup>8</sup> Grace, therefore, is pointed at by the law, in order that the law may be fulfilled by grace. Now what does it avail for Pelagius, that he declares the self-same thing under different phrases, that he may not be understood to place in law and teaching that grace which, as he avers, assists the "capacity" of our nature? So far, indeed, as I can conjecture, the reason why he fears being so understood is, because he condemned all those who maintain that God's grace and help are not given for a man's single actions, but exist rather in his freedom, or in the law and teaching. And yet he supposes that he escapes detection by the shifts he so constantly employs for disguising what he means by his formula of "law and teaching" under so many various phrases.

#### CHAP. II [X.]--PELAGIUS' DEFINITION OF HOW GOD HELPS US: "HE PROMISES US FUTURE GLORY."

For in another passage, after asserting at length that it is not by the help of God, but out of our own selves, that a good will is formed within us, he confronted himself with a question out of the apostle's epistle; and he asked this question: "How will this stand consistently with the apostle's words, 'It is God that worketh in you both to will and to perfect'?" Then, in order to obviate this opposing authority, which he plainly saw to be most thoroughly contrasted with his own dogma, he went on at once to add: "He works in us to will what is good, to will what is holy, when He rouses us from our devotion to earthly desires, and from our love of the present only, after the manner of brute animals, by the magnitude of the future glory and the promise of its rewards; when by revealing wisdom to us He stirs up our sluggish will to a longing after God; when (what you are not afraid to deny in another passage) he persuades us to everything which is good." Now what can be plainer, than that by the grace whereby God works within us to will what is good, he means nothing

else than the law and the teaching? For in the law and the teaching of the holy Scriptures are promised future glory and its great rewards. To the teaching also appertains the revelation of wisdom, whilst it is its further function to direct our thoughts to everything that is good. And if between teaching and persuading (or rather exhorting) there seems to be a difference, yet even this is provided for in the general term "teaching," which is contained in the several discourses or letters; for the holy Scriptures both teach and exhort, and in the processes of teaching and exhorting there is room likewise for man's operation. We, however, on our side would fain have him sometime confess that grace, by which not only future glory in all its magnitude is promised, but also is believed in and hoped for; by which wisdom is not only revealed, but also loved; by which everything that is good is not only recommended, but pressed upon us until we accept it. For all men do not possess faith, who hear the Lord in the Scriptures promising the kingdom of heaven; nor are all men persuaded, who are counselled to come to Him, who says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour." They, however, who have faith are the same who are also persuaded to come to Him. This He Himself set forth most plainly, when He said, "No man can come to me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him." And some verses afterwards, when speaking of such as believe not, He says, "Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me except it were given unto him of my Father." This is the grace which Pelagius ought to acknowledge, if he wishes not only to be called a Christian, but to be one.

CHAP. 12 [XI.]--THE SAME CONTINUED: "HE REVEALS WISDOM."

But what shall I say about the revelation of wisdom? For there is no man who can in the present life very well hope to attain to the great revelations which were given to the Apostle Paul; and of course it is

impossible to suppose that anything was accustomed in these revelations to be made known to him but what appertained to wisdom. Yet for all this he says: "Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that He would take it away from me. And He said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness." Now, undoubtedly, if there were already in the apostle that perfection of love which admitted of no further addition, and which could be puffed up no more, there could have been no further need of the messenger of Satan to buffet him, and thereby to repress the excessive elation which might arise from abundance of revelations. What means this elation, however, but a being puffed up? And of love it has been indeed most truly said, "Love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up." This love, therefore, was still in process of constant increase in the great apostle, day by day, as long as his "inward man was renewed day by day," and would then be perfected, no doubt, when he was got beyond the reach of all further vaunting and elation. But at that time his mind was still in a condition to be inflated by an abundance of revelations before it was perfected in the solid edifice of love; for he had not arrived at the goal and apprehended the prize, to which he was reaching forward in his course.

#### CHAP. 13 [XII.]--GRACE CAUSES US TO DO.

To him, therefore, who is reluctant to endure the troublesome process, whereby this vaunting disposition is restrained, before he attains to the ultimate and highest perfection of charity, it is most properly said, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness," --in weakness, that is, not of the flesh only, as this man supposes, but both of the flesh and of the mind;

because the mind, too, was, in comparison of that last stage of complete perfection, weak, and to it also was assigned, in order to check its elation, that messenger of Satan, the thorn in the flesh; although it was very strong, in contrast with the carnal or animal faculties, which as yet understand not the things of the Spirit of God. Inasmuch, then, as strength is made perfect in weakness, whoever does not own himself to be weak, is not in the way to be perfected. This grace, however, by which strength is perfected in weakness, conducts all who are predestinated and called according to the divine purpose to the state of the highest perfection and glory. By such grace it is effected, not only that we discover what ought to be done, but also that we do what we have discovered,--not only that we believe what ought to be loved, but also that we love what we have believed.

#### CHAP. 14 [XII.]--THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS OF GOD, AND THE RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS OF THE LAW.

If this grace is to be called "teaching," let it at any rate be so called in such wise that God may be believed to infuse it, along with an ineffable sweetness, more deeply and more internally, not only by their agency who plant and water from without, but likewise by His own too who ministers in secret His own increase,--in such a way, that He not only exhibits truth, but likewise imparts love. For it is thus that God teaches those who have been called according to His purpose, giving them simultaneously both to know what they ought to do, and to do what they know. Accordingly, the apostle thus speaks to the Thessalonians: "As touching love of the brethren, ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." And then, by way of proving that they had been taught of God, he subjoined: "And indeed ye do it towards all the brethren which are in all Macedonia." As if the surest sign that you

have been taught of God, is that you put into practice what you have been taught. Of that character are all who are called according to God's purpose, as it is written in the prophets: "They shall be all taught of God." The man, however, who has learned what ought to be done, but does it not, has not as yet been "taught of God" according to grace, but only according to the law,--not according to the spirit, but only according to the letter. Although there are many who appear to do what the law commands, through fear of punishment, not through love of righteousness; and such righteousness as this the apostle calls "his own which is after the law,"--a thing as it were commanded, not given. When, indeed, it has been given, it is not called our own righteousness, but God's; because it becomes our own only so that we have it from God. These are the apostle's words: "That I may be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ the righteousness which is of God by faith." So great, then, is the difference between the law and grace, that although the law is undoubtedly of God, yet the righteousness which is "of the law" is not "of God," but the righteousness which is consummated by grace is "of God." The one is designated "the righteousness of the law," because it is done through fear of the curse of the law; while the other is called "the righteousness of God," because it is bestowed through the beneficence of His grace, so that it is not a terrible but a pleasant commandment, according to the prayer in the psalm: "Good art Thou, O Lord, therefore in Thy goodness teach me Thy righteousness; " that is, that I may not be compelled like a slave to live under the law with fear of punishment; but rather in the freedom of love may be delighted to live with law as my companion. When the freeman keeps a commandment, he does it readily. And whosoever learns his duty in this spirit, does everything that he has learned ought to be done.

CHAP. 15 [XIV.]--HE WHO HAS BEEN TAUGHT BY GRACE ACTUALLY COMES TO CHRIST.

Now as touching this kind of teaching, the Lord also says: "Every man that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Of the man, therefore, who has not come, it cannot be correctly said: "Has heard and has learned that it is his duty to come to Him, but he is not willing to do what he has learned." It is indeed absolutely improper to apply such a statement to that method of teaching, whereby God teaches by grace. For if, as the Truth says, "Everyman that hath learned cometh," it follows, of course, that whoever does not come has not learned. But who can fail to see that a man's coming or not coming is by the determination of his will? This determination, however, may stand alone, if the man does not come; but if he does come, it cannot be without assistance; and such assistance, that he not only knows what it is he ought to do, but also actually does what he thus knows. And thus, when God teaches, it is not by the letter of the law, but by the grace of the Spirit. Moreover, He so teaches, that whatever a man learns, he not only sees with his perception, but also desires with his choice, and accomplishes in action. By this mode, therefore, of divine instruction, volition itself, and performance itself, are assisted, and not merely the natural "capacity" of willing and performing. For if nothing but this "capacity" of ours were assisted by this grace, the Lord would rather have said, "Every man that hath heard and hath learned of the Father may possibly come unto me." This, however, is not what He said; but His words are these: "Every man that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me." Now the possibility coming Pelagius places in nature, or even--as we found him attempting to say some time ago --in grace (whatever that may mean according to him),--when he says, "whereby this very capacity is assisted;" whereas the actual coming lies in the will and act. It does not, however, follow



that he who may come actually comes, unless he has also willed and acted for the coming. But every one who has learned of the Father not only has the possibility of coming, but comes; and in this result are already included the motion of the capacity, the affection of the will, and the effect of the action.<sup>6</sup>

CHAP. 16 [XV.]--WE NEED DIVINE AID IN THE USE OF OUR POWERS. ILLUSTRATION FROM SIGHT.

Now what is the use of his examples, if they do not really accomplish his own promise of making his meaning clearer to us; not, indeed, that we are bound to admit their sense, but that we may discover more plainly and openly what is his drift and purpose in using them? "That we are able," says he, "to see with our eyes is not of us; but it is of us that we make a good or a bad use of our sight." Well, there is an answer for him in the psalm, in which the psalmist says to God, "Turn Thou away mine eyes, that they behold not iniquity." Now although this was said of the eyes of the mind, it still follows from it, that in respect of our bodily eyes there is either a good use or a bad use that may be made of them: not in the literal sense merely of a good sight when the eyes are sound, and a bad sight when they are bleared, but in the

moral sense of a right sight when it is directed towards succouring the helpless, or a bad sight when its object is the indulgence of lust. For although both the pauper who is succoured, and the woman who is lusted after, are seen by these external eyes; it is after all from the inner eyes that either compassion in the one case or lust in the other proceeds. How then is it that the prayer is offered to God, "Turn Thou away mine eyes, that they behold not iniquity"? Or why is that asked for which lies within our own power, if it be true that God does not assist the will?

CHAP. 17 [XVI.]--DOES PELAGIUS DESIGNEDLY REFRAIN FROM OPENLY SAYING THAT ALL GOOD ACTION IS FROM GOD?

"That we are able to speak," says he, "is of God; but that we make a good or a bad use of speech is of ourselves." He, however, who has made the most excellent use of speech does not teach us so. "For," says He, "it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." "So, again," adds Pelagius, "that I may, by applying a general case in illustration, embrace all,--that we are able to do, say, think, any good thing, comes from Him who has endowed us with this ability, and who also assists it." Observe how even here he repeats his former meaning --that of these three, capacity, volition, action, it is only the capacity which receives help. Then, by way of completely stating what he intends to say, he adds: "But that we really do a good thing, or speak a good word, or think a good thought, proceeds from our own selves." He forgot what he had before said by way of correcting, as it were, his own words; for after saying, "Man is to be praised therefore for his willing and doing a goOd work," he at once goes on to modify his statement thus: "Or rather, this praise belongs both to man, and to God who has given him the capacity of this very will and work." Now what is the reason why he did not remember this admission when giving his examples, so as to say this much at least after quoting them: "That we are able to do, say, think any good thing, comes from Him who has given us this ability, and who also assists it. That, however, we really do a good thing, or speak a good word, or think a good thought, proceeds both from ourselves and from Him!" This, however, he has not said. But, if I am not mistaken, I think I see why he was afraid to do so.

CHAP. 18 [XVII.]--HE DISCOVERS THE REASON OF PELAGIUS' HESITATION SO TO SAY.

For, when wishing to point out why this lies within our own competency, he says: "Because we are able to turn all these actions into evil." This, then, was the reason why he was afraid to admit that such an action proceeds "both from ourselves and from God," lest it should be objected to him in reply: "If the fact of our doing, speaking, thinking anything good, is owing both to ourselves and to God, because He has endowed us with this ability, then it follows that our doing, thinking, speaking evil things, is due to ourselves and to God, because He has here also endowed us with ability of indifferency; the conclusion from this being--and God forbid that we should admit any such--that just as God is associated with ourselves in the praise of good actions, so must He share with us the blame of evil actions." For that "capacity" with which He has endowed us makes us capable alike of good actions and of evil ones.

CHAP. 19 [XVIII.]--THE TWO ROOTS OF ACTION, LOVE AND CUPIDITY; AND EACH BRINGS FORTH ITS OWN FRUIT.

Concerning this "capacity," Pelagius thus writes in the first book of his Defence of Free Will: "Now," says he, "we have implanted in us by God a capacity for either part. It resembles, as I may say, a fruitful and fecund root which yields and produces diversely according to the will of man, and which is capable, at the planter's own choice, of either shedding a beautiful bloom of virtues, or of bristling with the thorny thickets of vices." Scarcely heeding what he says, he here makes one and the same root productive both of good and evil fruits, in opposition to gospel truth and apostolic teaching. For the Lord declares that "a good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit;" and when the Apostle Paul says that covetousness is "the root of all evils," he intimates to us, of course, that love may be regarded as the root of all good things. On the supposition, therefore, that two trees, one good and the other

corrupt, represent two human beings, a good one and a bad, what else is the good man except one with a good will, that is, a tree with a good root? And what is the bad man except one with a bad will, that is, a tree with a bad root? The fruits which spring from such roots and trees are deeds, are words, are thoughts, which proceed, when good, from a good will, and when evil, from an evil one.

CHAP. 20 [XIX.]--HOW A MAN MAKES A GOOD OR A BAD TREE.

Now a man makes a good tree when he receives the grace of God. For it is not by himself that he makes himself good instead of evil; but it is of Him, and through Him, and in Him who is always good. And in order that he may not only be a good tree, but also bear good fruit, it is necessary for him to be assisted by the self-same grace, without which he can do nothing good. For God Himself cooperates in the production of fruit in good trees, when He both externally waters and tends them by the agency of His servants, and internally by Himself also gives the increase.<sup>1</sup> A man, however, makes a corrupt tree when he makes himself corrupt, when he falls away from Him who is the unchanging good; for such a declension from Him is the origin of an evil will. Now this decline does not initiate some other corrupt nature, but it corrupts that which has been already created good. When this corruption, however, has been healed, no evil remains; for although nature no doubt had received an injury, yet nature was not itself a blemish.<sup>2</sup>

CHAP. 21 [XX.]--LOVE THE ROOT OF ALL GOOD THINGS; CUPIDITY, OF ALL EVIL ONES.

The "capacity," then, of which we speak is not (as he supposes) the one identical root both of good things and evil. For the love which is the root of good things is quite different from the cupidity which is the root of evil things--as different, indeed, as virtue is from vice. But

without doubt this "capacity" is capable of either root: because a man is not only able to possess love, whereby the tree becomes a good one; but he is likewise able to have cupidity, which makes the tree evil. This human cupidity, however, which is a vice, has for its author man, or man's deceiver, but not man's Creator. It is indeed that "lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world."<sup>3</sup> And who can be ignorant of the usage of the Scripture, which under the designation of "the world" is accustomed to describe those who inhabit the world ?

#### CHAP. 22 [XXI.]--LOVE IS A GOOD WILL.

That love, however, which is a virtue, comes to us from God, not from ourselves, according to the testimony of Scripture, which says: "Love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God: for God is love." It is on the principle of this love that one can best understand the passage, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; " as well as the sentence, "And he cannot sin." Because the love according to which we are born of God "doth not behave itself unseemly," and "thinketh no evil." Therefore, whenever a man sins, it is not according to love: but it is according to cupidity that he commits sin; and following such a disposition, he is not born of God. Because, as it has been already stated, "the capacity" of which we speak is capable of either root. When, therefore, the Scripture says, "Love is of God," or still more pointedly, "God is love;" when the Apostle John so very emphatically exclaims, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called, and be, the sons of God !" with what face can this writer, on hearing that "God is love," persist in maintaining his opinion, that we bare of God one only of those three, namely, "the capacity;" whereas it is of ourselves that we have "the good will" and "the good action?" As if, indeed, this good will were a different thing from that love

which the Scripture so loudly proclaims to have come to us from God, and to have been given to us by the Father, that we might become His children.

CHAP. 23 [XXII.]--PELAGIUS' DOUBLE DEALING CONCERNING THE GROUND OF THE CONFERENCE OF GRACE.

Perhaps, however, our own antecedent merits caused this gift to be bestowed upon us; as this writer has already suggested in reference to God's grace, in that work which he addressed to a holy virgin,<sup>10</sup> whom he mentions in the letter sent by him to Rome. For, after adducing the testimony of the Apostle James, in which he says, "Submit yourselves unto God; but resist the devil, and he will flee from you," he goes on to say: "He shows us how we ought to resist the devil, if we submit ourselves indeed to God and by doing His will merit His divine grace, and by the help of the Holy Ghost more easily withstand the evil spirit." Judge, then, how sincere was his condemnation in the Palestine Synod of those persons who say that God's grace is conferred on us according to our merits! Have we any doubt as to his still holding this opinion, and most openly proclaiming it? Well, how could that confession of his before the bishops have been true and real? Had he already written the book in which he most explicitly alleges that grace is bestowed on us according to our deserts--the very position which he without any reservation condemned at that Synod in the East? Let him frankly acknowledge that he once held the opinion, but that he holds it no longer; so should we most frankly rejoice in his improvement. As it is, however, when, besides other objections, this one was laid to his charge which we are now discussing, he said in reply: "Whether these are the opinions of Coelestius or not, is the concern of those who affirm that they are. For my own part, indeed, I never entertained such views; on the contrary, I anathematize every one who does

entertain them." But how could he "never have entertained such views," when he had already composed this work? Or how does he still "anathematize everybody who entertains these views," if he afterwards composed this work?

CHAP. 24.--PELAGIUS PLACES FREE WILL AT THE BASIS OF ALL TURNING TO GOD FOR GRACE.

But perhaps he may meet us with this rejoinder, that in the sentence before us he spoke of our "meriting the divine grace by doing the will of God," in the sense that grace is added to those who believe and lead godly lives, whereby they may boldly withstand the tempter; whereas their very first reception of grace was, that they might do the will of God. Lest, then, he make such a rejoinder, consider, some other words of his on this subject: "The man," says he, "who hastens to the Lord, and desires to be directed by Him, that is, who makes his own will depend upon God's, who moreover cleaves so closely to the Lord as to become (as the apostle says) 'one spirit' with Him, does all this by nothing else than by his freedom of will." Observe how great a result he has here stated to be accomplished only by our freedom of will; and how, in fact, he supposes us to cleave to God without the help of God: for such is the force of his words, "by nothing else than by his own freedom of will." So that, after we have cleaved to the Lord without His help, we even then, because of such adhesion of our own, deserve to be assisted. [XXIII.] For he goes on to say: "Whosoever makes a right use of this" (that is, rightly uses his freedom of will), "does so entirely surrender himself to God, and does so completely mortify his own will, that he is able to say with the apostle, 'Nevertheless it is already of I that live, but Christ liveth in me;' and 'He placeth his heart in the hand of God, so that He turneth it whithersoever He willeth.'" Great indeed is the help of the grace of God, so that He turns our heart in whatever direction He

pleases. But according to this writer's foolish opinion, however great the help may be, we deserve it all at the moment when, without any assistance beyond the liberty of our will, we hasten to the Lord, desire His guidance and direction, suspend our own will entirely on His, and by close adherence to Him become one spirit with Him. Now all these vast courses of goodness we (according to him) accomplish, forsooth, simply by the freedom of our own free will; and by reason of such antecedent merits we so secure His grace, that He turns our heart which way soever He pleases. Well, now, how is that grace which is not gratuitously conferred? How can it be grace, if it is given in payment of a debt? How can that be true which the apostle says, "It is not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast;" and again, "If it is of grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace:"<sup>6</sup> how, I repeat, can this be true, if such meritorious works precede as to procure for us the bestowal of grace? Surely, under the circumstances, there can be no gratuitous gift, but only the recompense of a due reward. Is it the case, then, that in order to find their way to the help of God, men run to God without God's help? And in order that we may receive God's help while cleaving to Him, do we without His help cleave to God? What greater gift, or even what similar gift, could grace itself bestow upon any man, if he has already without grace been able to make himself one spirit with the Lord by no other power than that of his own free will?

#### CHAP. 25 [XXIV.]--GOD BY HIS WONDERFUL POWER WORKS IN OUR HEARTS GOOD DISPOSITIONS OF OUR WILL.

Now I want him to tell us whether that king of Assyria, whose holy wife Esther "abhorred his bed," whilst sitting upon the throne of his kingdom, and clothed in all his glorious apparel, adorned all over with gold and precious stones, and dreadful in his majesty when he



raised his face, which was inflamed with anger, in the midst of his splendour, and beheld her, with the glare of a wild bull in the fierceness of his indignation; and the queen was afraid, and her colour changed as she fainted, and she bowed herself upon the head of the maid that went before her; --I want him to tell us whether this king had yet "hastened to the Lord, and had desired to be directed by Him, and had subordinated his own will to His, and had, by cleaving fast to God, become one spirit with Him, simply by the force of his own free will." Had he surrendered himself wholly to God, and entirely mortified his own will, and placed his heart in the hand of God? I suppose that anybody who should think this of the king, in the state he was then in, would be not foolish only, but even mad. And yet God converted him, and turned his indignation into gentleness. Who, however, can fail to see how much greater a task it is to change and turn wrath completely into gentleness, than to bend the heart to something, when it is not preoccupied with either affection, but is indifferently poised between the two? Let them therefore read and understand, observe and acknowledge, that it is not by law and teaching uttering their lessons from without, but by a secret, wonderful, and ineffable power operating within, that God works in men's hearts not only revelations of the truth, but also good dispositions of the will.

CHAP. 26 [XXV.]--THE PELAGIAN GRACE OF "CAPACITY" EXPLODED. THE SCRIPTURE TEACHES THE NEED OF GOD'S HELP IN DOING, SPEAKING, AND THINKING, ALIKE.

Let Pelagius, therefore, cease at last to deceive both himself and others by his disputations against the grace of God. It is not on account of only one of these three --that is to say, of the "capacity" of a good will and work--that the grace of God towards us ought to be proclaimed; but also on account of the good "will" and "work"

themselves. This "capacity," indeed, according to his definition, avails for both directions; and yet our sins must not also be attributed to God in consequence, as our good actions, according to his view, are attributed to Him owing to the same capacity. It is not only, therefore, on this account that the help of God's grace is maintained, because it assists our natural capacity. He must cease to say, "That we are able to do, say, think any good, is from Him who has given us this ability, and who also assists this ability; whereas that we really do a good thing, or speak a good word, or think a good thought, proceeds from our own selves." He must, I repeat, cease to say this. For God has not only given us the ability and aids it, but He further works in us "to will and to do." It is not because we do, not will, or do not do, that we will and do nothing good, but because we are without His help. How can he say, "That we are able to do good is of God, but that we actually do it is of ourselves," when the apostle tells us that he "prays to God" in behalf of those to whom he was writing, "that they should do no evil, but that they should do that which is good?" His words are not, "We pray that ye be able to do nothing evil;" but, "that ye do no evil." Neither does he say, "that ye be able to do good;" but, "that ye do good." Forasmuch as it is written, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God," it follows that, in order that they may do that which is good, they must be led by Him who is good. How can Pelagius say, "That we are able to make a good use of speech comes from God; but that we do actually make this good use of speech proceeds from ourselves," when the Lord declares, "It is the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you"? He does not say, "It is not you who have given to yourselves the power of speaking well;" but His words are, "It is not ye that speak." Nor does He say, "It is the Spirit of your Father which giveth, or hath given, you the power to speak well;" but He says, "which speaketh in you." He does not allude to the motion of "the capacity," but He asserts the effect of the cooperation. How

can this arrogant asserter of free will say, "That we are able to think a good thought comes from God, but that we actually think a good thought proceeds from ourselves"? He has his answer from the humble preacher of grace, who says, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." Observe he does not say, "to be able to think anything;" but, "to think anything."

CHAP. 27 [XXVI.]--WHAT TRUE GRACE IS, AND WHEREFORE GIVEN. MERITS DO NOT PRECEDE GRACE.

Now even Pelagius should frankly confess that this grace is plainly set forth in the inspired Scriptures; nor should he with shameless effrontery hide the fact that he has too long opposed it, but admit it with salutary regret; so that the holy Church may cease to be harassed by his stubborn persistence, and rather rejoice in his sincere conversion. Let him distinguish between knowledge and love, as they ought to be distinguished; because "knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth." And then knowledge no longer puffeth up when love builds up. And inasmuch as each is the gift of God (although one is less, and the other greater), he must not extol our righteousness above the praise which is due to Him who justifies us, in such a way as to assign to the lesser of these two gifts the help of divine grace, and to claim the greater one for the human will. And should he consent that we receive love from the grace of God, he must not suppose that any merits of our own preceded our reception of the gift. For what merits could we possibly have had at the time when we loved not God? In order, indeed, that we might receive that love whereby we might love, we were loved while as yet we had no love ourselves. This the Apostle John most expressly declares: "Not that we loved God," says he, "but that He loved us;" and again, "We love Him, because He first loved us." 10 Most excellently and truly

spoken! For we could not have wherewithal to love Him, unless we received it from Him in His first loving us.

And what good could we possibly do if we possessed no love? Or how could we help doing good if we have love? For although God's commandment appears sometimes to be kept by those who do not love Him, but only fear Him; yet where there is no love, no good work is imputed, nor is there any good work, rightly so called; because "whatsoever is not of faith is sin," and "faith worketh by love." Hence also that grace of God, whereby "His love is shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us," must be so confessed by the man who would make a true confession, as to show his undoubting belief that nothing whatever in the way of goodness pertaining to godliness and real holiness can be accomplished without it. Not after the fashion of him who clearly enough shows us what he thinks of it when he says, that "grace is bestowed in order that what God commands may be the more easily fulfilled;" which of course means, that even without grace God's commandments may, although less easily, yet actually, be accomplished.

CHAP. 28 [XXVII.]--PELAGIUS TEACHES THAT SATAN MAY BE RESISTED WITHOUT THE HELP OF THE GRACE OF GOD.

In the book which he addressed to a certain holy virgin, there is a passage which I have already mentioned, wherein he plainly indicates what he holds on this subject; for he speaks of our "deserving the grace of God, and by the help of the Holy Ghost more easily resisting the evil spirit." Now why did he insert the phrase "more easily"? Was not the sense already complete: "And by the help of the Holy Ghost resisting the evil spirit"? But who can fail to perceive what an injury he has done by this insertion? He wants it, of

course, to be supposed, that so great are the powers of our nature, which he is in such a hurry to exalt, that even without the assistance of the Holy Ghost the evil spirit can be resisted--less easily it may be, but still in a certain measure.

CHAP. 29 [XXVIII.]--WHEN HE SPEAKS OF GOD'S HELP, HE MEANS IT ONLY TO HELP US DO WHAT WITHOUT IT WE STILL COULD DO.

Again, in the first book of his Defence of the Freedom of the Will, he says: "But while we have within us a free will so strong and so steadfast against sinning, which our Maker has implanted in human nature generally, still, by His unspeakable goodness, we are further defended by His own daily help." What need is there of such help, if free will is so strong and so steadfast against sinning? But here, as before, he would have it understood that the purpose of the alleged assistance is, that may be more easily accomplished by grace which he nevertheless supposes may be effected, less easily, no doubt, but yet actually, without grace.

CHAP. 30 [XXIX.] --WHAT PELAGIUS THINKS IS NEEDFUL FOR EASE OF PERFORMANCE IS REALLY NECESSARY FOR THE PERFORMANCE.

In like manner, in another passage of the same book, he says: "In order that men may more easily accomplish by grace that which they are commanded to do by free will." Now, expunge the phrase "more easily," and you leave not only a full, but also a sound sense, if it be regarded as meaning simply this: "That men may accomplish through grace what they are commanded to do by free will." The addition of the words "more easily," however, tacitly suggests the possibility of accomplishing good works even without the grace of

God. But such a meaning is disallowed by Him who says, "Without me ye can do nothing."

CHAP. 31 [XXX.]--PELAGIUS AND COELESTIUS NOWHERE REALLY ACKNOWLEDGE GRACE.

Let him amend all this, that if human infirmity has erred in subjects so profound, he may not add to the error diabolical deception and wilfulness, either by denying what he has really believed, or by maintaining what he has rashly believed, after he has once discovered, on recollecting the light of truth, that he ought never to have so believed. As for that grace, indeed, by which we are justified,--in other words, whereby "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us," --I have nowhere, in those writings of Pelagius and Coelestius which I have had the opportunity of reading, found them acknowledging it as it ought to be acknowledged. In no passage at all have I observed them recognising "the children of the promise," concerning whom the apostle thus speaks: "They which are children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."<sup>6</sup> For that which God promises we do not ourselves bring about by our own choice or natural power, but He Himself effects it by grace.

CHAP. 32.--WHY THE PELAGIANS DEEMED PRAYERS TO BE NECESSARY. THE LETTER WHICH PELAGIUS DESPACHED TO POPE INNOCENT WITH AN EXPOSITION OF HIS BELIEF.

Now I will say nothing at present about the works of Coelestius, or those tracts of his which he produced in those ecclesiastical proceedings, copies of the whole of which we have taken care to send to you, along with another letter which we deemed it necessary to add. If you carefully examine all these documents, you will observe

that he does not posit the grace of God, which helps us whether to avoid evil or to do good, beyond the natural choice of the will, but only in the law and teaching. Thus he even asserts that their very prayers are necessary for the purpose of showing men what to desire and love. All these documents, however, I may omit further notice of at present; for Pelagius himself has lately forwarded to Rome both a letter and an exposition of his belief, addressing it to Pope Innocent, of blessed memory, of whose death he was ignorant. Now in this letter he says that "there are certain subjects about which some men are trying to vilify him. One of these is, that he refuses to infants the sacrament of baptism, and promises the kingdom of heaven to some, independently of Christ's redemption. Another of them is, that he so speaks of man's ability to avoid sin as to exclude God's help, and so strongly confides in free will that he repudiates the help of divine grace." Now, as touching the perverted opinion he holds about the baptism of infants (although he allows that it ought to be administered to them), in opposition to the Christian faith and catholic truth, this is not the place for us to enter on an accurate discussion, for we must now complete our treatise on the assistance of grace, which is the subject we undertook. Let us see what answer he makes out of this very letter to the objection which he has proposed concerning this matter. Omitting his invidious complaints about his opponents, we approach the subject before us; and find him expressing himself as follows.

CHAP. 33 [XXXI.]--PELAGIUS PROFESSES NOTHING ON THE SUBJECT OF GRACE WHICH MAY NOT BE UNDERSTOOD OF THE LAW AND TEACHING.

"See," he says, "how this epistle will clear me before your Blessedness; for in it we clearly and simply declare, that we possess a free will which is unimpaired for sinning and for not sinning; and

this free will is in all good works always assisted by divine help." Now you perceive, by the understanding which the Lord has given you, that these words of his are inadequate to solve the question. For it is still open to us to inquire what the help is by which he would say that the free will is assisted; lest perchance he should, as is usual with him, maintain that law and teaching are meant. If, indeed, you were to ask him why he used the word "always," he might answer: Because it is written, And in His law will he meditate day and night." Then, after interposing a statement about the condition of man, and his natural capacity for sinning and not sinning, he added the following words: "Now this power of free will we declare to reside generally in all alike--in Christians, in Jews, and in Gentiles. In all men free will exists equally by nature, but in Christians alone is it assisted by grace." We again ask: "By what grace?" And again he might answer: "By the law and the Christian teaching."

CHAP. 34.--PELAGIUS SAYS THAT GRACE IS GIVEN ACCORDING TO MEN'S MERITS. THE BEGINNING, HOWEVER, OF MERIT IS FAITH; AND THIS IS A GRATUITOUS GIFT, NOT A RECOMPENSE FOR OUR MERITS.

Then, again, whatever it is which he means by "grace," he says is given even to Christians according to their merits, although (as I have already mentioned above), when he was in Palestine, in his very remarkable vindication of himself, he condemned those who hold this opinion. Now these are his words: "In the one," says he, "the good of their created condition is naked and defenceless;" meaning in those who are not Christians. Then adding the rest: "In these, however, who belong to Christ, there is defence afforded by Christ's help." You see it is still uncertain what the help is, according to the remark we have already made on the same subject. He goes on, however, to say of those who are not Christians: "Those deserve



judgment and condemnation, because, although they possess free will whereby they could come to have faith and deserve God's grace, they make a bad use of the freedom which has been granted to them. But these deserve to be rewarded, who by the right use of free will merit the Lord's grace, and keep His commandments." Now it is clear that he says grace is bestowed according to merit, whatever and of what kind soever the grace is which he means, but which he does not plainly declare. For when he speaks of those persons as deserving reward who make a good use of their free will, and as therefore meriting the Lord's grace, he asserts in fact that a debt is paid to them. What, then, becomes of the apostle's saying, "Being justified freely by His grace"? And what of his other statement too, "By grace are ye saved"? --where, that he might prevent men's supposing that it is by works, he expressly added, "by faith." And yet further, lest it should be imagined that faith itself is to be attributed to men independently of the grace of God, the apostle says: "And that not of yourselves; for it is the gift of God." It follows, therefore, that we receive, without any merit of our own, that from which everything which, according to them, we obtain because of our merit, has its beginning--that is, faith itself. If, however, they insist on denying that this is freely given to us, what is the meaning of the apostle's words: "According as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith"? But if it is contended that faith is so bestowed as to be a recompense for merit, not a free gift, what then becomes of another saying of the apostle: "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake"? Each is by the apostle's testimony made a gift,--both that he believes in Christ, and that each suffers for His sake. These men however, attribute faith to free will in such a way as to make it appear that grace is rendered to faith not as a gratuitous gift, but as a debt--thus ceasing to be grace any longer, because that is not grace which is not gratuitous.

CHAP. 35 [XXXII.]--PELAGIUS BELIEVES THAT INFANTS HAVE NO SIN TO BE REMITTED IN BAPTISM.

But Pelagius would have the reader pass from this letter to the book which states his belief. This he has made mention of to yourselves, and in it he has discoursed a good deal on points about which no question was raised as to his views. Let us, however, look simply at the subjects about which our own controversy with them is concerned. Having, then terminated a discussion which he had conducted to his heart's content,--from the Unity of the Trinity to the resurrection of the flesh, on which nobody was questioning him,--he goes on to say: "We hold likewise one baptism, which we aver ought to be administered to infants in the same sacramental formula as it is to adults." Well, now, you have yourselves affirmed that you heard him admit at least as much as this in your presence. What, however, is the use of his saying that the sacrament of baptism is administered to children "in the same words as it is to adults," when our inquiry concerns the thing, not merely the words? It is a more important matter, that (as you write) with his own mouth he replied to your own question, that "infants receive baptism for the remission of sins." For he did not say here, too, "in words of remission of sins," but he acknowledged that they are baptized for the remission itself; and yet for all this, if you were to ask him what the sin is which he supposes to be remitted to them, he would contend that they had none whatever.

CHAP. 36 [XXXIII.]--COELESTIUS OPENLY DECLARES INFANTS TO HAVE NO ORIGINAL SIN.

Who would believe that, under so clear a confession, there is concealed a contrary meaning, if Coelestius had not exposed it? He who in that book of his, which he quoted at Rome in the ecclesiastical

proceedings there, distinctly acknowledged that "infants too are baptized for the remission of sins," also denied "that they have any original sin." But let us now observe what Pelagius thought, not about the baptism of infants, but rather about the assistance of divine grace, in this exposition of his belief which he forwarded to Rome. "We confess," says he, "free will in such a sense that we declare ourselves to be always in need of the help of God." Well, now, we ask again, what the help is which he says we require; and again we find ambiguity, since he may possibly answer that he meant the law and the teaching of Christ, whereby that natural "capacity" is assisted. We, however, on our side require them to acknowledge a grace like that which the apostle describes, when he says: "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind;" although it does not follow by any means that the man who has the gift of knowledge, whereby he has discovered what he ought to do, has also the grace of love so as to do it.

CHAP. 37 [XXXIV.]--PELAGIUS NOWHERE ADMITS THE NEED OF DIVINE HELP FOR WILL AND ACTION.

I also have read those books or writings of his which he mentions in the letter which he sent to Pope Innocent, of blessed memory, with the exception of a brief epistle which he says he sent to the holy Bishop Constantius; but I have nowhere been able to find in them that he acknowledges such a grace as helps not only that "natural capacity of willing and acting" (which according to him we possess, even when we neither will a good thing nor do it), but also the will and the action itself, by the ministration of the Holy Ghost.

CHAP. 38 [XXXV.]--A DEFINITION OF THE GRACE OF CHRIST BY PELAGIUS.

"Let them read," says he, "the epistle which we wrote about twelve years ago to that holy man Bishop Paulinus: its subject throughout in some three hundred lines is the confession of God's grace and assistance alone, and our own inability to do any good thing at all without God." Well, I have read this epistle also, and found him dwelling throughout it on scarcely any other topic than the faculty and capacity of nature, whilst he makes God's grace consist almost entirely. in this. Christ's grace, indeed, he treats with great brevity, simply mentioning its name, so that his only aim seems to have been to avoid the scandal of ignoring it altogether. It is, however, absolutely uncertain whether he means Christ's grace to consist in the remission of sins, or even in the teaching of Christ, including also the example of His life (a meaning which he asserts in several passages of his treatises); or whether he believes it to be a help towards good living, in addition to nature and teaching, through the inspiring influence of a burning and shining love.

CHAP. 39 [XXXVI]--A LETTER OF PELAGIUS UNKNOWN TO AUGUSTIN.

"Let them also read," says he, "my epistle to the holy Bishop Constantius, wherein I have--briefly no doubt, but yet plainly--conjoined the grace and help of God with man's free will." This epistle, as I have already stated, I have not read; but if it is not unlike the other writings which he mentions, and with which I am acquainted, even this work does nothing for the subject of our present inquiry.

CHAP. 40 [XXXVII]--THE HELP OF GRACE PLACED BY PELAGIUS IN THE MERE REVELATION OF TEACHING.

"Let them read moreover" says he, "what I wrote, when I was in the East, to Christ's holy virgin Demetrias, and they will find that we so

commend the nature of man as always to add the help of God's grace." Well, I read this letter too; and it had almost persuaded me that he did acknowledge therein the grace about which our discussion is concerned, although he did certainly seem in many passages of this work to contradict himself. But when there also came to my hands those other treatises which he afterwards wrote for more extensive circulation, I discovered in what sense he must have intended to speak of grace,--concealing what he believed under an ambiguous generality, but employing the term "grace" in order to break the force of obloquy, and to avoid giving offence. For at the very commencement of this work (where he says: "Let us apply ourselves with all earnestness to the task which we have set before us, nor let us have any misgiving because of our own humble ability; for we believe that we are assisted by the mother's faith and her daughter's merit" ) he appeared to me at first to acknowledge the grace which helps us to individual action; nor did I notice at once the fact that he might possibly have made this grace consist simply in the revelation of teaching.

#### CHAP. 41.--RESTORATION OF NATURE UNDERSTOOD BY PELAGIUS AS FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

In this same work he says in another passage: "Now, if even without God men show of what character they have been made by God, see what Christians have it in their power to do, whose nature has been through Christ restored to a better condition, and who are, moreover, assisted by the help of divine grace." By this restoration of nature to a better state he would have us understand the remission of sins. This he has shown with sufficient clearness in another passage of this epistle, where he says: "Even those who have become in a certain sense obdurate through their long practice of sinning, can be

restored through repentance." But he may even here too make the assistance of divine grace consist in the revelation of teaching.

CHAP. 42 [XXXVIII.]--GRACE PLACED BY PELAGIUS IN THE REMISSION OF SINS AND THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST.

Likewise in another place in this epistle of his he says: "Now, if even before the law, as we have already remarked, and long previous to the coming of our Lord and Saviour, some men are related to have lived righteous and holy lives; how much more worthy of belief is it that we are capable of doing this since the illumination of His coming, who have been restored by the grace of Christ, and born again into a better man? How much better than they, who lived before the law, ought we to be, who have been reconciled and cleansed by His blood, and by His example encouraged to the perfection of righteousness!" Observe how even here, although in different language, he has made the assistance of grace to consist in the remission of sins and the example of Christ. He then completes the passage by adding these words: "Better than they were even who lived under the law; according to the apostle, who says, 'Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace.' Now, inasmuch as we have," says he, "said enough, as I suppose, on this point, let us describe a perfect virgin, who shall testify the good at once of nature and of grace by the holiness of her conduct, evermore warmed with the virtues of both." Now you ought to notice that in these words also he wished to conclude what he was saying in such a way that we might understand the good of nature to be that which we received when we were created; but the good of grace to be that which we receive when we regard and follow the example of Christ,--as if sin were not permitted to those who were or are under the law, on this account, because they either had not Christ's example, or else do not believe in Him.

CHAP. 43 [XXXIX.]--THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS AND  
EXAMPLE OF CHRIST HELD BY PELAGIUS ENOUGH TO SAVE  
THE MOST HARDENED SINNER.

That this, indeed, is his meaning, other words also of his show us,--not contained in this work, but in the third book of his Defence of Free Will, wherein he holds a discussion with an opponent, who had insisted on the apostle's words when he says, "For what I would, that do I not;" and again, "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind." To this he replied in these words: "Now that which you wish us to understand of the apostle himself, all Church writers assert that he spoke in the person of the sinner, and of one who was still under the law,--such a man as was, by reason of a very long custom of vice, held bound, as it were, by a certain necessity of sinning, and who, although he desired good with his will, in practice indeed was hurried headlong into evil. In the person, however, of one man," he continues, "the apostle designates the people who still sinned under the ancient law. This nation he declares was to be delivered from this evil of custom through Christ, who first of all remits all sins in baptism to those who believe in Him, and then urges them by an imitation of Himself to perfect holiness, and by the example of His own virtues overcomes the evil custom of their sins." Observe in what way he supposes them to be assisted who sin under the law: they are to be delivered by being justified through Christ's grace, as if the law alone were insufficient for them, without some reinforcement from Christ, owing to their long habit of sinning; not the inspiration of love by His Holy Spirit, but the contemplation and copy of His example in the inculcation of virtue by the gospel. Now here, at any rate, there was the very greatest call on him to say plainly what grace he meant, seeing that the apostle closed the very passage which formed the ground of discussion with these telling words: "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the

body of this death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." Now, when he places this grace, not in the aid of His power, but in His example for imitation, what further hope must we entertain of him, since everywhere the word "grace" is mentioned by him under an ambiguous generality?

CHAP. 44 [XL.]--PELAGIUS ONCE MORE GUARDS HIMSELF AGAINST THE NECESSITY OF GRACE.

Then, again, in the work addressed to the holy virgin, of which we have spoken already, there is this passage: "Let us submit ourselves to God, and by doing His will let us merit the divine grace; and let us the more easily, by the help of the Holy Ghost, resist the evil spirit." Now, in these words of his, it is plain enough that he regards us as assisted by the grace of the Holy Ghost, not because we are unable to resist the tempter without Him by the sheer capacity of our nature, but in order that we may resist more easily. With respect, however, to the quantity and quality, whatever these might be, of this assistance, we may well believe that he made them consist of the additional knowledge which the Spirit reveals to us through teaching, and which we either cannot, or scarcely can, possess by nature. Such are the particulars which I have been able to discover in the book which he addressed to the virgin of Christ, and wherein he seems to confess grace. Of what purport and kind these are, you of course perceive.

CHAP. 45 [XLI.]--TO WHAT PURPOSE PELAGIUS THOUGHT PRAYERS OUGHT TO BE OFFERED.

"Let them also read," says he, "my recent little treatise which we were obliged to publish a short while ago in defence of free will, and let them acknowledge how unfair is their determination to disparage us for a denial of grace, when we throughout almost the whole work



acknowledge fully and sincerely both free will and grace." There are four books in this treatise, all of which I read, marking such passages as required consideration, and which I proposed to discuss: these I examined as well as I was able, before we came to that epistle of his which was sent to Rome. But even in these four books, that which he seems to regard as the grace which helps us to turn aside from evil and to do good, he describes in such a manner as to keep to his old ambiguity of language, and thus have it in his power so to explain to his followers, that they may suppose the assistance which is rendered by grace, for the purpose of helping our natural capacity, consists of nothing else than the law and the teaching. Thus our very prayers (as, indeed, he most plainly affirms in his writings) are of no other use, in his opinion, than to procure for us the explanation of the teaching by a divine revelation, not to procure help for the mind of man to perfect by love and action what it has learned should be done. The fact is, he does not in the least relinquish that very manifest dogma of his system in which he sets forth those three things, capacity, volition, action; maintaining that only the first of these, the capacity, is favoured with the constant assistance of divine help, but supposing that the volition and the action stand in no need of God's assistance. Moreover, the very help which he says assists our natural capacity, he places in the law and teaching. This teaching, he allows, is revealed or explained to us by the Holy Ghost, on which account it is that he concedes the necessity of prayer. But still this assistance of law and teaching he supposes to have existed even in the days of the prophets; whereas the help of grace, which is properly so called, he will have to lie simply in the example of Christ. But this example, you can plainly see, pertains after all to "teaching,"--even that which is preached to us as the gospel. The general result, then, is the pointing out, as it were, of a road to us by which we are bound to walk, by the powers of our free will, and needing no assistance from any one else, may suffice to ourselves not to faint or fail on the way. And even as to

the discovery of the road itself, he contends that nature alone is competent for it; only the discovery will be more easily effected if grace renders assistance.

CHAP. 46 [XLII]--PELAGIUS PROFESSES TO RESPECT THE CATHOLIC AUTHORS.

Such are the particulars which, to the best of my ability, I have succeeded in obtaining from the writings of Pelagius, whenever he makes mention of grace. You perceive, however, that men who entertain such opinions as we have reviewed are "ignorant of God's righteousness, and desire to establish their own," and are far off from "the righteousness which we have of God " and not of ourselves; and this they ought to have discovered and recognised in the very holy canonical Scriptures. Forasmuch, however, as they read these Scriptures in a sense of their own, they of course fail to observe even the most obvious truths therein. Would that they would but turn their attention in no careless mood to what might be learned concerning the help of God's grace in the writings, at all events, of catholic authors; for they freely allow that the Scriptures were correctly understood by these, and that they would not pass them by in neglect, out of an overweening fondness for their own opinions. For note how this very man Pelagius, in that very treatise of his so recently put forth, and which he formally mentions in his self-defence (that is to say, in the third book of his Defence of Free Will), praises St. Ambrose.

CHAP. 47 [XLIII.]--AMBROSE MOST HIGHLY PRAISED BY PELAGIUS.

"The blessed Bishop Ambrose," says he, "in whose writings the Roman faith shines forth with especial brightness, and whom the Latins have always regarded as the very flower and glory of their

authors, and who has never found a foe bold enough to censure his faith or the purity of his understanding of the Scriptures." Observe the sort as well as the amount of the praises which he bestows; nevertheless, however holy and learned he is, he is not to be compared to the authority of the canonical Scripture. The reason of this high commendation of Ambrose lies in the circumstance, that Pelagius sees proper to quote a certain passage from his writings to prove that man is able to live without sin. This, however, is not the question before us. We are at present discussing that assistance of grace which helps us towards avoiding sin, and leading holy lives.

CHAP. 48 [XLIV].--AMRBOSE IS NOT IN AGREEMENT WITH PELAGIUS.

I wish, indeed, that he would listen to the venerable bishop when, in the second book of his Exposition of the Gospel according to Luke, he expressly teaches us that the Lord co-operates' also with our wills. "You see, therefore," says he, "because the power of the Lord co-operates everywhere with human efforts, that no man is able to build without the Lord, no man to watch without the Lord, no man to undertake anything without the Lord. Whence the apostle tires enjoins: 'Whether ye eat, or whether ye drink, do all to the glory of God.' " You observe how the holy Ambrose takes away from men even their familiar expressions,--such as, "We undertake, but God accomplishes,"--when he says here that "no man is able to undertake anything without the Lord." To the same effect he says, in the sixth book of the same work, treating of the two debtors of a certain creditor: "According to men's opinions, he perhaps is the greater offender who owed most. The case, however, is altered by the Lord's mercy, so that he loves the most who owes the most, if he yet obtains grace." See how the catholic doctor most plainly declares that the

very love which prompts every man to an ampler love appertains to the kindly gift of grace.

CHAP. 49 [XLV.]--AMBROSE TEACHES WITH WHAT EYE CHRIST TURNED AND LOOKED UPON PETER.

That repentance, indeed, itself, which beyond all doubt is an action of the will, is wrought into action by the mercy and help of the Lord, is asserted by the blessed Ambrose in the following passage in the ninth book of the same work: "Good, says he, "are the tears which wash away sin. They upon whom the Lord at last turns and looks, bewail. Peter denied Him first, and did not weep, because the Lord had not turned and looked upon him. He denied Him a second time, and still wept not, because the Lord had not even yet turned and looked upon him. The third time also he denied Him, Jesus turned and looked, and then he wept most bitterly." Let these persons read the Gospel; let them consider how that the Lord Jesus was at that moment within, having a hearing before the chief of the priests; whilst the Apostle Peter was outside, and down in the hall, sitting at one time with the servants at the fire, at another time standing, as the most accurate and consistent narrative of the evangelists shows. It cannot therefore be said that it was with His bodily eyes that the Lord turned and looked upon him by a visible and apparent admonition. That, then, which is described in the words, "The Lord turned and looked upon Peter," was effected internally; it was wrought in the mind, wrought in the will. In mercy the Lord silently and secretly approached, touched the heart, recalled the memory of the past, with His own internal grace visited Peter, stirred and brought out into external tears the feelings of his inner man. Behold in what manner God is present with His help to our wills and actions; behold how "He worketh in us both to will and to do."

CHAP. 50.--AMBROSE TEACHES THAT ALL MEN NEED GOD'S HELP.

In the same book the same St. Ambrose says again: "Now if Peter fell, who said, 'Though all men shall be offended, yet will I never be offended,' who else shall rightly presume concerning himself? David, indeed, because he had said, 'In my prosperity I said, I shall never be moved,' confesses how injurious his confidence had proved to himself: 'Thou didst turn away Thy face,' he says, 'and I was troubled.' " Pelagius ought to listen to the teaching of so eminent a man, and should follow his faith, since he has commended his teaching and faith. Let him listen humbly; let him follow with fidelity; let him indulge no longer in obstinate presumption, lest he perish. Why does Pelagius choose to be sunk in that sea whence Peter was rescued by the Rock?

CHAP. 51 [XLVI.]--AMBROSE TEACHES THAT IT IS GOD THAT DOES FOR MAN WHAT PELAGIUS ATTRIBUTES TO FREE WILL.

Let him lend an ear also to the same godly bishop, who says, in the sixth book of this same book: "The reason why they would not receive Him is mentioned by the evangelist himself in these words, 'Because His face was as though He would go to Jerusalem.' But His disciples had a strong wish that He should be received into the Samaritan town. God, however, calls whomsoever He deigns, and whom He wills He makes religious." What wise insight of the man of God, drawn from the very fountain of God's grace! "God," says he, "calls whomsoever He deigns, and whom He wills He makes religious." See whether this is not the prophet's own declaration: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and will show pity on whom I will be pitiful;" and the apostle's deduction therefrom: "So then," says he, "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth,

but of God that showeth mercy." Now, when even his model man of our own times says, that "whomsoever God deigns He calls, and whom He wills He makes religious," will any one be bold enough to contend that that man is not yet religious "who hastens to the Lord, and desires to be directed by Him, and makes his own will depend upon God's; who, moreover, cleaves so closely to the Lord, that he becomes (as the apostle says) 'one spirit' with Him?" Great, however, as is this entire work of a "religious man," Pelagius maintains that "it is effected only by the freedom of the will." But his own blessed Ambrose, whom he so highly commends in word, is against him, saying, "The Lord God calls whomsoever He deigns, and whom He wills He makes religious." It is God, then, who makes religious whomsoever He pleases, in order that he may "hasten to the Lord, and desire to be directed by Him, and make his own will depend upon God's, and cleave so closely to the Lord as to become (as the apostle says) 'one spirit' with Him;" and all this none but a religious man does. Who, then, ever does so much, unless he be made by God to do it?

CHAP. 52 [XLVII.]--IF PELAGIUS AGREES WITH AMBROSE, AUGUSTIN HAS NO CONTROVERSY WITH HIM.

Inasmuch, however, as the discussion about free will and God's grace has such difficulty in its distinctions, that when free will is maintained, God's grace is apparently denied; whilst when God's grace is asserted, free will is supposed to be done away with,--Pelagius can so involve himself in the shades of this obscurity as to profess agreement with all that we have quoted from St. Ambrose, and declare that such is, and always has been, his opinion also; and endeavour so to explain each, that men may suppose his opinion, to be in fair accord with Ambrose's. So far therefore, as concerns the questions of God's help and grace, you are requested to observe the

three things which he has distinguished so very plainly, under the terms "ability," "will," and "actuality," that is, "capacity," "volition," and "action." If, then, he has come round to an agreement with us, then not the "capacity" alone in man, even if he neither wills nor performs the good, but the volition and the action also,--in other words, our willing well and doing well,--things which have no existence in man, except when he has a good will and acts rightly:--if, I repeat, he thus consents to hold with us that even the volition and the action are assisted by God, and so assisted that we can neither will nor do any good thing without such help; if, too, he believes that this is that very grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ which makes us righteous through His righteousness, and not our own, so that our true righteousness is that which we have of Him,--then, so far as I can judge, there will remain no further controversy between us concerning the assistance we have from the grace of God.

#### CHAP. 53 [XLVIII.]--IN WHAT SENSE SOME MEN MAY BE SAID TO LIVE WITHOUT SIN IN THE PRESENT LIFE.

But in reference to the particular point in which he quoted the holy Ambrose with so much approbation,--because he found in that author's writings, from the praises he accorded to Zacharias and Elisabeth, the opinion that a man might possibly in this life be without sin; although this cannot be denied if God wills it, with whom all things are possible, yet he ought to consider more carefully in what sense this was said. Now, so far as I can see, this statement was made in accordance with a certain standard of conduct, which is among men held to be worthy of approval and praise, and which no human being could justly call in question for the purpose of laying accusation or censure. Such a standard Zacharias and his wife Elisabeth are said to have maintained in the sight of God, for no other reason than that they, by walking therein, never deceived

people by any dissimulation; but as they in their sincerity appeared to men, so were they known in the sight of God. The statement, however, was not made with any reference to that perfect state of righteousness in which we shall one day live truly and absolutely in a condition of spotless purity. The Apostle Paul, indeed, has told us that he was "blameless, as touching the righteousness which is of the law;" and it was in respect of the same law that Zacharias also lived a blameless life. This righteousness, however, the apostle counted as "dung" and "loss," in comparison with the righteousness which is the object of our hope, and which we ought to "hunger and thirst after," in order that hereafter we may be satisfied with the vision thereof, enjoying it now by faith, so long as "the just do live by faith."

CHAP. 54 [XLIX.]--AMBROSE TEACHES THAT NO ONE IS SINLESS IN THIS WORLD.

Lastly, let him give good heed to his venerable bishop, when he is expounding the Prophet Isaiah, and says that "no man in this world can be without sin." Now nobody can pretend to say that by the phrase "in this world" he simply meant, in the love of this world. For he was speaking of the apostle, who said, "Our conversation is in heaven;" and while unfolding the sense of these words, the eminent bishop expressed himself thus: "Now the apostle says that many men, even while living in the present world, are perfect with themselves, who could not possibly be deemed perfect, if one looks at true perfection. For he says himself: 'We now see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know, even as also I am known.' Thus, there are those who are spotless in this world, there are those who will be spotless in the kingdom of God; although, of course, if you sift the thing minutely, no one could be spotless, because no one is without sin." That passage, then, of the holy Ambrose, which Pelagius applies in



support of his own opinion, was either written in a qualified sense, probable, indeed, but not expressed with minute accuracy; or if the holy and lowly-minded author did think that Zacharias and Elisabeth lived according to the highest and absolutely perfect righteousness, which was incapable of increase or addition, he certainly corrected his opinion on a minuter examination of it.

CHAP. 55 [L.]--AMRBOSE WITNESSES THAT PERFECT PURITY IS IMPOSSIBLE TO HUMAN NATURE.

He ought, moreover, carefully to note that, in the very same context from which he quoted that passage of Ambrose's, which seemed so satisfactory for his purpose, he also said this: "To be spotless from the beginning is an impossibility to human nature." In this sentence the venerable Ambrose does undoubtedly predicate feebleness and infirmity of that natural "capacity," which Pelagius refuses faithfully to regard as corrupted by sin, and therefore boastfully extols. Beyond question, this runs counter to this man's will and inclination, although it does not contravene the truthful confession of the apostle, wherein he says: "We too were once by nature the children of wrath, even as others." For through the sin of the first man, which came from his free will, our nature became corrupted and ruined; and nothing but God's grace alone, through Him who is the Mediator between God and men, and our Almighty Physician, succours it. Now, since we have already prolonged this work too far in treating of the assistance of the divine grace towards our justification, by which God co-operates in all things for good with those who love Him, and whom He first loved --giving to them that He might receive from them: we must commence another treatise, as the Lord shall enable us, on the subject of sin also, which by one man has entered into the world, along with death, and so has passed upon all men, setting forth as much as shall seem needful and sufficient, in opposition to

those persons who have broken out into violent and open error, contrary to the truth here stated.

BOOK II.

ON ORIGINAL SIN.

WHEREIN AUGUSTIN SHOWS THAT PELAGIUS REALLY DIFFERS IN NO RESPECT, ON THE QUESTION OF ORIGINAL SIN AND THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS, FROM HIS FOLLOWER COELESTIUS, WHO, REFUSING TO ACKNOWLEDGE ORIGINAL SIN AND EVEN DARING TO DENY THE DOCTRINE IN PUBLIC, WAS CONDEMNED IN TRIALS BEFORE THE BISHOPS -- FIRST AT CARTHAGE, AND AFTERWARDS AT ROME; FOR THIS QUESTION IS NOT, AS THESE HERETICS WOULD HAVE IT, ONE WHEREIN PERSONS MIGHT ERR WITHOUT DANGER TO THE FAITH. THEIR HERESY, INDEED, AIMED AT NOTHING ELSE THAN THE VERY FOUNDATIONS OF CHRISTIAN BELIEF. HE AFTERWARDS REFUTES ALL SUCH AS MAINTAINED THAT THE BLESSING OF MATRIMONY IS DISPARAGED BY THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL DEPRAVITY, AND AN INJURY DONE TO GOD HIMSELF, THE CREATOR OF MAN WHO IS BORN BY MEANS OF MATRIMONY.

CHAP. I [I.] -- CAUTION NEEDED IN ATTENDING TO PELAGIUS' DELIVERANCES ON INFANT BAPTISM.

NEXT I beg of you, carefully to observe with what caution you ought to lend an ear, on the question of the baptism of infants, to men of this character, who dare not openly deny the layer of regeneration and the forgiveness of sins to this early age, for fear that Christian ears would not bear to listen to them; and who yet persist in holding and urging their opinion, that the carnal generation is not held guilty of man's first sin, although they seem to allow infants to be baptized

for the remission of sins. You have, indeed, yourselves informed me in your letter, that you heard Pelagius say in your presence, reading out of that book of his which he declared that he had also sent to Rome, that they maintain that "infants ought to be baptized with the same formula of sacramental words as adults." Who, after that statement, would suppose that one ought to raise any question at all on this subject? Or if he did, to whom would he not seem to indulge a very calumnious disposition --previous to the perusal of their plain assertions, in which they deny that infants inherit original sin, and contend that all persons are born free from all corruption ?

CHAP. 2 [II.] --COELESTIUS, ON HIS TRIAL AT CARTHAGE, REFUSES TO CONDEMN HIS ERROR; THE WRITTEN STATEMENT WHICH HE GAVE TO ZOSIMUS.

Coelestius, indeed, maintained this erroneous doctrine with less restraint. To such an extent did he push his freedom as actually to refuse, when on trial before the bishops at Carthage, to condemn those who say, "That Adam's sin injured only Adam himself, and not the human race; and that infants at their birth are in the same state that Adam was in before his transgression." In the written statement, too, which he presented to the most blessed Pope Zosimus at Rome, he declared with especial plainness, "that original sin binds no single infant." Concerning the ecclesiastical proceedings at Carthage we copy the following account of his words.

CHAP. 3 [III.] --PART OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE COUNCIL OF CARTHAGE AGAINST COELESTIUS.

"The bishop Aurelius said: 'Let what follows be recited.' It was accordingly recited, 'That the sin of Adam was injurious to him alone, and not to the human race.' Then, after the recital, Coelestius said: ' I said that I was in doubt about the transmission of sin, but so

as to yield assent to any man whom God has gifted with the grace of knowledge; for I have heard different opinions from those who have been even appointed presbyters in the Catholic Church.' The deacon Paulinus said: 'Tell us their names.' Coelestius answered: 'The holy presbyter Rufinus, who lived at Rome with the holy Pammachius. I have heard him declare that there is no transmission of sin.' The deacon Paulinus then asked: 'Is there any one else?' Coelestius replied: 'I have heard more say the same.' The deacon Paulinus rejoined: 'Tell us their names.' Coelestius said: 'Is not one priest enough for you?'" Then afterwards in another place we read: "The bishop Aurelius said: 'Let the rest of the accusation be read.' It then was recited 'That infants at their birth are in the same state that Adam was before the transgression; and they read to the very end of the brief accusation which had been previously put in. [iv.] The bishop Aurelius inquired: 'Have you, Coelestius, taught at any time, as the deacon Paulinus has stated, that infants are at their birth in the same state that Adam was before his transgression?' Coelestius answered: 'Let him explain what he meant when he said, "before the transgression.'" The deacon Paulinus then said 'Do you on your side deny that you ever taught this doctrine? It must be one of two things: he must either say that he never so taught, or else he must now condemn the opinion.' Coelestius rejoined: 'I have already said, Let him explain the words he mentioned, "before the transgression.'" The deacon Paulinus then said: ' You must deny ever having taught this.' The bishop Aurelius said: 'I ask, What conclusion I have on my part to draw from this man's obstinacy; my affirmation is, that although Adam, as created in Paradise, is said to have been made immortal at first, he afterwards became corruptible through transgressing the commandment. Do you say this, brother Paulinus?' 'I do, my lord,' answered the deacon Paulinus. Then the bishop Aurelius said: 'As regards the condition of infants before baptism at the present day, the deacon Paulinus wishes to be informed whether

it is such as Adam's was before the transgression; and whether it derives the guilt of transgression from the same origin of sin from which it is born?' The deacon Paulinus asked: 'Let him deny whether he taught this, or not.' Coelestius answered: 'As touching the transmission of sin, I have already asserted, that I have heard many persons of acknowledged position in the catholic Church deny it altogether; and on the other hand, others affirm it: it may be fairly deemed a matter for inquiry, but not a heresy. I have always maintained that infants require baptism, and ought to be baptized. What else does he want?'"

#### CHAP. 4.-- COELESTIUS CONCEDES BAPTISM FOR INFANTS, WITHOUT AFFIRMING ORIGINAL SIN.

You, of course, see that Coelestius here conceded baptism for infants only in such a manner as to be unwilling to confess that the sin of the first man, which is washed away in the laver of regeneration, passes over to them, although at the same time he did not venture to deny this; and on account of this doubt he refused to condemn those who maintain "That Adam's sin injured only himself, and not the human race;" and "that infants at their birth are in the same condition wherein Adam was before the transgression."

#### CHAP. 5 [v.] --COELESTIUS BOOK WHICH WAS PRODUCED IN THE PROCEEDINGS AT ROME.

But in the book which he published at Rome, and produced in the proceedings before the church there, he so speaks on this question as to show that he really believes what he had professed to be in doubt about. For these are his words: "That infants, however, ought to be baptized for the remission Of sins, according to the rule of the Church universal, and according to the meaning of the Gospel, we confess. For the Lord has determined that the kingdom of heaven

should only be conferred on baptized persons; and since the resources of nature do not possess it, it must necessarily be conferred by the gift of grace." Now if he had not said anything elsewhere on this subject, who would not have supposed that he acknowledged the remission of original sin even in infants at their baptism, by saying that they ought to be baptized for the remission of sins? Hence the point of what you

have stated in your letter, that Pelagius' answer to you was on this wise, " That infants are baptized with the same words of sacramental formula as adults," and that you were rejoiced to hear the very thing which you were desirous of hearing, and yet that you preferred holding a consultation with us concerning his words.

#### CHAP. 6 [VI.] -- COELESTIUS THE DISCIPLE IS IN THIS WORK BOLDER THAN HIS MASTER.

Carefully observe, then, what Coelestius has advanced so very openly, and you will discover what amount of concealment Pelagius has practised upon you. Coelestius goes on to say as follows: "That infants, however, must be baptized for the remission of sins, was not admitted by us with the view of our seeming to affirm sin by transmission. This is very alien from the catholic meaning, because sin is not born with a man,-- it is subsequently committed by the man for it is shown to be a fault, not of nature, but of the will. It is fitting, therefore, to confess this, lest we should seem to make different kinds of baptism; it is, moreover, necessary to lay down this preliminary safeguard, lest by the occasion of this mystery evil should, to the disparagement of the Creator, be said to be conveyed to man by nature, before that it has been committed by man." Now Pelagius was either afraid or ashamed to avow this to be his own opinion before you; although his disciple experienced neither a

qualm nor a blush in openly professing it to be his, without any obscure subterfuges, in presence of the Apostolic See.

#### CHAP. 7. --POPE ZOSIMUS KINDLY EXCUSES HIM.

The bishop, however, who presides over this See, upon seeing him hurrying headlong in so great presumption like a madman, chose in his great compassion, with a view to the man's repentance, if it might be, rather to bind him tightly by eliciting from him answers to questions proposed by himself, than by the stroke of a severe condemnation to drive him over the precipice, down which he seemed to be even now ready to fall. I say advisedly, "down which he seemed to be ready to fall," rather than "over which he had actually fallen," because he had already in this same book of his forecast the subject with an intended reference to questions of this sort in the following words: "If it should so happen that any error of ignorance has stolen over us human beings, let it be corrected by your decisive sentence."

#### CHAP. 8 [VII.] -- Coelestius CONDEMNED BY ZOSIMUS.

The venerable Pope Zosimus, keeping in view this deprecatory preamble, dealt with the man, puffed up as he was with the blasts of false doctrine, so as that he should condemn all the objectionable points which had been alleged against him by the deacon Paulinus, and that he should yield his assent to the rescript of the Apostolic See which had been issued by his predecessor of sacred memory. The accused man, however, refused to condemn the objections raised by the deacon, yet he did not dare to hold out against the letter of the blessed Pope Innocent; indeed, he went so far as to "promise that he would condemn all the points which the Apostolic See condemned." Thus the man was treated with gentle remedies, as a delirious patient who required rest; but, at the same time, he was not regarded as

being yet ready to be released from the restraints of excommunication. The interval of two months being granted him, until communications could be received from Africa, a place for recovery was conceded to him, under the mild restorative of the sentence which had been pronounced. For in truth, if he would have laid aside his vain obstinacy, and be now willing to carry out what he had undertaken, and would carefully read the very letter to which he had replied by promising submission, he would yet come to a better mind. But after the rescripts were duly issued from the council of the African bishops, there were very good reasons why the sentence should be carried out against him, in strictest accordance with equity. What these reasons were you may read for yourselves, for we have sent you all the particulars.

CHAP. 9 [VIII.]-- PELAGIUS DECEIVED THE COUNCIL IN PALESTINE, BUT WAS UNABLE TO DECEIVE THE CHURCH AT ROME.

Wherefore Pelagius, too, if he will only reflect candidly on his own position and writings, has no reason for saying that he ought not to have been banned with such a sentence. For although he deceived the council in Palestine, seemingly clearing himself before it, he entirely failed in imposing on the church at Rome (where, as you well know, he is by no means a stranger), although he went so far as to make the attempt, if he might somehow succeed. But, as I have just said, he entirely failed. For the most blessed Pope Zosimus recollected what his predecessor, who had set him so worthy an example, had thought of these very proceedings. Nor did he omit to observe what opinion was entertained about this man by the trusty Romans, whose faith deserved to be spoken of in the Lord, and whose consistent zeal in defence of catholic truth against this heresy he saw prevailing amongst them with warmth, and at the same time



most perfect harmony. The man had lived among them for a long while, and his opinions could not escape their notice; moreover, they had so completely found out his disciple Coelestius, as to be able at once to adduce the most trustworthy and irrefragable evidence on this subject. Now what was the solemn judgment which the holy Pope Innocent formed respecting the proceedings in the Synod of Palestine, by which Pelagius boasts of having been acquitted, you may indeed read in the letter which he addressed to me. It is duly mentioned also in the answer which was forwarded by the African Synod to the venerable Pope Zosimus and which, along with the other instructions, we have despatched to your loving selves.<sup>1</sup> But it seems to me, at the same time, that I ought not to omit producing the particulars in the present work.

#### CHAP. 10 [IX.]--THE JUDGMENT OF INNOCENT RESPECTING THE PROCEEDINGS IN PALESTINE.

Five bishops, then, of whom I was one, wrote him a letter, wherein we mentioned the proceedings in Palestine, of which the report had already reached us. We informed him that in the East, where this man lived, there had taken place certain ecclesiastical proceedings, in which he was thought to have been acquitted on all the charges. To this communication from us Innocent replied in a letter which contains the following among other words: "There are," says he, "sundry positions, as stated in these very Proceedings, which, when they were objected against him, he partly suppressed by avoiding them, and partly confused in absolute obscurity, by wresting the sense of many words; whilst there are other allegations which he cleared off, -- not, indeed, in the honest way which he might seem at the time to use, but rather by methods of sophistry, meeting some of the objections with a fiat denial, and tampering with others by a fallacious interpretation. Would, however, that he would even now

adopt what is the far more desirable course of turning from his own error back to the true ways of catholic faith; that he would also, duly considering God's daily grace, and acknowledging the help thereof, be willing and desirous to appear, amidst the approbation of all men, to be truly corrected by the method of open conviction, -- not, indeed, by judicial process, but by a hearty conversion to the catholic faith. We are therefore unable either to approve of or to blame their proceedings at that trial; for we cannot tell whether the proceedings were true, or even, if true, whether they do not really show that the man escaped by subterfuge, rather than that he cleared himself by entire truth."3 You see clearly from these words, how that the most blessed Pope Innocent without doubt speaks of this man as of one who was by no means unknown to him.

You see what opinion he entertained about his acquittal. You see, moreover, what his successor the holy Pope Zosimus was bound to recollect,-- as in truth he did,-- so as to confirm without hesitation the judgment of his predecessor in this case.

#### CHAP. II [X.] --HOW THAT PELAGIUS DECEIVED THE SYNOD OF PALESTINE.

Now I pray you carefully to observe by what evidence Pelagius is shown to have deceived his judges in Palestine, not to mention other points, on this very question of the baptism of infants, lest we should seem to any one to have used calumny and suspicion, rather than to have ascertained the certain fact, when we alleged that Pelagius concealed the opinion which Coelestius expressed with greater frankness, while at the same time he actually entertained the same views. Now, from what has been stated above, it has been clearly seen that Coelestius refused to condemn the assertion that "Adam's sin injured only himself, and not the human race, and that infants at

their birth are in the same state that Adam was before the transgression," because he saw that, if he condemned these propositions, he would affirm that there was in infants a transmission of sin from Adam. When, however, it was objected to Pelagius that he was of one mind with Coelestius on this point, he condemned the words without hesitation. I am quite aware that you have read all this before. Since, however, we are not writing this account for you alone, we proceed to transcribe the very words of the synodal acts, lest the reader should be unwilling either to turn to the record for himself, or if he does not possess it, take the trouble to procure a copy. Here, then, are the words: --

CHAP. 12 [XI.] --A PORTION OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE SYNOD OF PALESTINE IN THE CAUSE OF PELAGIUS.

"The synod said: 4 Now, forasmuch as Pelagius has pronounced his anathema on this uncertain utterance of folly, rightly replying that a man by God's help and grace is able to live *agamarghgqs*, that is to say, without sin, let him give us his answer on other articles also. Another particular in the teaching of Coelestius, disciple of Pelagius, selected from the heads which were mentioned and heard at Carthage before the holy Aurelius bishop of Carthage, and other bishops, was to this effect: 'That Adam was made mortal, and that he would have died, whether he sinned or did not sin; that Adam's sin injured himself alone, and not the human race; that the law no less than the gospel leads us to the kingdom; that before the coming of Christ there were persons without sin; that newborn infants are in the same condition that Adam was before the transgression; that, on the one hand, the entire human race does not die on account of Adam's death and transgression, nor, on the other hand, does the whole human race rise again through the resurrection of Christ; that the holy bishop

Augustin wrote a book in answer to his followers in Sicily, on articles which were subjoined, and in this book, which was addressed to Hilary, are contained the following statements: That a man is able to be without sin if he wishes; that infants, even if they are unbaptized, have eternal life; that rich men, even if they are baptized, unless they renounce and give up all, have, whatever good they may seem to have done, nothing of it reckoned unto them, neither can they possess the kingdom of heaven.' Pelagius then said: As regards man's ability to be without sin, my opinion has been already spoken. With respect, however, to the allegation that there were even before the Lord's coming persons who lived without sin, we also on our part say, that before the coming of Christ there certainly were persons who passed their lives in holiness and righteousness, according to the accounts which have been handed down to us in the Holy Scriptures. As for the other points, indeed, even on their own showing, they are not of a character which obliges me to be answerable for them; but yet, for the satisfaction of the sacred Synod, I anathematize those who either now hold or have ever held these opinions."

CHAP. 13 [XII.] -- COELESTIUS THE BOLDER HERETIC;  
PELAGIUS THE MORE SUBTLE.

You see, indeed, not to mention other points, how that Pelagius pronounced his anathema against those who hold that " Adam's sin injured only himself, and not the human race; and that infants are at their birth in the same condition in which Adam was before the transgression." Now what else could the bishops who sat in judgment on him have possibly understood him to mean by this, but that the sin of Adam is transmitted to infants? It was to avoid making such an admission that Coelestius refused to condemn this statement, which this man on the contrary anathematized. If, therefore, I shall show that he did not really entertain any other opinion concerning infants

than that they are born without any contagion of a single sin, what difference will there remain on this question between him and Coelestius, except this, that the one is more open, the other more reserved; the one more pertinacious, the other more mendacious; or, at any rate, that the one is more candid, the other more astute? For, the one before the church of Carthage refused to condemn what he afterwards in the church at Rome publicly confessed to be a tenet of his own; at the same time professing himself "ready to submit to correction if an error had stolen over him, considering that he was but human;" whereas the other both condemned this dogma as being contrary to the truth lest he should himself be condemned by his catholic judges, and yet kept it in reserve for subsequent defence, so that either his condemnation was a lie, or his interpretation a trick.

CHAP. 14 [XIII.]-- HE SHOWS THAT, EVEN AFTER THE SYNOD OF PALESTINE, PELAGIUS HELD THE SAME OPINIONS AS COELESTIUS ON THE SUBJECT OF ORIGINAL SIN.

I see, however, that it may be most justly demanded of me, that I do not defer my promised demonstration, that he actually entertains the same views as Coelestius. In the first book of his more recent work, written in defence of free will (which work he mentions in the letter he despatched to Rome), he says: "Everything good, and everything evil, on account of which we are either laudable or blameworthy, is not born with us but done by us: for we are born not fully developed, but with a capacity for either conduct; and we are procreated as without virtue, so also without vice; and previous to the action of our own proper will, that alone is in man which God has formed." Now you perceive that in these words of Pelagius, the dogma of both these men is contained, that infants are born without the contagion of any sin from Adam. It is therefore not astonishing that Coelestius refused to condemn such as say that Adam's sin injured only himself, and not

the human race; and that infants are at their birth in the same state in which Adam was before the transgression. But it is very much to be wondered at, that Pelagius had the effrontery to anathematize these opinions. For if, as he alleges, "evil is not born with us, and we are procreated without fault, and the only thing in man previous to the action of his own will is what God has formed," then of course the sin of Adam did only injure himself, inasmuch as it did not pass on to his offspring. For there is not any sin which is not an evil; or a sin that is not a fault; or else sin was created by God. But he says: "Evil is not born with us, and we are procreated without fault; and the only thing in men at their birth is what God has formed." Now, since by this language he supposes it to be most true, that, according to the well-known sentence of his: "Adam's sin was injurious to himself alone, and not to the human race," why did Pelagius condemn this, if it were not for the purpose of deceiving his catholic judges? By parity of reasoning, it may also be argued: "If evil is not born with us, and if we are procreated without fault, and if the only thing found in man at the time of his birth is what God has formed," it follows beyond a doubt that "infants at their birth are in the same condition that Adam was before the transgression," in whom no evil or fault was inherent, and in whom that alone existed which God had formed. And yet Pelagius pronounced anathema on all those persons "who hold now, or have at any time held, that newborn babes are placed by their birth in the same state that Adam was in before the transgression," -- in other words, are without any evil, without any fault, having that only which God had formed. Now, why again did Pelagius condemn this tenet also, if it were not for the purpose of deceiving the catholic Synod, and saving himself from the condemnation of an heretical innovator?

CHAP. 15 [XIV.] --PELAGIUS BY HIS MENDACITY AND DECEPTION STOLE HIS ACQUITTAL FROM THE SYNOD IN

## PALESTINE.

For my own part, however, I, as you are quite aware, and as I also stated in the book which I addressed to our venerable and aged Aurelius on the proceedings in Palestine, really felt glad that Pelagius in that answer of his had exhausted the whole of this question. To me, indeed, he seemed most plainly to have acknowledged that there is original sin in infants, by the anathema which he pronounced against those persons who supposed that by the sin of Adam only himself, and not the human race, was injured, and who entertained the opinion that infants are in the same state in which the first man was before the transgression. When, however, I had read his four books (from the first of which I copied the words which I have just now quoted), and discovered that he was still cherishing thoughts which were opposed to the catholic faith touching infants, I felt all the greater surprise at a mendacity which he so unblushingly maintained in a synod of the Church, and on so great a question. For if he had already written these books, how did he profess to anathematize those who had ever entertained the opinions alluded to? If he purposed, however, afterwards to publish such a work, how could he anathematize those who at the time were holding the opinions? Unless, to be sure, by some ridiculous subterfuge he meant to say that the objects of his anathema were such persons as had in some previous time held, or were then holding, these opinions; but that in respect of the future--that is, as regarded those persons who were about to take up with such views -- he felt that it would be impossible for him to prejudge either himself or other people, and that therefore he was guilty of no lie when he was afterwards detected in the maintenance of similar errors. This plea, however, he does not advance, not only because it is a ridiculous one, but because it cannot possibly be true; because in these very books of his he both argues against the transmission of sin from Adam to infants, and

glories in the proceedings of the Synod in Palestine, where he was supposed to have sincerely anathematized such as hold the opinions in dispute, and where he, in fact, stole his acquittal by practising deceit.

#### CHAP. 16 [XV.]--PELAGIUS' FRAUDULENT AND CRAFTY EXCUSES.

For what is the significance to the matter with which we now have to do of his answers to his followers, when he tells them that "the reason why he condemned the points which were objected against him, is because he himself maintains that primal sin was injurious not only to the first man, but to the whole human race, not by transmission, but by example;" in other words, not because those who have been propagated from him have derived any fault from him, but because all who afterwards have sinned, have imitated him who committed the first sin? Or when he says that "the reason why infants are not in the same state in which Adam was before the transgression, is because they are not yet able to receive the commandment, whereas he was able; and because they do not yet make use of that choice of a rational will which he certainly made use of, since otherwise no commandment would have been given to him"? How does such an exposition as this of the points alleged against him justify him in thinking that he rightly condemned the propositions, "Adam's sin injured only himself, and not the whole race of man;" and "infants at their birth are in the self-same state in which Adam was before he sinned;" and that by the said condemnation he is not guilty of deceit in holding such opinions as are found in his subsequent writings, how that "infants are born without any evil or fault, and that there is nothing in them but what God has formed," -- no wound, in short, inflicted by an enemy?



## CHAP. 17.-- HOW PELAGIUS DECEIVED HIS JUDGES.

Now, is it by making such statements as these, meeting objections which are urged in one sense with explanations which are meant in another, that he designs to prove to us that he did not deceive those who sat in judgment on him? Then he utterly fails in his purpose. In proportion to the craftiness of his explanations, was the stealthiness with which he deceived them. For, just because they were catholic bishops, when they heard the man pouring out anathemas upon those who maintained that "Adam's sin was injurious to none but himself, and not to the human race," they understood him to assert nothing but what the catholic Church has been accustomed to declare, on the ground of which it truly baptizes infants for the remission of sins--not, indeed, sins which they have committed by imitation owing to the example of the first sinner, but sins which they have contracted by their very birth, owing to the corruption of their origin. When, again, they heard him anathematizing those who assert that "infants at their birth are in the same state in which Adam was before the transgression," they supposed him to refer to none others than those persons who "think that infants have derived no sin from Adam, and that they are accordingly in that state that he was in before his sin." For, of course, no other objection would be brought against him than that on which the question turned. When, therefore, he so explains the objection as to say that infants are not in the same state that Adam was in before he sinned, simply because they have not yet arrived at the same firmness of mind or body, not because of any propagated fault that has passed on to them, he must be answered thus: "When the objections were laid against you for condemnation, the catholic bishops did not understand them in this sense; therefore, when you condemned them, they believed that you were a catholic. That, accordingly, which they supposed you to maintain, deserved to be

released from censure; but that which you really maintained was worthy of condemnation. It was not you, then, that were acquitted, who held tenets which ought to be condemned; but that opinion was freed from censure which you ought to have held and maintained. You could only be supposed to be acquitted by having been believed to entertain opinions worthy to be praised; for your judges could not suppose that you were concealing opinions which merited condemnation. Rightly have you been adjudged an accomplice of Coelestius, in whose opinions you prove yourself to be a sharer. And though you kept your books shut during your trial, you published them to the world after it was over."

#### CHAP. 18 [XVII.]--THE CONDEMNATION OF PELAGIUS.

This being the case, you of course feel that episcopal councils, and the Apostolic See, and the whole Roman Church, and the Roman Empire itself, which by God's gracious favour has become Christian, has been most righteously moved against the authors of this wicked error, until they repent and escape from the snares of the devil. For who can tell whether God may not give them repentance to discover, and acknowledge, and even proclaim His truth, and to condemn their own damnable error? But whatever may be the bent of their own will, we cannot doubt that the merciful kindness of the Lord has sought the good of many persons who followed them, for no other reason than because they saw them associated in communion with the catholic Church.

#### CHAP. 19.--PELAGIUS' ATTEMPT TO DECEIVE THE APOSTOLIC SEE; HE INVERTS THE BEARINGS OF THE CONTROVERSY.

But I would have you carefully observe the way in which Pelagius endeavoured by deception to overreach even the judgment of the bishop of the Apostolic See on this very question of the baptism of

infants. He sent a letter to Rome to Pope Innocent of blessed memory; and when it found him not in the flesh, it was handed to the holy Pope Zosimus, and by him directed to us. In this letter he complains of being "defamed by certain persons for refusing the sacrament of baptism to infants, and promising the kingdom of heaven irrespective of Christ's redemption." The objections, however, are not urged against them in the manner he has stated. For they neither deny the sacrament of baptism to infants, nor do they promise the kingdom of heaven to any irrespective of the redemption of Christ. As regards, therefore, his complaint of being defamed by sundry persons, he has set it forth in such terms as to be able to give a ready answer to the alleged charge against him, without injury to his own dogma. [XVIII.] The real objection against them is, that they refuse to confess that unbaptized infants are liable to the condemnation of the first man, and that original sin has been transmitted to them and requires to be purged by regeneration; their contention being that infants must be baptized solely for being admitted into the kingdom of heaven, as if they could only have eternal death apart from the kingdom of heaven, who cannot have eternal life without partaking of the Lord's body and blood. This, I would have you know, is the real objection to them respecting the baptism of infants; and not as he has represented it, for the purpose of enabling himself to save his own dogmas while answering what is actually a proposition of his own, under colour of meeting an objection.

#### CHAP. 20.--PELAGIUS PROVIDES A REFUGE FOR HIS FALSEHOOD IN AMBIGUOUS SUBTERFUGES.

And then observe how he makes his answer, how he provides in the obscure mazes of his double sense retreats for his false doctrine, quenching the truth in his dark mist of error; so that even we, on our

first perusal of his words, almost rejoiced at their propriety and correctness. But the fuller discussions in his books, in which he is generally forced, in spite of all his efforts at concealment, to explain his meaning, have made even his better statements suspicious to us, lest on a closer inspection of them we should detect them to be ambiguous. For, after saying that "he had never heard even an impious heretic say this" (namely, what he set forth as the objection) "about infants," he goes on to ask: "Who indeed is so unacquainted with Gospel lessons, as not only to attempt to make such an affirmation, but even to be able to lightly say it or even let it enter his thought? And then who is so impious as to wish to exclude infants from the kingdom of heaven, by forbidding them to be baptized and to be born again in Christ?"

CHAP. 21 [XIX.]--PELAGIUS AVOIDS THE QUESTION AS TO WHY BAPTISM IS NECESSARY FOR INFANTS.

Now it is to no purpose that he says all this. He does not clear himself thereby. Not even they have ever denied the impossibility of infants entering the kingdom of heaven without baptism. But this is not the question; what we are discussing concerns the obliteration of original sin in infants. Let him clear himself on this point, since he refuses to acknowledge that there is anything in infants which the laver of regeneration has to cleanse. On this account we ought carefully to consider what he has afterwards to say. After adducing, then, the passage of the Gospel which declares that "whosoever is not born again of water and the Spirit cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven" (on which matter, as we have said, they raise no question), he goes on at once to ask: "Who indeed is so impious as to have the heart to refuse the common redemption of the human race to an infant of any age whatever?" But this is ambiguous language for what redemption does he mean? Is it from evil to good? or from good to

better? Now even Coelestius, at Carthage, allowed a redemption for infants in his book; although, at the same time, he would not, admit the transmission of sin to them from Adam.

CHAP. 22 [XX.]--ANOTHER INSTANCE OF PELAGIUS' AMBIGUITY.

Then, again, observe what he subjoins to the last remark: "Can any one," says he, "forbid a second birth to an eternal and certain life, to him who has been born to this present uncertain life?" In other words: "Who is so impious as to forbid his being born again to the life which is sure and eternal, who has been born to this life of uncertainty?" When we first read these words, we supposed that by the phrase "uncertain life" he meant to designate this present temporal life; although it appeared to us that he ought rather to have called it "mortal" than "uncertain," because it is brought to a close by certain death. But for all this, we thought that he had only shown a preference for calling this mortal life an uncertain one, because of the general view which men take that there is undoubtedly not a moment in our lives when we are free from this uncertainty. And so it happened that our anxiety about him was allayed to some extent by the following consideration, which rose almost to a proof, notwithstanding the fact of his unwillingness openly to confess that infants incur eternal death who depart this life without the sacrament of baptism. We argued: "If, as he seems to admit, eternal life can only accrue to them who have been baptized, it follows of course that they who die unbaptized incur everlasting death. This destiny, however, cannot by any means justly befall those who never in this life committed any sins of their own, unless on account of original sin."

CHAP. 23 [XXI.]--WHAT HE MEANS BY OUR BIRTH TO AN "UNCERTAIN" LIFE.

Certain brethren, however, afterwards failed not to remind us that Pelagius possibly expressed himself in this way, because on this question he is represented as having his answer ready for all inquirers, to this effect: "As for infants who die unbaptized, I know indeed whither they go not; yet whither they go, I know not;" that is, I know they do not go into the kingdom of heaven. But as to whither they go, he was (and for the matter of that, still is ) in the habit of saying that he knew not, because he dared not say that those went to eternal death, who he was persuaded had never committed sin in this life, and whom he would not admit to have inherited original sin. Consequently those very words of his which were forwarded to Rome to secure his absolute acquittal, are so steeped in ambiguity that they afford a shelter for their doctrine, out of which may sally forth an heretical sense to entrap the unwary straggler; for when no one is at hand who can give the answer, any solitary man may find himself weak.

CHAP. 24.--PELAGIUS' LONG RESIDENCE AT ROME.

The truth indeed is, that in the book of his faith which he sent to Rome with this very letter to the before-mentioned Pope Innocent, to whom also he had written the letter, he only the more evidently exposed himself by his efforts at concealment. He says: "We hold one baptism, which we say ought to be administered in the same sacramental words in the case of infants as in the case of adults." He did not, however, say, "in the same sacrament" (although if he had so said, there would still have been ambiguity), but "in the same sacramental words,"--as if remission of sins in infants were declared by the sound of the words, and not wrought by the effect of the acts.

For the time, indeed, he seemed to say what was agreeable with the catholic faith; but he had it not in his power permanently to deceive that see. Subsequent to the rescript of the African Council, into which province this pestilent doctrine had stealthily made its way--without, however, spreading widely or sinking deeply--other opinions also of this man were by the industry of some faithful brethren discovered and brought to light at Rome, where he had dwelt for a very long while, and had already engaged in sundry discourses and controversies. In order to procure the condemnation of these opinions, Pope Zosimus, as you may read, annexed them to his letter, which he wrote for publication throughout the catholic world. Among these statements, Pelagius, pretending to expound the Apostle Paul's Epistle to the Romans, argues in these words: "If Adam's sin injured those who have not sinned, then also Christ's righteousness profits those who do not believe." He says other things, too, of the same purport; but they have all been refuted and answered by me with the Lord's help in the books which I wrote, On the Baptism of Infants. But he had not the courage to make those objectionable statements in his own person in the fore-mentioned so-called exposition. This particular one, however, having been enunciated in a place where he was so well known, his words and their meaning could not be disguised. In those books, from the first of which I have already before quoted, he treats this point without any suppression of his views. With all the energy of which he is capable, he most plainly asserts that human nature in infants cannot in any wise be supposed to be corrupted by propagation; and by claiming salvation for them as their due, he does despite to the Saviour.

CHAP. 25 [XXII.]--THE CONDEMNATION OF PELAGIUS AND COELESTIUS.

These things, then, being as I have stated them, it is now evident that there has arisen a deadly heresy, which, with the Lord's help, the Church by this time guards against more directly--now that those two men, Pelagius and Coelestius, have been either offered repentance, or on their refusal been wholly condemned. They are reported, or perhaps actually proved, to be the authors of this perversion; at all events, if not the authors (as having learnt it from others), they are yet its boasted abettors and teachers, through whose agency the heresy has advanced and grown to a wider extent. This boast, too, is made even in their own statements and writings, and in unmistakeable signs of reality, as well as in the fame which arises and grows out of all these circumstances. What, therefore, remains to be done? Must not every catholic, with all the energies wherewith the Lord endows him, confute this pestilential doctrine, and oppose it with all vigilance; so that whenever we contend for the truth, compelled to answer, but not fond of the contest, the untaught may be instructed, and that thus the Church may be benefited by that which the enemy devised for her destruction; in accordance with that word of the apostle's, "There must be heresies, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you"?

CHAP. 26 [XXIII.]--THE PELAGIANS MAINTAIN THAT RAISING QUESTIONS ABOUT ORIGINAL SIN DOES NOT ENDANGER THE FAITH.

Therefore, after the full discussion with which we have been able to rebut in writing this error of theirs, which is so inimical to the grace of God bestowed on small and great through our Lord Jesus Christ, it is now our duty to examine and explode that assertion of theirs, which in their desire to avoid the odious imputation of heresy they astutely advance, to the effect that "calling this subject into question produces no danger to the faith,"--in order that they may appear,



forsooth, if they are convicted of having deviated from it, to have erred not criminally, but only, as it were, courteously. This, accordingly, is the language which Coelestius used in the ecclesiastical process at Carthage: "As touching the transmission of sin," he said, "I have already said that I have heard many persons of acknowledged position in the catholic Church deny it, and on the other hand many affirm it; it may fairly, indeed, be deemed a matter for inquiry, but not a heresy. I have always maintained that infants require baptism, and ought to be baptized. What else does he want?" He said this, as if he wanted to intimate that only then could he be deemed chargeable with heresy, if he were to assert that they ought not to be baptized. As the case stood, however, inasmuch as he acknowledged that they ought to be baptized, he thought that he had not erred [criminally], and therefore ought not to be adjudged a heretic, even though he maintained the reason of their baptism to be other than the truth holds, or the faith claims as its own. On the same principle, in the book which he sent to Rome, he first explained his belief, so far as it suited his pleasure, from the Trinity of the One Godhead down to the kind of resurrection of the dead that is to be; on all which points, however, no one had ever questioned him, or been questioned by him. And when his discourse reached the question which was under consideration, he said: "If, indeed, any questions have arisen beyond the compass of the faith, on which there might be perhaps dissension on the part of a great many persons, in no case have I pretended to pronounce a decision on any dogma, as if I possessed a definitive authority in the matter myself; but whatever I have derived from the fountain of the prophets and the apostles, I have presented for approbation to the judgment of your apostolic office; so that if any error has crept in among us, human as we are, through our ignorance, it may be corrected by your sentence." You of course clearly see that in this action of his he used all this deprecatory preamble in order that, if he had been discovered

to have erred at all, he might seem to have erred not on a matter of faith, but on questionable points outside the faith; wherein, however necessary it may be to correct the error, it is not corrected as a heresy; wherein also the person who undergoes the correction is declared indeed to be in error, but for all that is not adjudged a heretic.

CHAP. 27 [XXIII.]--ON QUESTIONS OUTSIDE THE FAITH--  
WHAT THEY ARE, AND INSTANCES OF THE SAME.

But he is greatly mistaken in this opinion. The questions which he supposes to be outside the faith are of a very different character from those in which, without any detriment to the faith whereby we are Christians, there exists either an ignorance of the real fact, and a consequent suspension of any fixed opinion, or else a conjectural view of the case, which, owing to the infirmity of human thought, issues in conceptions at variance with truth: as when a question arises about the description and locality of that Paradise where God placed man whom He formed out of the ground, without any disturbance, however, of the Christian belief that there undoubtedly is such a Paradise; or as when it is asked where Elijah is at the present moment, and where Enoch--whether in this Paradise or in some other place, although we doubt not of their existing still in the same bodies in which they were born; or as when one inquires whether it was in the body or out of the body that the apostle was caught up to the third heaven,--an inquiry, however, which betokens great lack of modesty on the part of those who would fain know what he who is the subject of the mystery itself expressly declares his ignorance of, without impairing his own belief of the fact; or as when the question is started, how many are those heavens, to the "third" of which he tells us that he was caught up; or whether the elements of this visible world are four or more; what it is which causes those

eclipses of the sun or the moon which astronomers are in the habit of foretelling for certain appointed seasons; why, again, men of ancient times lived to the age which Holy Scripture assigns to them; and whether the period of their puberty, when they begat their first son, was postponed to an older age, proportioned to their longer life; or where Methuselah could possibly have lived, since he was not in the Ark, inasmuch as (according to the chronological notes of most copies of the Scripture, both Greek and Latin) he is found to have survived the deluge; or whether we must follow the order of the fewer copies--and they happen to be extremely few--which so arrange the years as to show that he died before the deluge. Now who does not feel, amidst the various and innumerable questions of this sort, which relate either to God's most hidden operations or to most obscure passages of the Scriptures, and which it is difficult to embrace and define in any certain way, that ignorance may on many points be compatible with sound Christian faith, and that occasionally erroneous opinion may be entertained without any room for the imputation of heretical doctrine?

CHAP. 28 [XXIV.]--THE HERESY OF PELAGIUS AND COELESTIUS AIMS AT THE VERY FOUNDATIONS OF OUR FAITH.

This is, however, in the matter of the two men by one of whom we are sold under sin, by the other redeemed from sins--by the one have been precipitated into death, by the other are liberated unto life; the former of whom has ruined us in himself, by doing his own will instead of His who created him; the latter has saved us in Himself, by not doing His own will, but the will of Him who sent Him: and it is in what concerns these two men that the Christian faith properly consists. For "there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;" since "there is none other name under

heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved;" and "in Him hath God defined unto all men their faith, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." Now without this faith, that is to say, without a belief in the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; without faith, I say, in His resurrection by which God has given assurance to all men and which no man could of course truly believe were it not for His incarnation and death; without faith, therefore, in the incarnation and death and resurrection of Christ, the Christian verity unhesitatingly declares that the ancient saints could not possibly have been cleansed from sin so as to have become holy, and justified by the grace of God. And this is true both of the saints who are mentioned in Holy Scripture, and of those also who are not indeed mentioned therein, but must yet be supposed to have existed,--either before the deluge, or in the interval between that event and the giving of the law, or in the period of the law itself,--not merely among the children of Israel, as the prophets, but even outside that nation, as for instance Job. For it was by the self-same faith. In the one Mediator that the hearts of these, too, were cleansed, and there also was "shed abroad in them the love of God by the Holy Ghost," "who bloweth where He listeth," not following men's merits, but even producing these very merits Himself. For the grace of God will in no wise exist unless it be wholly free.

**CHAP. 29.--THE RIGHTEOUS MEN WHO LIVED IN THE TIME OF THE LAW WERE FOR ALL THAT NOT UNDER THE LAW, BUT UNDER GRACE. THE GRACE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT HIDDEN UNDER THE OLD.**

Death indeed reigned from Adam until Moses, because it was not possible even for the law given through Moses to overcome it: it was not given, in fact, as something able to give life; but as something that ought to show those that were dead and for whom grace was

needed to give them life, that they were not only prostrated under the propagation and domination of sin, but also convicted by the additional guilt of breaking the law itself: not in order that any one might perish who in the mercy of God understood this even in that early age; but that, destined though he was to punishment, owing to the dominion of death, and manifested, too, as guilty through his own violation of the law, he might seek God's help, and so where sin abounded, grace might much more abound, even the grace which alone delivers from the body of this death. [XXV.] Yet, notwithstanding this, although not even the law which Moses gave was able to liberate any man from the dominion of death, there were even then, too, at the time of the law, men of God who were not living under the terror and conviction and punishment of the law, but under the delight and healing and liberation of grace. Some there were who said, "I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me;" and, "There is no rest in my bones, by reason of my sins;" and, "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit in my inward parts;" and, "Stablish me with Thy directing Spirit;" and, "Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me." There were some, again, who said: "I believed, therefore have I spoken." For they too were cleansed with the self-same faith with which we ourselves are. Whence the apostle also says: "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believe, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." Out of very faith was it said, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel," "which is, being interpreted, God with us." Out of very faith too was it said concerning Him: "As a bridegroom He cometh out of His chamber; as a giant did He exult to run His course. His going forth is from the extremity of heaven, and His circuit runs to the other end of heaven; and no one is hidden from His heat." Out of very faith, again, was it said to Him: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of

Thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, Thy God, hath anointed Thee with the oil of gladness above Thy fellows." By the self-same Spirit of faith were all these things foreseen by them as to happen, whereby they are believed by us as having happened. They, indeed, who were able in faithful love to foretell these things to us were not themselves partakers of them. The Apostle Peter says, "Why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they." Now on what principle does he make this statement, if it be not because even they were saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and not the law of Moses, from which comes not the cure, but only the knowledge of sin? Now, however, the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets. If, therefore, it is now manifested, it even then existed, but it was hidden. This concealment was symbolized by the veil of the temple. When Christ was dying, this veil was rent asunder, to signify the full revelation of Him. Even of old, therefore there existed amongst the people of God this grace of the one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; but like the rain in the fleece which God sets apart for His inheritance, not of debt, but of His own will, it was latently present, but is now patently visible amongst all nations as its "floor," the fleece being dry,--in other words, the Jewish people having become reprobate.

**CHAP. 30 [XXVI]--PELAGIUS AND COELESTIUS DENY THAT THE ANCIENT SAINTS WERE SAVED BY CHRIST.**

We must not therefore divide the times, as Pelagius and his disciples do, who say that men first lived righteously by nature, then under the law, thirdly under grace,--by nature meaning all the long time from

Adam before the giving of the law. "For then," say they, "the Creator was known by the guidance of reason; and the rule of living rightly was carried written in the hearts of men, not in the law of the letter, but of nature. But men's manners became corrupt; and then," they say, "when nature now tarnished began to be insufficient, the law was added to it whereby as by a moon the original lustre was restored to nature after its blush was impaired. But after the habit of sinning had too much prevailed among men, and the law was unequal to the task of curing it, Christ came; and the Physician Himself, through His own self, and not through His disciples, brought relief to the malady at its most desperate development."

CHAP. 31.--CHRIST'S INCARNATION WAS OF AVAIL TO THE FATHERS, EVEN THOUGH IT HAD NOT YET HAPPENED.

By disputation of this sort, they attempt to exclude the ancient saints from the grace of the Mediator, as if the man Christ Jesus were not the Mediator between God and those men; on the ground that, not having yet taken flesh of the Virgin's womb, He was not yet man at the time when those righteous men lived. If this, however, were true, in vain would the apostle say: "By man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." For inasmuch as those ancient saints, according to the vain conceits of these men, found their nature self-sufficient, and required not the man Christ to be their Mediator to reconcile them to God, so neither shall they be made alive in Him, to whose body they are shown not to belong as members, according to the statement that it was on man's account that He became man. If, however, as the Truth says through His apostles, even as all die in Adam, even so shall all be made alive in Christ; forasmuch as the resurrection of the dead comes through the one man, even as death comes through the other man; what Christian man can be bold

enough to doubt that even those righteous men who pleased God in the more remote periods of the human race are destined to attain to the resurrection of eternal life, and not eternal death, because they shall be made alive in Christ? that they are made alive in Christ, because they belong to the body of Christ? that they belong to the body of Christ, because Christ is the head even to them? and that Christ is the head even to them, because there is but one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus? But this He could not have been to them, unless through His grace they had believed in His resurrection. And how could they have done this, if they had been ignorant that He was to come in the flesh, and if they had not by this faith lived justly and piously? Now, if the incarnation of Christ could be of no concern to them, on the ground that it had not yet come about, it must follow that Christ's judgment can be of no concern to us, because it has not yet taken place. But if we shall stand at the right hand of Christ through our faith in His judgment, which has not yet transpired, but is to come to pass, it follows that those ancient saints are members of Christ through their faith in His resurrection, which had not in their day happened, but which was one day to come to pass.

**CHAP. 32 [XXVII.]--HE SHOWS BY THE EXAMPLE OF ABRAHAM THAT THE ANCIENT SAINTS BELIEVED IN THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST.**

For it must not be supposed that those saints of old only profited by Christ's divinity, which was ever existent, and not also by the revelation of His humanity, which had not yet come to pass. What the Lord Jesus says, "Abraham desired to see my day, and he saw it, and was glad," meaning by the phrase his day to understand his time, affords of course a clear testimony that Abraham was fully imbued with belief in His incarnation. It is in respect of this that He has a



"time;" for His divinity exceeds all time, for it was by it that all times were created. If, however, any one supposes that the phrase in question must be understood of that eternal "day" which is limited by no morrow, and preceded by no yesterday,--in a word, of the very eternity in which He is co-eternal with the Father,--how would Abraham really desire this, unless he was aware that there was to be a future mortality belonging to Him whose eternity he wished for ? Or, perhaps, some one would confine the meaning of the phrase so far as to say, that nothing else is meant in the Lord's saying, "He desired to see my day," than "He desired to see me," who am the never-ending Day, or the unfailing Light, as when we mention the life of the Son, concerning which it is said in the Gospel "So hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." Here the life is nothing less than Himself. So we understand the Son Himself to be the life, when He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life; " of whom also it was said "He is the true God, and eternal life." Supposing, then, that Abraham desired to see this equal divinity of the Son's with the Father, without any precognition of His coming in the flesh--as certain philosophers sought Him, who knew nothing of His flesh--can that other act of Abraham, when he orders his servant to place his hand under his thigh, and to swear by the God of heaven, be rightly understood by any one otherwise than as showing that Abraham well knew that the flesh in which the God of heaven was to come was the offspring of that very thigh ?

#### CHAP. 33 [XVIII.]--HOW CHRIST IS OUR MEDIATOR.

Of this flesh and blood Melchizedek also, when he blessed Abram himself,<sup>6</sup> gave the testimony which is very well known to Christian believers, so that long afterwards it was said to Christ in the Psalms: "Thou art a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek." This was not then an accomplished fact, but was still future; yet that faith of

the fathers, which is the self-same faith as our own, used to chant it. Now, to all who find death in Adam, Christ is of this avail, that He is the Mediator for life. He is, however, not a Mediator, because He is equal with the Father; for in this respect He is Himself as far distant from us as the Father; and how can there be any medium where the distance is the very same? Therefore the apostle does not say, "There is one Mediator between God and men, even Jesus Christ;" but his words are, "The MAN Christ Jesus." He is the Mediator, then, in that He is man,--inferior to the Father, by so much as He is nearer to ourselves, and superior to us, by so much as He is nearer to the Father. This is more openly expressed thus: "He is inferior to the Father, because in the form of a servant;" superior to us, because without spot of sin.

#### CHAP. 34 [XXIX.] --NO MAN EVER SAVED SAVE BY CHRIST.

Now, whoever maintains that human nature at any period required not the second Adam for its physician, because it was not corrupted in the first Adam, is convicted as an enemy to the grace of God; not in a question where doubt or error might be compatible with soundness of belief, but in that very rule of faith which makes us Christians. How happens it, then, that the human nature, which first existed, is praised by these men as being so far less tainted with evil manners? How is it that they overlook the fact that men were even then sunk in so many intolerable sins, that, with the exception of one man of God and his wife, and three sons and their wives, the whole world was in God's just judgment destroyed by the flood, even as the little land of Sodom was afterwards with fire? From the moment, then, when "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, in whom all sinned," the entire mass of our nature was ruined beyond doubt, and fell into the possession of its destroyer. And from him no one--no, not one--has

been delivered, or is being delivered, or ever will be delivered, except by the grace of the Redeemer.

#### CHAP. 35 [XXX.]--WHY THE CIRCUMCISION OF INFANTS WAS ENJOINED UNDER PAIN OF SO GREAT A PUNISHMENT.

The Scripture does not inform us whether before Abraham's time righteous men or their children were marked by any bodily or visible sign.<sup>12</sup> Abraham himself, indeed, received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith. And he received it with this accompanying injunction: All the male infants of his household were from that very time to be circumcised, while fresh from their mother's womb, on the eighth day from their birth; so that even they who were not yet able with the heart to believe unto righteousness, should nevertheless receive the seal of the righteousness of faith.

And this command was imposed with so fearful a sanction, that God said: "That soul shall be cut off from his people, whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised on the eighth day."<sup>1</sup> If inquiry be made into the justice of so terrible a penalty, will not the entire argument of these men about free will, and the laudable soundness and purity of nature, however cleverly maintained, fall to pieces, struck down and fractured to atoms? For, pray tell me, what evil has an infant committed of his own will, that, for the negligence of another in not circumcising him, he himself must be condemned, and with so severe a condemnation, that soul must be cut off from his people? It was not of any temporal death that this fear was inflicted, since of righteous persons, when they died, it used rather to be said, "And he was gathered unto his people;" or, "He was gathered to his fathers:" for no attempt to separate a man from his people is long formidable to him, when his own people is itself the people of God.

CHAP. 36 [XXXI]--THE PLATONISTS' OPINION ABOUT THE EXISTENCE OF THE SOUL PREVIOUS TO THE BODY REJECTED.

What, then, is the purport of so severe a condemnation, when no wilful sin has been committed? For it is not as certain Platonists have thought, because every such infant is thus requited in his soul for what it did of its own wilfulness previous to the present life, as having possessed previous to its present bodily state a free choice of living either well or ill; since the Apostle Paul says most plainly, that before they were born they did neither good nor evil.<sup>4</sup> On what account, therefore, is an infant rightly punished with such ruin, if it be not because he belongs to the mass of perdition, and is properly regarded as born of Adam, condemned under the bond of the ancient debt unless he has been released from the bond, not according to debt, but according to grace? And what grace but God's, through our Lord Jesus Christ? Now there was a forecast of His coming undoubtedly contained not only in other sacred institutions of the ancient Jews, but also in their circumcision of the foreskin. For the eighth day, in the recurrence of weeks, became the Lord's day, on which the Lord arose from the dead; and Christ was the rock whence was formed the stony blade for the circumcision; and the flesh of the foreskin was the body of sin.

CHAP. 37 [XXXII.]--IN WHAT SENSE CHRIST IS CALLED "SIN."

There was a change of the sacramental ordinances made after the coming of Him whose advent they prefigured; but there was no change in the Mediator's help, who, even previous to His coming in the flesh, all along delivered the ancient members of His body by their faith in His incarnation; and in respect of ourselves too, though we were dead in sins and in the uncircumcision of our flesh, we are quickened together in Christ, in whom we are circumcised with the

circumcision not made with the hand, but such as was prefigured by the old manual circumcision, that the body of sin might be done away which was born with us from Adam. The propagation of a condemned origin condemns us, unless we are cleansed by the likeness of sinful flesh, in which He was sent without sin, who nevertheless concerning sin condemned sin, having been made sin for us.<sup>10</sup> Accordingly the apostle says: "We beseech you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled unto God. For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." God, therefore, to whom we are reconciled, has made Him to be sin for us,--that is to say, a sacrifice by which our sins may be remitted; for by sins are designated the sacrifices for sins. And indeed He was sacrificed for our sins, the only one among men who had no sins, even as in those early times one was sought for among the flocks to prefigure the Faultless One who was to come to heal our offences. On whatever day, therefore, an infant may be baptized after his birth, he is as if circumcised on the eighth day; inasmuch as he is circumcised in Him who rose again the third day indeed after He was crucified, but the eighth according to the weeks. He is circumcised for the putting off of the body of sin; in other words, that the grace of spiritual regeneration may do away with the debt which the contagion of carnal generation contracted. "For no one is pure from uncleanness" (what uncleanness, pray, but that of sin?), "not even the infant, whose life is but that of a single day upon the earth."

#### CHAP. 38 [XXXIII.]--ORIGINAL SIN DOES NOT RENDER MARRIAGE EVIL.

But they argue thus, saying: "Is not, then, marriage an evil, and the man that is produced by marriage not God's work?" As if the good of the married life were that disease of concupiscence with which they who know not God love their wives--a course which the apostle

forbids; and not rather that conjugal chastity, by which carnal lust is reduced to the good purposes of the appointed procreation of children. Or as if, forsooth, a man could possibly be anything but God's work, not only when born in wedlock, but even if he be produced in fornication or adultery. In the present inquiry, however, when the question is not for what a Creator is necessary, but for what a Saviour, we have not to consider what good there is in the procreation of nature, but what evil there is in sin, whereby our nature has been certainly corrupted. No doubt the two are generated simultaneously--both nature and nature's corruption; one of which is good, the other evil. The one comes to us from the bounty of the Creator, the other is contracted from the condemnation of our origin; the one has its cause in the good-will of the Supreme God, the other in the depraved will of the first man; the one exhibits God as the maker of the creature, the other exhibits God as the punisher of disobedience: in short, the very same Christ was the maker of man for the creation of the one, and was made man for the healing of the other.

#### CHAP. 39 [XXXIV.]--THREE THINGS GOOD AND LAUDABLE IN MATRIMONY.

Marriage, therefore, is a good in all the things which are proper to the married state. And these are three: it is the ordained means of procreation, it is the guarantee of chastity, it is the bond of union. In respect of its ordination for generation the Scripture says, "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house;"<sup>4</sup> as regards its guaranteeing chastity, it is said of it, "The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband; and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife;" and considered as the bond of union: "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Touching these points, we do not forget that

we have treated at sufficient length, with whatever ability the Lord has given us, in other works of ours, which are not unknown to you. In relation to them all the Scripture has this general praise: "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled." For, inasmuch as the wedded state is good, insomuch does it produce a very large amount of good in respect of the evil of concupiscence; for it is not lust, but reason, which makes a good use of concupiscence. Now lust lies in that law of the "disobedient" members which the apostle notes as "warring against the law of the mind;" whereas reason lies in that law of the wedded state which makes good use of concupiscence. If, however, it were impossible for any good to arise out of evil, God could not create man out of the embraces of adultery. As, therefore, the damnable evil of adultery, whenever man is born in it, is not chargeable on God, who certainly amidst man's evil work actually produces a good work; so, likewise, all which causes shame in that rebellion of the members which brought the accusing blush on those who after their sin covered these members with the fig-tree leaves, is not laid to the charge of marriage, by virtue of which the conjugal embrace is not only allowable, but is even useful and honourable; but it is imputable to the sin of that disobedience which was followed by the penalty of man's finding his own members emulating against himself that very disobedience which he had practised against God. Then, abashed at their action, since they moved no more at the bidding of his rational will, but at their own arbitrary choice as it were, instigated by lust, he devised the covering which should conceal such of them as he judged to be worthy of shame. For man, as the handiwork of God, deserved not confusion of face; nor were the members which it seemed fit to the Creator to form and appoint by any means designed to bring the blush to the creature. Accordingly, that simple nudity was displeasing neither to God nor to man: there was nothing to be ashamed of, because nothing at first accrued which deserved punishment.

CHAP. 40 [XXXV.]--MARRIAGE EXISTED BEFORE SIN WAS COMMITTED. HOW GOD'S BLESSING OPERATED IN OUR FIRST PARENTS.

There was, however, undoubtedly marriage, even when sin had no prior existence; and for no other reason was it that woman, and not a second man, was created as a help for the man. Moreover, those words of God, "Be fruitful and multiply," are not prophetic of sins to be condemned, but a benediction upon the fertility of marriage. For by these ineffable words of His, I mean by the divine methods which are inherent in the truth of His wisdom by which all things were made, God endowed the primeval pair with their seminal power. Suppose, however, that nature had not been dishonoured by sin, God forbid that we should think that marriages in Paradise must have been such, that in them the procreative members would be excited by the mere ardour of lust, and not by the command of the will for producing offspring,--as the foot is for walking, the hand for labour, and the tongue for speech. Nor, as now happens, would the chastity of virginity be corrupted to the conception of offspring by the force of a turbid heat, but it would rather be submissive to the power of the gentlest love; and thus there would be no pain, no blood-effusion of the concumbent virgin, as there would also be no groan of the parturient mother. This, however, men refuse to believe, because it has not been verified in the actual condition of our mortal state. Nature, having been vitiated by sin, has never experienced an instance of that primeval purity. But we speak to faithful men, who have learnt to believe the inspired Scriptures, even though no examples are adduced of actual reality. For how could I now possibly prove that a man was made of the dust, without any parents, and a wife formed for him out of his own side? And yet faith takes on trust what the eye no longer discovers.



CHAP. 41 [XXXVI.]--LUST AND TRAVAIL COME FROM SIN.  
WHENCE OUR MEMBERS BECAME A CAUSE OF SHAME.

Granted, therefore, that we have no means of showing both that the nuptial acts of that primeval marriage were quietly discharged, undisturbed by lustful passion, and that the motion of the organs of generation, like that of any other members of the body, was not instigated by the ardour of lust, but directed by the choice of the will (which would have continued such with marriage had not the disgrace of sin intervened); still, from all that is stated in the sacred Scriptures on divine authority, we have reasonable grounds for believing that such was the original condition of wedded life. Although, it is true, I am not told that the nuptial embrace was unattended with prurient desire; as also I do not find it on record that parturition was unaccompanied with groans and pain, or that actual birth led not to future death; yet, at the same time, if I follow the verity of the Holy Scriptures, the travail of the mother and the death of the human offspring would never have supervened if sin had not preceded. Nor would that have happened which abashed the man and woman when they covered their loins; because in the same sacred records it is expressly written that the sin was first committed, and then immediately followed this hiding of their shame. For unless some indelicacy of motion had announced to their eyes--which were of course not closed, though not open to this point, that is, not attentive--that those particular members should be corrected, they would not have perceived anything on their own persons, which God had entirely made worthy of all praise, that called for either shame or concealment. If, indeed, the sin had not first occurred which they had dared to commit in their disobedience, there would not have followed the disgrace which their shame would fain conceal.

CHAP. 42 [XXXVII.]--THE EVIL OF LUST OUGHT NOT TO BE ASCRIBED TO MARRIAGE. THE THREE GOOD RESULTS OF THE NUPTIAL ORDINANCE: OFFSPRING, CHASTITY, AND THE SACRAMENTAL UNION.

It is then manifest that must not be laid to the account of marriage, even in the absence of which, marriage would still have existed. The good of marriage is not taken away by the evil, although the evil is by marriage turned to a good use. Such, however, is the present condition of mortal men, that the connubial intercourse and lust are at the same time in action; and on this account it happens, that as the lust is blamed, so also the nuptial commerce, however lawful and honourable, is thought to be reprehensible by those persons who either are unwilling or unable to draw the distinction between them. They are, moreover, inattentive to that good of the nuptial state which is the glory of matrimony; I mean offspring, chastity, and the pledge. The evil, however, at which even marriage blushes for shame is not the fault of marriage, but of the lust of the flesh. Yet because without this evil it is impossible to effect the good purpose of marriage, even the procreation of children, whenever this process is approached, secrecy is sought, witnesses removed, and even the presence of the very children which happen to be born of the process is avoided as soon as they reach the age of observation. Thus it comes to pass that marriage is permitted to effect all that is lawful in its state, only it must not forget to conceal all that is improper. Hence it follows that infants, although incapable of sinning, are yet not born without the contagion of sin,--not, indeed, because of what is lawful, but on account of that which is unseemly: for from what is lawful nature is born; from what is unseemly, sin. Of the nature so born, God is the Author, who created man, and who united male and female under tile nuptial law; but of the sin the author is the subtlety of the devil who deceives, and the will of the man who consents.

CHAP. 43 [XXXVIII.]-- HUMAN OFFSPRING, EVEN PREVIOUS TO BIRTH, UNDER CONDEMNATION AT THE VERY ROOT. USES OF MATRIMONY UNDERTAKEN FOR MERE PLEASURE NOT WITHOUT VENIAL FAULT.

Where God did nothing else than by a just sentence to condemn the man who wilfully sins, together with his stock; there also, as a matter of course, whatsoever was even not yet born is justly condemned in its sinful root. In this condemned stock carnal generation holds every man; and from it nothing but spiritual regeneration liberates him. In the case, therefore, of regenerate parents, if they continue in the same state of grace, it will undoubtedly work no injurious consequence, by reason of the remission of sins which has been bestowed upon them, unless they make a perverse use of it,--not alone all kinds of lawless corruptions, but even in the marriage state itself, whenever husband and wife toil at procreation, not from the desire of natural propagation of their species, but are mere slaves to the gratification of their lust out of very wantonness. As for the permission which the apostle gives to husbands and wives, "not to defraud one another, except with consent for a time, that they may have leisure for prayer," <sup>1</sup> he concedes it by way of indulgent allowance, and not as a command; but this very form of the concession evidently implies some degree of fault. The connubial embrace, however, which marriage-contracts point to as intended for the procreation of children, considered in itself simply, and without any reference to fornication, is good and right; because, although it is by reason of this body of death (which is unrenewed as yet by the resurrection) impracticable without a certain amount of bestial motion, which puts human nature to the blush, yet the embrace is not after all a sin in itself, when reason applies the concupiscence to a good end, and is not overmastered to evil.

CHAP. 44 [XXXIX.]--EVEN THE CHILDREN OF THE REGENERATE BORN IN SIN. THE EFFECT OF BAPTISM.

This concupiscence of the flesh would be prejudicial,[\*] just in so far as it is present in us,[\*] if the remission of sins were not so beneficial[\*] that while it is present in men, both as born and as born again, it may in the former be prejudicial as well as present, but in the latter present simply but never prejudicial. In the unregenerate it is prejudicial to such an extent indeed, that, unless they are born again, no advantage can accrue to them from being born of regenerate parents. The fault of our nature remains in our offspring so deeply impressed as to make it guilty, even when the guilt of the self-same fault has been washed away in the parent by the remission of sins-- until every defect which ends in sin by the consent of the human will is consumed and done away in the last regeneration. This will be identical with that renovation of the very flesh itself which is promised in its future resurrection, when we shall not only commit no sins, but be even free from those corrupt desires which lead us to sin by yielding consent to them. To this blessed consummation advances are even now made by us, through the grace of that holy layer which we have put within our reach. The same regeneration which now renews our spirit, so that all our past sins are remitted, will by and by also operate, as might be expected, to the renewal to eternal life of that very flesh, by the resurrection of which to an incorruptible state the incentives of all sins will be purged out of our nature. But this salvation is as yet only accomplished in hope: it is not realized in fact; it is not in present possession, but it is looked forward to with patience. [XL.] And thus there is a whole and perfect cleansing, in the self-same baptismal layer, not only of all the sins remitted now in our baptism, which make us guilty owing to the consent we yield to wrong desires, and to the sinful acts in which they issue; but of these said wrong desires also, which, if not

consented to by us, would contract no guilt of sin, and which, though not in this present life removed, will yet have no existence in the life beyond.

#### CHAP. 45.--MAN'S DELIVERANCE SUITED TO THE CHARACTER OF HIS CAPTIVITY.

The guilt, therefore, of that corruption of which we are speaking will remain in the carnal offspring of the regenerate, until in them also it be washed away in the layer of regeneration. A regenerate man does not regenerate, but generates, sons according to the flesh; and thus he transmits to his posterity, not the condition of the regenerated, but only of the generated. Therefore, be a man guilty of unbelief, or a perfect believer, he does not in either case beget faithful children, but sinners; in the same way that the seeds, not only of a wild olive, but also of a cultivated one, produce not cultivated olives, but wild ones. So, likewise, his first birth holds a man in that bondage from which nothing but his second birth delivers him. The devil holds him, Christ liberates him: Eve's deceiver holds him, Mary's Son frees him: he holds him, who approached the man through the woman; He frees him, who was born of a woman that never approached a man: he holds him, who injected into the woman the cause of lust; He liberates him, who without any lust was conceived in the woman. The former was able to hold all men in his grasp through one; nor does any deliver them out of his power but One, whom he was unable to grasp. The very sacraments indeed of the Church, which she administers with due ceremony, according to the authority of very ancient tradition (so that these men, notwithstanding their opinion that the sacraments are imitatively rather than really used in the case of infants, still do not venture to reject them with open disapproval),-the very sacraments, I say, of the holy Church show plainly enough that infants, even when fresh from the womb, are delivered from the

bondage of the devil through the grace of Christ. For, to say nothing of the fact that they are baptized for the remission of sins by no fallacious, but by a true and faithful mystery, there is previously wrought on them the exorcism and the exsufflation of the hostile power, which they profess to renounce by the mouth of those who bring them to baptism. Now, by all these consecrated and evident signs of hidden realities, they are shown to pass from their worst oppressor to their most excellent Redeemer, who, by taking on Himself our infirmity in our behalf, has bound the strong man, that He may spoil his goods; seeing that the weakness of God is stronger, not only than men, but also than angels. While, therefore, God delivers small as well as great, He shows in both instances that the apostle spoke under the direction of the Truth. For it is not merely adults, but little babes too whom He rescues from the power of darkness, in order to transfer them to the kingdom of God's dear Son.<sup>2</sup>

#### CHAP. 46.--DIFFICULTY OF BELIEVING ORIGINAL SIN. MAN'S VICE IS A BEAST'S NATURE.

No one should feel surprise, and ask: "Why does God's goodness create anything for the devil's malignity to take possession of?" The truth is, God's gift is bestowed on the seminal elements of His creature with the same bounty wherewith "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." It is with so large a bounty that God has blessed the very seeds, and by blessing has constituted them. Nor has this blessing been eliminated out of our excellent nature by a fault which puts us under condemnation. Owing, indeed, to God's justice, who punishes, this fatal flaw has so far prevailed, that men are born with the fault of original sin; but yet its influence has not extended so far as to stop the birth of men. Just so does it happen in persons of adult age:

whatever sins they commit, do not eliminate his manhood from man; nay, God's work continues still good, however evil be the deeds of the impious. For although "man being placed in honour abideth not; and being without understanding, is compared with the beasts, and is like them,"<sup>4</sup> yet the resemblance is not so absolute that he becomes a beast. There is a comparison, no doubt, between the two; but it is not by reason of nature, but through vice--not vice in the beast, but in nature. For so excellent is a man in comparison with a beast, that man's vice is beast's nature; still man's nature is never on this account changed into beast's nature. God, therefore, condemns man because of the fault wherewithal his nature is disgraced, and not because of his nature, which is not destroyed in consequence of its fault. Heaven forbid that we should think beasts are obnoxious to the sentence of condemnation! It is only proper that they should be free from our misery, inasmuch as they cannot partake of our blessedness. What, then, is there surprising or unjust in man's being subjected to an impure spirit--not on account of nature, but on account of that impurity of his which he has contracted in the stain of his birth, and which proceeds, not from the divine work, but from the will of man;--since also the impure spirit itself is a good thing considered as spirit, but evil in that it is impure? For the one is of God, and is His work, while the other emanates from man's own will. The stronger nature, therefore, that is, the angelic one, keeps the lower, or human, nature in subjection, by reason of the association of vice with the latter. Accordingly the Mediator, who was stronger than the angels, became weak for man's sake.<sup>5</sup> So that the pride of the Destroyer is destroyed by the humility of the Redeemer; and he who makes his boast over the sons of men of his angelic strength, is vanquished by the Son of God in the human weakness which He assumed.

CHAP. 47 [XLI.]--SENTENCES FROM AMBROSE IN FAVOUR OF ORIGINAL SIN.

And now that we are about to bring this book to a conclusion, we think it proper to do on this subject of Original Sin what we did before in our treatise On Grace, --adduce in evidence against the injurious talk of these persons that servant of God, the Archbishop Ambrose, whose faith is proclaimed by Pelagius to be the most perfect among the writers of the Latin Church; for grace is more especially honoured in doing away with original sin. In the work which the saintly Ambrose wrote, Concerning the Resurrection, he says: "I fell in Adam, in Adam was I expelled from Paradise, in Adam I died; and He does not recall me unless He has found me in Adam,-- so as that, as I am obnoxious to the guilt of sin in him, and subject to death, I may be also justified in Christ." Then, again, writing against the Novatians, he says: "We men are all of us born in sin; our very origin is in sin; as you may read when David says, 'Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.' Hence it is that Paul's flesh is 'a body of death;' even as he says himself, 'Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?' Christ's flesh, however, has condemned sin, which He experienced not by being born, and which by dying He crucified, that in our flesh there might be justification through grace, where previously there was impurity through sin." The same holy man also, in his Exposition Isaiah, speaking of Christ, says: "Therefore as man He was tried in all things, and in the likeness of men He endured all things; but as born of the Spirit, He was free from sin. For every man is a liar, and no one but God alone is without sin. It is therefore an observed and settled fact, that no man born of a man and a woman, that is, by means of their bodily union, is seen to be free from sin. Whosoever, indeed, is free from sin, is free also from a conception and birth of this kind." Moreover, when expounding the Gospel according to



Luke, he says: "It was no cohabitation with a husband which opened the secrets of the Virgin's womb; rather was it the Holy Ghost which infused immaculate seed into her unviolated womb. For the Lord Jesus alone of those who are born of woman is holy, inasmuch as He experienced not the contact of earthly corruption, by reason of the novelty of His immaculate birth; nay, He repelled it by His heavenly majesty."

#### CHAP. 48.--PELAGIUS RIGHTLY CONDEMNED AND REALLY OPPOSED BY AMBROSE.

These words, however, of the man of God are contradicted by Pelagius, notwithstanding all his commendation of his author, when he himself declares that "we are procreated, as without virtue, so without vice." What remains, then, but that Pelagius should condemn and renounce this error of his; or else be sorry that he has quoted Ambrose in the way he has? Inasmuch, however, as the blessed Ambrose, catholic bishop as he is, has expressed himself in the above-quoted passages in accordance with the catholic faith, it follows that Pelagius, along with his disciple Coelestius, was justly condemned by the authority of the catholic Church for having turned aside from the true way of faith, since he repented not for having bestowed commendation on Ambrose, and for having at the same time entertained opinions in opposition to him. I know full well with what insatiable avidity you read whatever is written for edification and in confirmation of the faith; but yet, notwithstanding its utility as contributing to such an end, I must at last bring this treatise to a conclusion.

# **A TREATISE ON THE PREDESTINATION OF THE SAINTS**

**by AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF  
HIPPO**

**THE FIRST BOOK.**

ADDRESSED TO PROSPER AND HILARY.

AD. 428 OR 429

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WHEREIN THE TRUTH OF PREDESTINATION AND GRACE IS DEFENDED AGAINST THE SEMI-PELAGIANS,--THOSE PEOPLE TO WIT, WHO BY NO MEANS WITHDRAW ALTOGETHER FROM THE PELAGIAN HERESY, IN THAT THEY CONTEND THAT THE BEGINNING OF SALVATION AND OF FAITH IS OF OURSELVES; SO THAT IN VIRTUE, AS IT WERE, OF THIS PRECEDENT MERIT, THE OTHER GOOD GIFTS OF GOD ARE ATTAINED. AUGUSTIN SHOWS THAT NOT ONLY THE INCREASE, BUT THE VERY BEGINNING ALSO OF FAITH IS IN GOD'S GIFT. ON THIS MATTER HE DOES NOT DISAVOW THAT HE ONCE THOUGHT DIFFERENTLY, AND THAT IN SOME SMALL WORKS, WRITTEN BEFORE HIS EPISCOPATE, HE WAS IN ERROR, AS IN THAT EXPOSITION, WHICH THEY OBJECT TO HIM, OF PROPOSITIONS FROM THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS. BUT HE POINTS OUT THAT HE WAS SUBSEQUENTLY CONVINCED CHIEFLY BY THIS TESTIMONY, "BUT WHAT HAST THOU THAT THOU HAST NOT RECEIVED ?" WHICH HE PROVES IS TO BE TAKEN AS A TESTIMONY CONCERNING FAITH ITSELF ALSO. HE SAYS THAT FAITH IS TO BE COUNTED AMONG OTHER

WORKS, WHICH THE APOSTLE DENIES TO ANTICIPATE GOD'S GRACE WHEN HE SAYS, "NOT OF WORKS" HE DECLARES THAT THE HARDNESS OF THE HEART IS TAKEN AWAY BY GRACE, AND THAT ALL COME TO CHRIST WHO ARE TAUGHT TO COME BY THE FATHER; BUT THAT THOSE WHOM HE TEACHES, HE TEACHES IN MERCY, WHILE THOSE WHOM HE TEACHES NOT, IN JUDGMENT HE TEACHES NOT. THAT THE PASSAGE FROM HIS HUNDRED AND SECOND EPISTLE, QUESTION 2, "CONCERNING THE TIME OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION" WHICH IS ALLEGED BY THE SEMI-PELAGIANS, MAY RIGHTLY BE EXPLAINED WITHOUT DETRIMENT TO THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE AND PREDESTINATION. HE TEACHES WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GRACE AND PREDESTINATION. FURTHER, HE SAYS THAT GOD IN HIS PREDESTINATION FOREKNEW WHAT HE HAD PURPOSED TO DO. HE MARVELS GREATLY THAT THE ADVERSARIES OF PREDESTINATION, WHO ARE SAID TO BE UNWILLING TO BE DEPENDENT ON THE UNCERTAINTY OF GOD'S WILL, PREFER RATHER TO TRUST THEMSELVES TO THEIR OWN WEAKNESS THAN TO THE STRENGTH OF GOD'S PROMISE. HE CLEARLY POINTS OUT THAT THEY ABUSE THIS AUTHORITY, IF THOU BELIEVEST, THOU SHALT BE SAVED." THAT THE TRUTH OF GRACE AND PERSEVERANCE SHINES FORTH IN THE CASE OF INFANTS THAT ARE SAVED, WHO ARE DISTINGUISHED BY NO MERITS OF THEIR OWN FROM OTHERS WHO PERISH. FOR THAT THERE IS NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THEM ARISING FROM THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF MERITS WHICH THEY WOULD HAVE HAD IF THEY HAD LIVED LONGER. THAT TESTIMONY IS WRONGFULLY REJECTED BY THE ADVERSARIES AS BEING UNCANONICAL, WHICH HE ADDUCED FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS DISCUSSION, " HE WAS TAKEN AWAY LEST WICKEDNESS," ETC. THAT THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS INSTANCE

OF PREDESTINATION AND GRACE IS THE SAVIOUR HIMSELF, IN WHOM A MAN OBTAINED THE PRIVILEGE OF BEING THE SAVIOUR AND THE ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD, THROUGH BEING ASSUMED INTO ONENESS OF PERSON BY THE WORD CO-ETERNAL WITH THE FATHER, ON ACCOUNT OF NO PRECEDENT MERITS, EITHER OF WORKS OR OF FAITH. THAT THE PREDESTINATED ARE CALLED BY SOME CERTAIN CALLING PECULIAR TO THE ELECT, AND THAT THEY HAVE BEEN ELECTED BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD; NOT BECAUSE THEY WERE FOREKNOWN AS MEN WHO WOULD BELIEVE AND WOULD BE HOLY, BUT IN ORDER THAT BY MEANS OF THAT VERY ELECTION OF GRACE THEY MIGHT BE SUCH, ETC.

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## **CHAP. 1 [I.]--INTRODUCTION.**

WE know that in the Epistle to the Philippians the apostle said, "To write the same things to you to me indeed is not grievous but for you it is safe;" yet the same apostle writing to the Galatians when he saw that he had done enough among them of what he regarded as being needful for them, by the ministry of his preaching, said, "For the rest let no man cause me labour" or as it is read in many codices "Let no one be troublesome to me." But although I confess that it causes me trouble that the divine word in which the grace of God is preached (which is absolutely no grace if it is given according to our merits), great and manifest as it is, is not yielded to, nevertheless my dearest sons, Prosper and Hilary your zeal and brotherly affection-which makes you so reluctant to see any of the brethren in error, as to wish that, after so many books and letters of mine on this subject, I should write again from here--I love more than I can tell, although I do not dare to say that I love it as much as I ought. Wherefore, behold, I

write to you again. And although not with you, yet through you I am still doing what I thought I had done sufficiently.

## **CHAP. 2.--TO WHAT EXTENT THE MASSILIANS WITHDRAW FROM THE PELAGIANS.**

For on consideration of your letters, I seem to see that those brethren on whose behalf you exhibit a pious care that they may not hold the poetical opinion in which it is affirmed, "Every one is a hope for himself," and so fall under that condemnation which is, not poetically, but prophetically, declared, "Cursed is every man that hath hope in man," must be treated in that way wherein the apostle dealt with those to whom he said, "And if in anything ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you." For as yet they are in darkness on the question concerning the predestination of the saints, but they have that whence, "if in anything they are otherwise minded, God will reveal even this unto them," if they are walking in that to which they have attained. For which reason the apostle, when he had said, "If ye are in anything otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this unto you," says, "Nevertheless whereunto we have attained, let us walk in the same." And those brethren of ours, on whose behalf your pious love is solicitous, have attained with Christ's Church to the belief that the human race is born obnoxious to the sin of the first man, and that none can be delivered from that evil save by the righteousness of the Second Man. Moreover, they have attained to the confession that men's wills are anticipated by God's grace; and to the agreement that no one can suffice to himself either for beginning or for completing any good work. These things, therefore, unto which they have attained, being held fast, abundantly distinguish them from the error of the Pelagians. Further, if they walk in them, and beseech Him who giveth understanding, if in anything concerning predestination they are otherwise minded, He

will reveal even this unto them. Yet let us also spend upon them the influence of our love, and the misery of our discourse, according to His gift, whom we have asked that in these letters we might say what should be suitable and profitable to them. For whence do we know whether by this our service, wherein we are serving them in the free love of Christ, our God may not perchance will to effect that purpose ?

### **CHAP. 3 [II.]--EVEN THE BEGINNING OF FAITH IS OF GOD'S GIFT.**

Therefore I ought first to show that the faith by which we are Christians is the gift of God if I can do that more thoroughly than I have already done in so many and so large volumes. But I see that I must now reply to those who say that the divine testimonies which I have adduced concerning this matter are of avail for this purpose, to assure us that we have faith itself of ourselves, but that its increase is of God; as if faith were not given to us by Him, but were only increased in us by Him, on the ground of the merit of its having begun from us. Thus there is here no departure from that opinion which Pelagius himself was constrained to condemn in the judgment of the bishops of Palestine, as is testified in the same Proceedings, "That the grace of God is given according to our merits," if it is not of God's grace that we begin to believe, but rather that on account of this beginning an addition is made to us of a more full and perfect belief; and so we first give the beginning of our faith to God, that His supplement may also be given to us again, and whatever else we faithfully ask.

### **CHAP. 4.--CONTINUATION OF THE PRECEDING.**

But why do we not in opposition to this, rather hear the words, "Who hath first given to Him and it shall be recompensed to him again ?

since of Him, and through Him, and in Him, are all things " And from whom, then, is that very beginning of our faith if not from Him ? For this is not excepted when other things are spoken of as of Him; but "of Him, and through Him, and in Him, are all things." But who can say that he who has already begun to believe deserves nothing from Him in whom he has believed? Whence it results that, to him who already deserves, other things are said to be added by a divine retribution, and thus that God's grace is given according to our merits. And this assertion when put before him, Pelagius himself condemned, that he might not be condemned. Whoever, then, wishes on every side to avoid this condemnable opinion, let him understand that what the apostle says is said with entire truthfulness, "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake." He shows that both are the gifts of God, because he said that both were given. And he does not say, "to believe on Him more fully and perfectly," but, "to believe on Him." Neither does he say that he himself had obtained mercy to be more faithful, but "to be faithful" because he knew that he had not first given the beginning of his faith to God, and had its increase given back to him again by Him; but that he had been made faithful by God, who also had made him an apostle. For the beginnings of his faith are recorded, and they are very well known by being read in the church on an occasion calculated to distinguish them: how, being turned away from the faith which he was destroying, and being vehemently opposed to it, he was suddenly by a more powerful grace converted to it, by the conversion of Him, to whom as One who would do this very thing it was said by the prophet, "Thou wilt turn and quicken us;" so that not only from one who refused to believe he was made a willing believer, but, moreover, from being a persecutor, he suffered persecution in defence of that faith which he persecuted. Because it was given him by Christ "not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake."

## **CHAP. 5.--TO BELIEVE IS TO THINK WITH ASSENT.**

And, therefore, commending that grace which is not given according to any merits, but is the cause of all good merits, he says, "Not that we are sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." Let them give attention to the, and well weigh these words, who think that the beginning of faith is of ourselves, and the supplement of faith is of God. For who cannot see that thinking is prior to believing? For no one believes anything unless he has first thought that it is to be believed. For however suddenly, however rapidly, some thoughts fly before the will to believe, and this presently follows in such wise as to attend them, as it were, in closest conjunction, it is yet necessary that everything which is believed should be believed after thought has preceded; although even belief itself is nothing else than to think with assent. For it is not every one who thinks that believes, since many think in order that they may not believe; but everybody who believes, thinks,--both thinks in believing and believes in thinking. Therefore in what pertains to religion and piety (of which the apostle was speaking), if we are not capable of thinking anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, we are certainly not capable of believing anything as of ourselves, since we cannot do this without thinking; but our sufficiency, by which we begin to believe, is of God. Wherefore, as no one is sufficient for himself, for the beginning or the completion of any good work whatever,--and this those brethren of yours, as what you have written intimates, already agree to be true, whence, as well in the beginning as in the carrying out of every good work, our sufficiency is of God,--so no one is sufficient for himself, either to begin or to perfect faith; but our sufficiency is of God. Because if faith is not a matter of thought, it is of no account; and we are not sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God.



## **CHAP. 6.--PRESUMPTION AND ARROGANCE TO BE AVOIDED.**

Care must be taken, brethren, beloved of God, that a man do not lift himself up in opposition to God, when he says that he does what God has promised. Was not the faith of the nations promised to Abraham, "and he, giving glory to God, most fully believed that what He promised He is able also to perform"? He therefore makes the faith of the nations, who is able to do what He has promised. Further, if God works our faith, acting in a wonderful manner in our hearts so that we believe, is there any reason to fear that He cannot do the whole; and does man on that account arrogate to himself its first elements, that he may merit to receive its last from God? Consider if in such a way any other result be gained than that the grace of God is given in some way or other, according to our merit, and so grace is no more grace. For on this principle it is rendered as debt, it is not given gratuitously; for it is due to the believer that his faith itself should be increased by the Lord, and that the increased faith should be the wages of the faith begun; nor is it observed when this is said, that this wage is assigned to believers, not of grace, but of debt. And I do not at all see why the whole should not be attributed to man,--as he who could originate for himself what he had not previously, can himself increase what he had originated,--except that it is impossible to withstand the most manifest divine testimony by which faith, whence piety takes its beginning, is shown also to be the gift of God: such as is that testimony that "God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith;" and that one, "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ," and other similar passages. Man, therefore, unwilling to resist such clear testimonies as these, and yet desiring himself to have the merit of believing, compounds as it were with God to claim a portion of faith for himself, and to leave a portion for Him; and, what is still more

arrogant, he takes the first portion for himself and gives the subsequent to Him; and so in that which he says belongs to both, he makes himself the first, and God the second !

## **CHAP. 7 [III.]--AUGUSTIN CONFESSES THAT HE HAD FORMERLY BEEN IN ERROR CONCERNING THE GRACE OF GOD.**

It was not thus that pious and humble teacher thought--I speak of the most blessed Cyprian--when he said "that we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own." And in order to show the, he appealed to the apostle as a witness, where he said, "For what hast thou that thou hast not received ? And if thou hast received it, why boastest thou as if thou hadst not received it?" And it was chiefly by this testimony that I myself also was convinced when I was in a similar error, thinking that faith whereby we believe on God is not God's gift, but that it is in us from ourselves, and that by it we obtain the gifts of God, whereby we may live temperately and righteously and piously in this world. For I did not think that faith was preceded by God's grace, so that by its means would be given to us what we might profitably ask, except that we could not believe if the proclamation of the truth did not precede; but that we should consent when the gospel was preached to us I thought was our own doing, and came to us from ourselves. And this my error is sufficiently indicated in some small works of mine written before my episcopate. Among these is that which you have mentioned in your letters wherein is an exposition of certain propositions from the Epistle to the Romans. Eventually, when I was retracting all my small works, and was committing that retraction to writing, of which task I had already completed two books before I had taken up your more lengthy letters,--when in the first volume I had reached the retraction of this book, I then spoke thus:--"Also discussing, I

say, 'what God could have chosen in him who was as yet unborn, whom He said that the elder should serve; and what in the same elder, equally as yet unborn, He could have rejected; concerning whom, on this account, the prophetic testimony is recorded, although declared long subsequently, "Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated," I carried out my reasoning to the point of saying: ' God did not therefore choose the works of any one in foreknowledge of what He Himself would give them, but he chose the faith, in the foreknowledge that He would choose that very person whom He foreknew would believe on Him,--to whom He would give the Holy Spirit, so that by doing good works he might obtain eternal life also.' I had not yet very carefully sought, nor had I as yet found, what is the nature of the election of grace, of which the apostle says, ' A remnant are saved according to the election of grace.' Which assuredly is not grace if any merits precede it; lest what is now given, not according to grace, but according to debt, be rather paid to merits than freely given. And what I next subjoined: ' For the same apostle says, "The same God which worketh all in all;" but it was never said, God believeth all in all ;' and then added, ' Therefore what we believe is our own, but what good thing we do is of Him who giveth the Holy Spirit to them that believe: ' I certainly could not have said, had I already known that faith itself also is found among those gifts of God which are given by the same Spirit. Both, therefore, are ours on account of the choice of the will, and yet both are given by the spirit of faith and love, For faith is not alone but as it is written, ' Love with faith, from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ.' And what I said a little after, ' For it is ours to believe and to will, but it is His to give to those who believe and will, the power of doing good works through the Holy Spirit, by whom love is shed abroad in our hearts,' -is true indeed; but by the same rule both are also God's, because God prepares the will; and both are ours too, because they are only brought about with our good wills. And thus what I subsequently

said also: ' Because we are not able to Will unless we are called; and when, after our calling, we would will, our willing is not sufficiently nor our running, unless God gives strength to us that run, and leads us whither He calls us;' and thereupon added: ' It is plain, therefore, that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy, that we do good works'--this is absolutely most true. But I discovered little concerning the calling itself, which is according to God's purpose; for not such is the calling of all that are called, but only of the elect. Therefore what I said a little afterwards: ' For as in those whom God elects it is not works but faith that begins the merit so as to do good works by the gift of God, so in those whom He condemns, unbelief and impiety begin the merit of punishment, so that even by way of punishment itself they do evil works'--I spoke most truly. But that even the merit itself of faith was God's gift, I neither thought of inquiring into, nor did I say. And in another place I say: 'For whom He has mercy upon, He makes to do good works, and whom He hardeneth He leaves to do evil works; but that mercy is bestowed upon the preceding merit of faith, and that hardening is applied to preceding iniquity.' And this indeed is true; but it should further have been asked, whether even the merit of faith does not come from God's mercy,--that is, whether that mercy is manifested in man only because he is a believer, or whether it is also manifested that he may be a believer? For we read in the apostles words: ' I obtained mercy to be a believer.' He does not say, ' Because I was a believer.' Therefore although it is given to the believer, yet it has been given also that he may be a believer. Therefore also, in another place in the same book I most truly said: ' Because, if it is of God's mercy, and not of works, that we are even called that we may believe and it is granted to us who believe to do good works, that mercy must not be grudged to the heathen;'--although I there discoursed less carefully about that calling which is given according to God's purpose."

## **CHAP. 8 [IV.]--WHAT AUGUSTIN WROTE TO SIMPLICIANUS, THE SUCCESSOR OF AMBROSE, BISHOP OF MILAN.**

You see plainly what was at that time my opinion concerning faith and works, although I was labouring in commending God's grace; and in this opinion I see that those brethren of ours now are, because they have not been as careful to make progress with me in my writings as they were in reading them. For if they had been so careful, they would have found that question solved in accordance with the truth of the divine Scriptures in the first book of the two which I wrote in the very beginning of my episcopate to Simplicianus, of blessed memory, Bishop of the Church of Milan, and successor to St. Ambrose. Unless, perchance, they may not have known these books; in which case, take care that they do know them. Of this first of those two books, I first spoke in the second book of the Retractations; and what I said is as follows: "Of the books, I say, on which, as a bishop, I have laboured, the first two are addressed to Simplicianus, president of the Church of Milan, who succeeded the most blessed Ambrose, concerning divers questions, two of which I gathered into the first book from the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans. The former of them is about what is written: 'What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? By no means;' as far as the passage where he says, 'Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.' And therein I have expounded those words of the apostle: The law is spiritual; but I am carnal,' and others in which the flesh is declared to be in conflict against the Spirit in such a way as if a man were there described as still under law, and not yet established under grace. For, long afterwards, I perceived that those words might even be (and probably were) the utterance of a spiritual man. The latter question in this book is gathered from that passage where the apostle says, '

And not only this, but when Rebecca also had conceived by one act of intercourse, even by our father Isaac,' as far as that place where he says, ' Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we should be as Sodoma, and should have been like unto Gomorrah.' In the solution of this question I laboured indeed on behalf of the free choice of the human will, but God's grace overcame, and I could only reach that point where the apostle is perceived to have said with the most evident truth, ' For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou hast not received ? Now, if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou receivedst it not?' And this the martyr Cyprian was also desirous of setting forth when he compressed the whole of it in that title: 'That we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own.' " This is why I previously said that it was chiefly by this apostolic testimony that I myself had been convinced, when I thought otherwise concerning this matter; and this God revealed to me as I sought to solve this question when I was writing, as I said, to the Bishop Simplicianus. This testimony, therefore, of the apostle, when for the sake of repressing man's conceit he said, "For what hast thou which thou hast not received?" does not allow any believer to say, I have faith which I received not. All the arrogance of this answer is absolutely repressed by these apostolic words. Moreover, it cannot even be said, "Although I have not a perfected faith, yet I have its beginning, whereby I first of all believed in Christ" Because here also answered: "But what hast thou that thou hast not received? Now, if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou receivedst it, not ?"

#### **CHAP. 9 [V.]--THE PURPOSE OF THE APOSTLE IN THESE WORDS.**

The notion, however, which they entertain, "that these words, 'What hast thou that thou hast not received ?' cannot be said of this faith,

because it has remained in the same nature, although corrupted, which at first was endowed with health and perfection," is perceived to have no force for the purpose that they desire if it be considered why the apostle said these words. For he was concerned that no one should glory in man, because dissensions had sprung up among the Corinthian Christians, so that every one was saying, "I, indeed, am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, and another, I am of Cephas;" and thence he went on to say: " God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the strong things; and God hath chosen the ignoble things of the world, and contemptible things, and those things which are not, to make of no account things which are; that no flesh should glory before God." Here the intention of the apostle is of a certainty sufficiently plain against the pride of man, that no one should glory in man; and thus, no one should glory in himself. Finally, when he had said "that no flesh should glory before God," in order to show in what man ought to glory, he immediately added, "But it is of Him that ye are in Christ Jesus, who is made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." Thence that intention of his progressed, till afterwards rebuking them he says, "For ye are yet carnal; for whereas there are among you envying and contention, are ye not carnal, and walk according to man ? For while one saith I am of Paul, and another, I am of Apollos, are ye not men ? What, then, is Apollos, and what Paul? Ministers by whom you believed; and to every one as the Lord has given. I have planted, and Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. Therefore, neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." Do you not see that the sole purpose of the apostle is that man may be humbled, and God alone exalted ? Since in all those things, indeed, which are planted and watered, he says that not even are the planter and the

waterer anything, but God who giveth the increase: and the very fact, also, that one plants and another waters he attributes not to themselves, but to God, when he says, "To every one as the Lord hath given; I have planted, Apollos watered." Hence, therefore, persisting in the same intention he comes to the point of saying, "Therefore let no man glory in man," for he had already said, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord." After these and some other matters which are associated therewith, that same intention of his is carried on in the words: "And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes, that ye might learn in us that no one of you should be puffed up for one against another above that which is written. For who maketh thee to differ? And what hast thou which thou hast not received? Now, if thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou receivedst it not?"

**CHAP. 10.--IT IS GOD'S GRACE WHICH SPECIALLY DISTINGUISHES ONE MAN FROM ANOTHER.**

In this the apostle's most evident intention, in which he speaks against human pride, so that none should glory in man but in God, it is too absurd, as I think, to suppose God's natural gifts, whether man's entire and perfected nature itself as it was bestowed on him in his flint state, or the remains, whatever they may be, of his degraded nature. For is it by such gifts as these, which are common to all men, that men are distinguished from men? But here he flint said, "For who maketh thee to differ?" and then added, "And what hast thou that thou hast not received?" Because a man, puffed up against another, might say, "My faith makes me to differ," or "My righteousness," or anything else of the kind. In reply to such notions, the good teacher says, "But what hast thou that thou hast not received?" And from whom but from Him who maketh thee to differ from another, on whom He bestowed not what He bestowed on thee



? "Now if," says he, "thou hast received it, why dost thou glory as if thou receivedst it not?" Is he concerned, I ask, about anything else save that he who glorieth should glory in the Lord? But nothing is so opposed to this feeling as for any one to glory concerning his own merits in such a way as if he himself had made them for himself, and not the grace of God,--a grace, however, which makes the good to differ from the wicked, and is not common to the good and the wicked. Let the grace, therefore, whereby we are living and reasonable creatures, and are distinguished from cattle, be attributed to nature; let that grace also by which, among men themselves, the handsome are made to differ from the ill-formed, or the intelligent from the stupid, or anything of that kind, be ascribed to nature. But he whom the apostle was rebuking did not puff himself up as contrasted with cattle, nor as contrasted with any other man, in respect of any natural endowment which might be found even in the worst of men. But he ascribed to himself, and not to God, some good gift which pertained to a holy life, and was puffed up therewith when he deserved to hear the rebuke, "Who hath made thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou receivedst not?" For though the capacity to have faith is of nature, is it also of nature to have it? "For all men have not faith," although all men have the capacity to have faith. But the apostle does not say, "And what hast thou capacity to have, the capacity to have which thou receivedst not?" but he says, "And what hast thou which thou receivedst not?" Accordingly, the capacity to have faith, as the capacity to have love, belongs to men's nature; but to have faith, even as to have love, belongs to the grace of believers. That nature, therefore, in which is given to us the capacity of having faith, does not distinguish man from man, but faith itself makes the believer to differ from the unbeliever. And thus, when it is said, "For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou receivedst not?" if any one dare to say, "I have faith of mystic I did not, therefore, receive it," he directly contradicts this most manifest

truth,--not because it is not in the choice of man's will to believe or not to believe, but because in the elect the will is prepared by the Lord. Thus, moreover, the passage, "For who maketh thee to differ? and what hast thou that thou receivedst not?" refers to that very faith which is in the will of man.

### **CHAP. 11 [VI.]--THAT SOME MEN ARE ELECTED IS OF GOD'S MERCY.**

" Many hear the word of truth; but some believe, while others contradict. Therefore, the former will to believe; the latter do not will." Who does not know this ? Who can deny this ? But since in some the will is prepared by the Lord, in others it is not prepared, we must assuredly be able to distinguish what comes from God's mercy, and what from His judgment. "What Israel sought for," says the apostle, "he hath not obtained, but the election hath obtained it; and the rest were blinded, as it is written, God gave to them the spirit of compunction,--eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, even to this day. And David said, Let their table be made a snare, a retribution, and a stumblingblock to them; let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see; and bow down their back always." Here is mercy and judgment,--mercy towards the election which has obtained the righteousness of God, but judgment to the rest which have been blinded. And yet the former, because they willed, believed; the latter, because they did not will believed not. Therefore mercy and judgment were manifested in the very wills themselves. Certainly such an election is of grace, not at all of merits. For he had before said, "So, therefore, even at this present time, the remnant has been saved by the election of grace. And if by grace, now it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace." Therefore the election obtained what it obtained gratuitously; there preceded none of those things which they might first give, and it should be

given to them again. He saved them for nothing. But to the rest who were blinded, as is there plainly declared, it was done in recompense. "All the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth." But His ways are unsearchable. Therefore the mercy by which He freely delivers, and the truth by which He righteously judges, are equally unsearchable.

## **CHAP. 12 [VII.]--WHY THE APOSTLE SAID THAT WE ARE JUSTIFIED BY FAITH AND NOT BY WORKS**

But perhaps it may be said: "The apostle distinguishes faith from works; he says, indeed, that grace is not of works, but he does not say that it is not of faith." This, indeed, is true. But Jesus says that faith itself also is the work of God, and commands us to work it. For the Jews said to Him, "What shall we do that we may work the work of God? Jesus answered, and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent." The apostle, therefore, distinguishes faith from works, just as Judah is distinguished from Israel in the two kingdoms of the Hebrews, although Judah is Israel itself. And he says that a man is justified by faith and not by works, because faith itself is first given, from which may be obtained other things which are specially characterized as works, in which a man may live righteously. For he himself also says, "By grace ye are saved through faith; and this not of yourselves; but it is the gift of God," -- that is to say, "And in saying 'through faith,' even faith itself is not of yourselves, but is God's gift." "Not of works," he says, "lest any man should be lifted up." For it is often said, "He deserved to believe, because he was a good man even before he believed." Which may be said of Cornelius since his alms were accepted and his prayers heard before he had believed on Christ; and yet without some faith he neither gave alms nor prayed. For how did he call on him on whom he had not believed? But if he could have been saved without the faith of Christ the Apostle Peter would not have been sent as an

architect to build him up; although, "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it." And we are told, Faith is of ourselves; other things which pertain to works of righteousness are of the Lord; as if faith did not belong to the building,--as if, I say, the foundation did not belong to the building. But if this primarily and especially belongs to it, he labours in vain who seeks to build up the faith by preaching, unless the Lord in His mercy builds it up from within. Whatever, therefore, of good works Cornelius performed, as well before he believed in Christ as when he believed and after he had believed, are all to be ascribed to God, lest, perchance any man be lifted up.

### **CHAP. 13 [VIII.] --THE EFFECT OF DIVINE GRACE.**

Accordingly, our only Master and Lord Himself, when He had said what I have above mentioned,--"This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent,"--says a little afterwards in that same discourse of His, "I said unto you that ye also have seen me and have not believed. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." What is the meaning of "shall come to me," but, "shall believe in me"? But it is the Father's gift that this may be the case. Moreover, a little after He says, "Murmur not among yourselves. No one can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all teachable of God. Every man that hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me." What is the meaning of, "Every man that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh unto me," except that there is none who hears from the Father, and learns, who cometh not to me? For if every one who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes, certainly every one who does not come has not heard from the Father; for if he had heard and learned, he would come. For no one has heard and

learned, and has not come; but every one, as the Truth declares, who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes. Far removed from the senses of the flesh is this teaching in which the Father is heard, and teaches to come to the Son. Engaged herein is also the Son Himself, because He is His Word by which He thus teaches; and He does not do this through the ear of the flesh, but of the heart. Herein engaged, also, at the same time, is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son; and He, too, teaches, and does not teach separately, since we have learned that the workings of the Trinity are inseparable. And that is certainly the same Holy Spirit of whom the apostle says, "We, however, having the same Spirit of faith." But this is especially attributed to the Father, for the reason that of Him is begotten the Only Begotten, and from Him proceeds the Holy Spirit, of which it would be tedious to argue more elaborately; and I think that my work in fifteen books on the Trinity which God is, has already reached you. Very far removed, I say, from the senses of the flesh is this instruction wherein God is heard and teaches. We see that many come to the Son because we see that many believe on Christ, but when and how they have heard this from the Father, and have learned, we see not. It is true that that grace is exceedingly secret, but who doubts that it is grace? This grace, therefore, which is hiddenly bestowed in human hearts by the Divine gift, is rejected by no hard heart, because it is given for the sake of first taking away the hardness of the heart. When, therefore, the Father is heard within, and teaches, so that a man comes to the Son, He takes away the heart of stone and gives a heart of flesh, as in the declaration of the prophet He has promised. Because He thus makes them children and vessels of mercy which He has prepared for glory.

**CHAP. 14.--WHY THE FATHER DOES NOT TEACH ALL THAT THEY MAY COME TO CHRIST.**

Why, then, does He not teach all that they may come to Christ, except because all whom He teaches, He teaches in mercy, while those whom He teaches not, in judgment He teaches not? Since, "On whom He will He has mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth." But He has mercy when He gives good things. He hardens when He recompenses what is deserved. Or if, as some would prefer to distinguish them, those words also are his to whom the apostle says, "Thou sayest then unto me," so that he may be regarded as having said, "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will, and whom He will He hardeneth," as well as those which follow,--to wit, "What is it that is still complained of? for who resists His will?" does the apostle answer, "O man, what thou hast said is false?" No; but he says, "O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Doth the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump?" and what follows, which you very well know. And yet in a certain sense the Father teaches all men to come to His Son. For it was not in vain that it was written in the prophets, "And they shall all be teachable of God." And when He too had premised this testimony, He added, "Every man, therefore, who has heard of the Father, and has learned, cometh to me." As, therefore, we speak justly when we say concerning any teacher of literature who is alone in a city, He teaches literature here to everybody,--not that all men learn, but that there is none who learns literature there who does not learn from him,--so we justly say, God teaches all men to come to Christ, not because all come, but because none comes in any other way. And why He does not teach all men the apostle explained, as far as he judged that it was to be explained, because, "willing to show His wrath, and to exhibit His power, He endured with much patience the vessels of wrath which were perfected for destruction; and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy which He has prepared for glory." Hence it is that the "word of the cross is foolishness to them

that perish; but unto them that are saved it is the power of God." God teaches all such to come to Christ, for He wills all such to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth. And if He had willed to teach even those to whom the word of the cross is foolishness to come to Christ beyond all doubt these also would have come. For He neither deceives nor is deceived when He says, "Every one that hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, cometh to me." Away, then, with the thought that any one cometh not, who has heard of the Father and has learned.

### **CHAP. 15.--IT IS BELIEVERS THAT ARE TAUGHT OF GOD.**

"Why," say they, "does He not teach all men?" If we should say that they whom He does not teach are unwilling to learn, we shall be met with the answer: And what becomes of what he said to Him, "O God, Thou wilt turn us again, and quicken us" ? Or if God does not make men willing who were not willing, on what principle does the Church pray, according to the Lord's commandment, for her persecutors? For thus also the blessed Cyprian would have it to be understood that we say, "Thy will be done, as in heaven so in earth,"--that is, as in those who have already believed, and who are, as it were, heaven, so also in those who do not believe, and on this account are still the earth. What, then, do we pray for on behalf of those who are unwilling to believe, except that God would work in them to will also? Certainly the apostle says, "Brethren, my heart's good will, indeed, and my prayer to God for them, is for their salvation." He prays for those who do not believe,-- for what, except that they may believe? For in no other way do they obtain salvation. If, then, the faith of the petitioners precede the grace of God, does the faith of them on whose behalf prayer is made that they may believe precede the grace of God?--since this is the very thing that is besought for them, that on them that believe not--that is, who have not faith--faith

itself may be bestowed ? When, therefore, the gospel is preached, some believe, some believe not; but they who believe at the voice of the preacher from without, hear of the Father from within, and learn; while they who do not believe, hear outwardly, but inwardly do not hear nor learn;--that is to say, to the former it is given to believe; to the latter it is not given. Because "no man," says He, "cometh to me, except the Father which sent me draw him." And this is more plainly said afterwards. For after a little time, when He was speaking of eating his flesh and drinking His blood, and some even of His disciples said, "This is a hard saying, who can hear it? Jesus, knowing in Himself that His disciples murmured at this, said unto them, Doth this offend you?" And a little after He said, "The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and life; but there are some among you which believe not." And immediately the evangelist says, "For Jesus knew from the beginning who were the believers, and who should betray Him; and He said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me except it were given him of my Father." Therefore, to be drawn to Christ by the Father, and to hear and learn of the Father in order to come to Christ, is nothing else than to receive from the Father the gift by which to believe in Christ. For it was not the hearers of the gospel that were distinguished from those who did not hear, but the believers from those who did not believe, by Him who said, "No man cometh to me except it were given him of my Father."

#### **CHAP. 16.--WHY THE GIFT OF FAITH IS NOT GIVEN TO ALL.**

Faith, then, as well in its beginning as in its completion, is God's gift; and let no one have any doubt whatever, unless he desires to resist the plainest sacred writings, that this gift is given to some, while to some it is not given. But why it is not given to all ought not to disturb the believer, who believes that from one all have gone into a



condemnation, which undoubtedly is most righteous; so that even if none were delivered therefrom, there would be no just cause for finding fault with God. Whence it is plain that it is a great grace for many to be delivered, and to acknowledge in those that are not delivered what would be due to themselves; so that he that glorieth may glory not in his own merits, which he sees to be equalled in those that are condemned, but in the Lord. But why He delivers one rather than another,--" His judgments are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out." For it is better in this case for us to hear or to say, "O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" than to dare to speak as if we could know what He has chosen to be kept secret. Since, moreover, He could not will anything unrighteous.

**CHAP. 17 [IX.]--HIS ARGUMENT IN HIS LETTER AGAINST PORPHYRY, AS TO WHY THE GOSPEL CAME SO LATE INTO THE WORLD.**

But that which you remember my saying in a certain small treatise of mine against Porphyry, under the title of The Time of the Christian Religion, I so said for the sake of escaping this more careful and elaborate argument about grace; although its meaning, which could be unfolded elsewhere or by others, was not wholly omitted, although I had been unwilling in that place to explain it. For, among other matters, I spoke thus in answer to the question proposed, why it was after so long a time that Christ came: "Accordingly, I say, since they do not object to Christ that all do not follow His teaching (for even they themselves feel that this could not be objected at all with any justice, either to the wisdom of the philosophers or even to the deity of their own gods), what will they reply, if--leaving out of the question that depth of God's wisdom and knowledge where perchance some other divine plan is far more secretly hidden, without prejudging also other causes, which cannot be traced out by

the wise--we say to them only this, for the sake of brevity in the arguing of this question, that Christ willed to appear to men, and that His doctrine should be preached among them, at that time when He knew, and at that place where He knew, that there were some who would believe on Him. For at those times, and in those places, at which His gospel was not preached, He foreknew that all would be in His preaching such as, not indeed all, but many were in His bodily presence, who would not believe on Him, even when the dead were raised by Him; such as we see many now, who, although the declarations of the prophets concerning Him are fulfilled by such manifestations, are still unwilling to believe, and prefer to resist by human astuteness, rather than yield to divine authority so dear and perspicuous, and so lofty, and sublimely made known, so long as the human understanding is small and weak in its approach to divine truth. What wonder is it, then, if Christ knew the world in former ages to be so full of unbelievers, that He should reasonably refuse to appear, or to be preached to them, who, as He foreknew, would believe neither His words nor His miracles? For it is not incredible that all at that time were such as from His coming even to the present time we marvel that so many have been and are. And yet from the beginning of the human race, sometimes more hiddenly, sometimes more evidently, even as to Divine Providence the times seemed to be fitting, there has neither been a failure of prophecy, nor were there wanting those who believed on Him; as well from Adam to Moses, as in the people of Israel itself which by a certain special mystery was a prophetic people; and in other nations before He had come in the flesh. For as some are mentioned in the sacred Hebrew books, as early as the time of Abraham,--neither of his fleshly race nor of the people of Israel nor of the foreign society among the people of Israel,--who were, nevertheless, sharers in their sacrament, why may we not believe that there were others elsewhere among other people, here and there, although we do not read any mention

of them in the same authorities ? Thus the salvation of this religion, by which only true one true salvation is truly promised, never failed him who was worthy of it; and whoever it failed was not worthy of it. And from the very beginning of the propagation of man, even to the end, the gospel is preached, to some for a reward, to some for judgment; and thus also those to whom the faith was not announced at all were foreknown as those who would not believe; and those to whom it was announced, although they were not such as would believe, are set forth as an example for the former; while those to whom it is announced who should believe, are prepared for the kingdom of heaven, and the company of the holy angels."

#### **CHAP. 18.--THE PRECEDING ARGUMENT APPLIED TO THE PRESENT TIME.**

Do you not see that my desire was, without any prejudice of the hidden counsel of God, and of other reasons, to say what might seem sufficient about Christ's foreknowledge, to convince the unbelief of the pagans who had brought forward this question? For what is more true than that Christ foreknew who should believe on Him, and at what times and places they should believe ? But whether by the preaching of Christ to themselves by themselves they were to have faith, or whether they would receive it by God's gift,--that is, whether God only foreknew them, or also predestinated them, I did not at that time think it necessary to inquire or to discuss. I Therefore what I said, "that Christ willed to appear to men at that time, and that His doctrine should be preached among them when He knew, and where He knew, that there were those who would believe on Him," may also thus be said, "That Christ willed to appear to men at that time, and that His gospel should be preached among those, whom He knew, and where He knew, that there were those who had been elected in Himself before the foundation of the word." But since, if it were so

said, it would make the reader desirous of asking about those things which now by the warning of Pelagian errors must of necessity be discussed with greater copiousness and care, it seemed to me that what at that time was sufficient should be briefly said, leaving to one side, as I said, the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God, and without prejudging other reasons, concerning which I thought that we might more fittingly argue, not then, but at some other time.

#### **CHAP. 19 [X]--IN WHAT RESPECTS PREDESTINATION AND GRACE DIFFER.**

Moreover, that which I said, "That the salvation of this religion has never been lacking to him who was worthy of it, and that he to whom it was lacking was not worthy,"--if it be discussed and it be asked whence any man can be worthy there are not wanting those who say--by human will. But we say, by divine grace or predestination. Further, between grace and predestination there is only this difference, that predestination is the preparation for grace, while grace is the donation itself. When, therefore the apostle says, "Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus in good works," it is grace; but what follows--"which God hath prepared that we should walk in them"--is predestination, which cannot exist without foreknowledge, although foreknowledge may exist without predestination; because God foreknew by predestination those things which He was about to do, whence it was said, "He made those things that shah be." Moreover, He is able to foreknow even those things which He does not Himself do,--as all sins whatever. Because, although there are some which are in such wise sins as that they are also the penalties of sins, whence it is said, "God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient," it is not in such a case the sin that is God's, but the judgment. Therefore God's predestination of good is,

as I have said, the preparation of grace; which grace is the effect of that predestination. Therefore when God promised to Abraham in his seed the faith of the nations, saying, "I have established thee a father of many nations," whence the apostle says, "Therefore it is of faith, that the promise, according to grace, might be established to all the seed," He promised not from the power of our will but from His own predestination. For He promised what He Himself would do, not what men would do. Because, although men do those good things which pertain to God's worship, He Himself makes them to do what He has commanded; it is not they that cause Him to do what He has promised. Otherwise the fulfilment of God's promises would not be in the power of God, but in that of men; and thus what was promised by God to Abraham would be given to Abraham by men themselves. Abraham, however, did not believe thus, but "he believed, giving glory to God, that what He promised He is able also to do." He does not say, "to foretell"--he does not say, "to foreknow;" for He can foretell and foreknow the doings of strangers also; but he says, "He is able also to do;" and thus he is speaking not of the doings of others, but of His own.

#### **CHAP. 20.--DID GOD PROMISE THE GOOD WORKS OF THE NATIONS AND NOT THEIR FAITH, TO ABRAHAM?**

Did God, perchance, promise to Abraham in his seed the good works of the nations, so as to promise that which He Himself does, but did not promise the faith of the Gentiles, which men do for themselves; but so as to promise what He Himself does, did He foreknow that men would effect that faith? The apostle, indeed, does not speak thus, because God promised children to Abraham, who should follow the footsteps of his faith, as he very plainly says. But if He promised the works, and not the faith of the Gentiles certainly since they are not good works unless they are of faith (for "the righteous lives of

faith," and, " Whatsoever is not of faith is sin," and, "Without faith it is impossible to please" ), it is nevertheless in man's power that God should fulfil what He has promised. For unless man should do what without the gift of God pertains to man, he will not cause God to give,--that is, unless man have faith of himself. God does not fulfil what He has promised, that works of righteousness should be given by God. And thus that God should be able to fulfil His promises is not in God's power, but man's. And if truth and piety do not forbid our believing this, let us believe with Abraham, that what He has promised He is able also to perform. But He promised children to Abraham; and this men cannot be unless they have faith, therefore He gives faith also.

**CHAP. 21.--IT IS TO BE WONDERED AT THAT MEN SHOULD RATHER TRUST TO THEIR OWN WEAKNESS THAN TO GOD'S STRENGTH.**

Certainly, when the apostle says, "Therefore it is of faith that the promise may be sure according to grace," I marvel that men would rather entrust themselves to their own weakness, than to the strength of God's promise. But sayest thou, God's will concerning myself is to me uncertain? What then? Is thine own will concerning thyself certain to thee? and dost thou not fear,--"Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall"? Since, then, both are uncertain, why does not man commit his faith, hope, and love to the stronger will rather than to the weaker?

**CHAP. 22.--GOD'S PROMISE IS SURE.**

"But," say they, "when it is said, ' If thou believest, thou shalt be saved, one of these things is required; the other is offered. What is required is in man's power; what is offered is in God's." Why are not both in God's, as well what He commands as what He offers? For He

is asked to give what He commands. Believers ask that their faith may be increased; they ask on behalf of those who do not believe, that faith may be given to them; therefore both in its increase and in its beginnings, faith is the gift of God. But it is said thus: "If thou believest, thou shalt be saved," in the same way that it is said, "If by the Spirit ye shall mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live." For in this case also, of these two things one is required, the other is offered. It is said, "If by the Spirit ye shall mortify the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live." Therefore, that we mortify the deeds of the flesh is required, but that we may live is offered. Is it, then, fitting for us to say, that to mortify the deeds of the flesh is not a gift of God, and not to confess it to be a gift of God, because we hear it required of us, with the offer of life as a reward if we shall do it? Away with this being approved by the partakers and champions of grace! This is the condemnable error of the Pelagians, whose mouths the apostle immediately stopped when he added, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God;" lest we should believe that we mortify the deeds of the flesh, not by God's Spirit, but by our own. And of this Spirit of God, moreover, he was speaking in that place where he says, "But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing unto every man what is his own, as He will;" and among all these things, as you know, he also named faith. As, therefore, although it is the gift of God to mortify the deeds of the flesh, yet it is required of us, and life is set before us as a reward; so also faith is the gift of God, although when it is said, "If thou believest, thou shalt be saved," faith is required of us, and salvation is proposed to us as a reward. For these things are both commanded us, and are shown to be God's gifts, in order that we may understand both that we do them, and that God makes us to do them, as He most plainly says by the prophet Ezekiel. For what is plainer than when He says, "I will cause you to do"? Give heed to that passage of Scripture, and you will see that God promises that He will make them to do

those things which He commands to be done. He truly is not silent as to the merits but as to the evil deeds, of those to whom He shows that He is returning good for evil, by the very fact that He causeth them thenceforth to have good works, in causing them to do the divine commands.

**CHAP. 23 [XII.] --REMARKABLE ILLUSTRATIONS OF GRACE AND PREDESTINATION IN INFANTS, AND IN CHRIST.**

But all this reasoning, whereby we maintain that the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord is truly grace, that is, is not given according to our merits, although it is most manifestly asserted by the witness of the divine declarations, yet, among those who think that they are withheld from all zeal for piety unless they can attribute to themselves something, which they first give that it may be recompensed to them again, involves somewhat of a difficulty in respect of the condition of grown-up people, who are already exercising the choice of will. But when we come to the case of infants, and to the Mediator between God and man Himself, the man Christ Jesus, there is wanting all assertion of human merits that precede the grace of God, because the former are not distinguished from others by any preceding good merits that they should belong to the Deliverer of men; any more than He Himself being Himself a man, was made the Deliverer of men by virtue of any precedent human merits.

**CHAP. 24.--THAT NO ONE IS JUDGED ACCORDING TO WHAT HE WOULD HAVE DONE IF HE HAD LIVED LONGER.**

For who can hear that infants, baptized in the condition of mere infancy, are said to depart from this life by reason of their future



merits, and that others not baptized are said to die in the same age because their future merits are foreknown,--but as evil; so that God rewards or condemns in them not their good or evil life, but no life at all? The apostle, indeed, fixed a limit which man's incautious suspicion, to speak gently, ought not to transgress, for he says, "We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive according to the things which he has done by means of the body, whether it be good or evil." "Has done," he said; and he did not add, "or would have done." But I know not whence this thought should have entered the minds of such men, that infants' future merits (which shall not be) should be punished or honoured. But why is it said that a man is to be judged according to those things which he has done by means of the body, when many things are done by the mind alone, and not by the body, nor by any member of the body; and for the most part things of such importance, that a most righteous punishment would be due to such thought, such as,--to say nothing of others,--that "The fool hath said in his heart there is no God"? What, then, is the meaning of, "According to those things that he hath done by means of the body," except according to those things which he has done during that time in which he was in the body, so that we may understand "by means of the body" as meaning "throughout the season of bodily life"? But after the body, no one will be in the body except at the last resurrection,--not for the purpose of establishing any claims of merit, but for the sake of receiving recompenses for good merits, and enduring punishments for evil merits. But in this intermediate period between the putting off and the taking again of the body, the souls are either tormented or they are in repose, according to those things which they have done during the period of the bodily life. And to this period of the bodily life moreover pertains, what the Pelagians deny, but Christ's Church confesses, original sin; and according to whether this is by God's grace loosed, or by God's judgment not loosed, when infants die, they

pass, on the one hand, by the merit of regeneration from evil to good, or on the other, by the merit of their origin from evil to evil. The catholic faith acknowledges this, and even some heretics, without any contradiction, agree to this. But in the height of wonder and astonishment I am unable to discover whence men, whose intelligence your letters show to be by no means contemptible, could entertain the opinion that any one should be judged not according to the merits that he had as long as he was in the body, but according to the merits which he would have had if he had lived longer in the body; and I should not dare to believe that there were such men, if I could venture to disbelieve you.

But I hope that God will interpose, so that when they are admonished they may at once perceive, that if those sins which, as is said, would have been, can rightly be punished by God's judgment in those who are not baptized, they may also be rightly remitted by God's grace in those who are baptized. For whoever says that future sins can only be punished by God's judgment, but cannot be pardoned by God's mercy, ought to consider how great a wrong he is doing to God and His grace; as if future sin could be foreknown, and could not be foregone. And if this is absurd, it is the greater reason that help should be afforded to those who would be sinners if they lived longer, when they die in early life, by means of that laver wherein sins are washed away.

**CHAP. 25 [XIII.]--POSSIBLY THE BAPTIZED INFANTS WOULD HAVE REPENTED IF THEY HAD LIVED, AND THE UNBAPTIZED NOT.**

But if, perchance, they say that sins are re-remitted to penitents, and that those who die in infancy are not baptized because they are foreknown as not such as would repent if they should live, while God

has foreknown that those who are baptized and die in infancy would have repented if they had lived, let them observe and see that if it be so it is not in this case original sins which are punished in infants that die without baptism, but what would have been the sins of each one had he lived; and also in baptized infants, that it is not original sins that are washed away, but their own future sins if they should live, since they could not sin except in more mature age; but that some were foreseen as such as would repent, and others as such as would not repent, therefore some were baptized, and others departed from this life without baptism. If the Pelagians should dare to say this, by their denial of original sin they would thus be relieved of the necessity of seeking, on behalf of infants outside of the kingdom of God, for some place of I know not what happiness of their own; especially since they are convinced that they cannot have eternal life because they have not eaten the flesh nor drank the blood of Christ; and because in them who have no sin at all, baptism, which is given for the remission of sins, is falsified. For they would go on to say that there is no original sin, but that those who as infants are released are either baptized or not baptized according to their future merits if they should live, and that according to their future merits they either receive or do not receive the body and blood of Christ, without which they absolutely cannot have life; and are baptized for the true remission of sins although they derived no sins from Adam, because the sins are remitted unto them concerning which God foreknew that they would repent. Thus with the greatest ease they would plead and would win their cause, in which they deny that there is any original sin, and contend that the grace of God is only given according to our merits. But that the future merits of men, which merits will never come into existence are beyond all doubt no merits at all, it is certainly most easy to see: for this reason even the Pelagians were not able to say this; and much rather these ought not to say it. For it cannot be said with what pain I find that they who with us on

catholic authority condemn the error of those heretics, have not seen this, which the Pelagians themselves have seen to be most false and absurd.

#### **CHAP. 26 [XIV]--REFERENCE TO CYPRIAN'S TREATISE "ON THE MORTALITY."**

Cyprian wrote a work *On the Mortality*, known with approval to many and almost all who love ecclesiastical literature, wherein he says that death is not only not disadvantageous to believers, but that it is even found to be advantageous, because it withdraws men from the risks of sinning, and establishes them in a security of not sinning. But wherein is the advantage of this, if even future sins which have not been committed are punished? Yet he argues most copiously and well that the risks of sinning are not wanting in this life, and that they do not continue after this life is done; where also he adduces that testimony from the book of Wisdom: "He was taken away, lest wickedness should alter his understanding." And this was also adduced by me, though you said that those brethren of yours had rejected it on the ground of its not having been brought forward from a canonical book; as if, even setting aside the attestation of this book, the thing itself were not clear which I wished to be taught therefrom. For what Christian would dare to deny that the righteous man, if he should be prematurely laid hold of by death, will be in repose? Let who will, say this, and what man of sound faith will think that he can withstand it? Moreover, if he should say that the righteous man, if he should depart from his righteousness in which he has long lived, and should die in that impiety after having lived in it, I say not a year, but one day, will go hence into the punishment due to the wicked, his righteousness having no power in the future to avail him,--will any believer contradict this evident truth? Further, if we are asked whether, if he had died then at the time that he was righteous, he

would have incurred punishment or repose, shall we hesitate to answer, repose? This is the whole reason why it is said,--"whoever says it,--" He was taken away lest wickedness should alter his understanding." For it was said in reference to the risks of this life, not with reference to the foreknowledge of God, who foreknew that which was to be, not that which was not to be--that is, that He would bestow on him an untimely death in order that he might be withdrawn from the uncertainty of temptations; not that he would sin, since he was not to remain in temptation. Because, concerning this life, we read in the book of Job, "Is not the life of man upon earth a temptation?" But why it should be granted to some to be taken away from the perils of this life while they are righteous, while others who are righteous until they fall from righteousness are kept in the same risks in a more lengthened life,--who has known the mind of the Lord? And yet it is permitted to be understood from this, that even those righteous people who maintain good and pious characters, even to the maturity of old age and to the last day of this life, must not glory in their own merits, but in the Lord. since He who took away the righteous man from the shortness of life, lest wickedness should alter his understanding, Himself guards the righteous man in any length of life, that wickedness may not alter his understanding. But why He should have kept the righteous man here to fall, when He might have withdrawn him before,--His judgments, although absolutely righteous, are yet unsearchable.

#### **CHAP. 27.--THE BOOK OF WISDOM OBTAINS IN THE CHURCH THE AUTHORITY OF CANONICAL SCRIPTURE.**

And since these things are so, the judgment of the book of Wisdom ought not to be repudiated, since for so long a course of years that book has deserved to be read in the Church of Christ from the station of the readers of the Church of Christ, and to be heard by all

Christians, from bishops downwards, even to the lowest lay believers, penitents, and catechumens, with the veneration paid to divine authority. For assuredly, if, from those who have been before me in commenting on the divine Scriptures, I should bring forward a defence of this judgment, which we are now called upon to defend more carefully and copiously than usual against the new error of the Pelagians,--that is, that God's grace is not given according to our merits, and that it is given freely to whom it is given, because it is neither of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy; but that by righteous judgment it is not given to whom it is not given, because there is no unrighteousness with God;-if, therefore, I should put forth a defence of this opinion from catholic commentators on the divine oracles who have preceded us, assuredly these brethren for whose sake I am now discoursing would acquiesce, for this you have intimated in your letters. What need is there, then, for us to look into the writings of those who, before this heresy sprang up, had no necessity to be conversant in a question so difficult of solution as this, which beyond a doubt they would have done if they had been compelled to answer such things? Whence it arose that they touched upon what they thought of God's grace briefly in some passages of their writings, and cursorily; but on those matters which they argued against the enemies of the Church, and in exhortations to every virtue by which to serve the firing and true God for the purpose of attaining eternal life and true happiness, they dwelt at length. But the grace of God, what it could do, shows itself artlessly by its frequent mention in prayers; for what God commands to be done would not be asked for from God, unless it could be given by Him that it should be done.

**CHAP. 28.--CYPRIAN'S TREATISE "ON THE MORTALITY."**

But if any wish to be instructed in the opinions of those who have handled the subject, it behoves them to prefer to all commentators the book of Wisdom, where it is read, "He was taken away, that wickedness should not alter his understanding;" because illustrious commentators, even in the times nearest to the apostles, preferred it to themselves, seeing that when they made use of it for a testimony they believed that they were making use of nothing but a divine testimony; and certainly it appears that the most blessed Cyprian, in order to commend the advantage of an earlier death, contended that those who end this life, wherein sin is possible, are taken away from the risks of sins. In the same treatise, among other things, he says, "Why, when you are about to be with Christ, and are secure of the divine promise, do you not embrace being called to Christ, and rejoice that you are free from the devil?" And in another he says, "Why do we not hasten and run, that we may see our country, that we may hail our relatives? A great number of those who are dear to us are expecting us there,--a dense and abundant crowd of parents, brethren, sons, are longing for us; already secure of their own safety, but still anxious about our salvation." By these and such like sentiments, that teacher sufficiently and plainly testifies, in the clearest light of the catholic faith, that perils of sin and trials are to be feared even until the putting off of this body, but that afterwards no one shall suffer any such things. And even if he did not testify thus, when could any manner of Christian be in doubt on this matter? How, then, should it not have been of advantage to a man who has lapsed, and who finishes his life wretchedly in that same state of lapse, and passes into the punishment due to such as he,--how, I say, should it not have been of the greatest and highest advantage to such an one to be snatched by death from this sphere of temptations before his fall?

**CHAP. 29.--GOD'S DEALING DOES NOT DEPEND UPON ANY CONTINGENT MERITS OF MEN.**

And thus, unless we indulge in reckless disputation, the entire question is concluded concerning him who is taken away lest wickedness should alter his understanding. And the book of Wisdom, which for such a series of years has deserved to be read in Christ's Church, and in which this is read, ought not to suffer injustice because it withstands those who are mistaken on behalf of men's merit, so as to come in opposition to the most manifest grace of God: and this grace chiefly appears in infants, and while some of these baptized, and some not baptized, come to the end of this life, they sufficiently point to God's mercy and His judgment,--His mercy, indeed, gratuitous, His judgment, of debt. For if men should be judged according to the merits of their life, which merits they have been prevented by death from actually having, but would have had if they had lived, it would be of no advantage to him who is taken away lest wickedness should alter his understanding; it would be of no advantage to those who die in a state of lapse if they should die before. And this no Christian will venture to say. Wherefore our brethren, who with us on behalf of the catholic faith assail the pest of the Pelagian error, ought not to such an extent to favour the Pelagian opinion, wherein they conceive that God's grace is given according to our merits, as to endeavour (which they cannot dare) to invalidate a true sentiment, plainly and from ancient times Christian,--"He was taken away, lest wickedness should alter his understanding;" and to build up that which we should think, I do not say, no one would believe, but no one would dream,--to wit, that any deceased person would be judged according to those things which he would have done if he had lived for a more lengthened period. Surely thus what we say manifests itself clearly to be incontestable,--that the grace of God is not given according to our merits; so that ingenious men who



contradict this truth are constrained to say things which must be rejected from the ears and from the thoughts of all men.

### **CHAP. 30 [XV.]--THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS INSTANCE OF PREDESTINATION IS CHRIST JESUS.**

Moreover, the most illustrious Light of predestination and grace is the Saviour Himself,--the Mediator Himself between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. And, pray, by what preceding merits of its own, whether of works or of faith, did the human nature which is in Him procure for itself that it should be this? Let this have an answer, I beg. That man, whence did He deserve this--to be assumed by the Word co-eternal with the Father into unity of person, and be the only-begotten Son of God? Was it because any kind of goodness in Him preceded? What did He do before? What did He believe? What did He ask, that He should attain to this unspeakable excellence? Was it not by the act and the assumption of the Word that that man, from the time He began to be, began to be the only Son of God? Did not that woman, full of grace, conceive the only Son of God? Was He not born the only Son of God, of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary,--not of the lust of the flesh, but by God's peculiar gift? Was it to be feared that as age matured this man, He would sin of free will? Or was the will in Him not free on that account? and was it not so much the more free in proportion to the greater impossibility of His becoming the servant of sin? Certainly, in Him human nature--that is to say, our nature--specially received all those specially admirable gifts, and any others that may most truly be said to be peculiar to Him, by virtue of no preceding merits of its own. Let a man here answer to God if he dare, and say, Why was it not I also? And if he should heal "O than, who art thou that repliest against God?" let him not at this point restrain himself, but increase his impudence and say, "How is it that I heal Who art thou, O man? since I am what I

hear,--that is, a than, and He of whom I speak is but the same? Why should not I also be what He is? For it is by grace that He is such and so great; why is grace different when nature is common? Assuredly, there is no respect of persons with God." I say, not what Christian man, but what madman will say this?

### **CHAP. 31.--CHRIST PREDESTINATED TO BE THE SON OF GOD.**

Therefore in Him who is our Head let there appear to be the very fountain of grace, whence, according to the measure of every man, He diffuses Himself through all His members. It is by that grace that every man from the beginning of his faith becomes a Christian, by which grace that one man from His beginning became Christ. Of the same Spirit also the former is born again of which the latter was born. By the same Spirit is effected in us the remission of sins, by which Spirit it was effected that He should have no sin. God certainly foreknew that He would do these things. This, therefore, is that same predestination of the saints which most especially shone forth in the Saint of saints; and who is there of those who rightly understand the declarations of the truth that can deny this predestination? For we have learned that the Lord of glory Himself was predestinated in so far as the man was made the Son of God. The teacher of the Gentiles exclaims, in the beginning of his epistles, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God (which He had promised afore by His prophets in the Holy Scriptures) concerning His Son, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, who was predestinated the Son of God in power, according to the Spirit of sanctification by the resurrection of the dead." Therefore Jesus was predestinated, so that He who was to be the Son of David according to the flesh should yet be in power the Son of God, according to the Spirit of sanctification, because He was

born of the Holy Spirit and of the Virgin Mary. This is that ineffably accomplished sole taking up of man by God the Word, so that He might truly and properly be called at the same time the Son of God and the Son of man,--Son of man on account of the man taken up, and the Son of God on account of the God only-begotten who took Him up, so that a Trinity and not a Quaternity might be believed in. Such a transporting of human nature was predestinated, so great, so lofty, and so sublime that there was no exalting it more highly,--just as on our behalf that divinity had no possibility of more humbly putting itself off, than by the assumption of man's nature with the weakness of the flesh, even to the death of the cross. As, therefore, that one man was predestinated to be our Head, so we being many are predestinated to be His members. Here let human merits which have perished through Adam keep silence, and let that grace of God reign which reigns through Jesus Christ our Lord, the only Son of God, the one Lord. Let whoever can find in our Head the merits which preceded that peculiar generation, seek in us His members for those merits which preceded our manifold regeneration. For that generation was not recompensed to Christ, but given; that He should be born, namely, of the Spirit and the Virgin, separate from all entanglement of sin. Thus also our being born again of water and the Spirit is not recompensed to us for any merit, but freely given; and if faith has brought us to the layer of regeneration, we ought not therefore to suppose that we have first given anything, so that the regeneration of salvation should be recompensed to us again; because He made us to believe in Christ, who made for us a Christ on whom we believe. He makes in men the beginning and the completion of the faith in Jesus who made the man Jesus the beginner and finisher of faith; for thus, as you know, He is called in the epistle which is addressed to the Hebrews.

### **CHAP. 32 [XVI.]--THE TWOFOLD CALLING.**

God indeed calls many predestinated children of His, to make them members of His only predestinated Son,--not with that calling with which they were called who would not come to the marriage, since with that calling were called also the Jews, to whom Christ crucified is an offence, and the Gentiles, to whom Christ crucified is foolishness; but with that calling He calls the predestinated which the apostle distinguished when he said that he preached Christ, the wisdom of God and the power of God, to them that were called, Jews as well as Greeks. For thus he says "But unto them which are called," in order to show that there were some who were not called; knowing that there is a certain sure calling of those who are called according to God's purpose, whom He has foreknown and predestinated before to be conformed to the image of His Son. And it was this calling he meant when he said, "Not of works, but of Him that calleth; it was said unto her, That the elder shall serve the younger." Did he say, "Not of works, but of him that believeth"? Rather, he actually took this away from man, that he might give the whole to God. Therefore he said, "But of Him that calleth,"--not with any sort of calling whatever, but with that calling wherewith a man is made a believer.

**CHAP. 33.--IT IS IN THE POWER OF EVIL MEN TO SIN;  
BUT TO DO THIS OR THAT BY MEANS**

Moreover, it was this that he had in view when he said, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." And in that saying also consider for a little what was its purport. For when he had said, "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, that ye may not be wise in yourselves, that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, and so all Israel should be saved; as it is written, There shall come out of Sion one who shall deliver, and turn away impiety from Jacob: and this is the covenant to them from me, when I shall take away their

sins;" he immediately added, what is to be very carefully understood, "As concerning the gospel, indeed, they are enemies for your sakes: but as concerning the election, they are beloved for their fathers' sake." What is the meaning of, "as concerning the gospel, indeed, they are enemies for your sake," but that their enmity wherewith they put Christ to death was, without doubt, as we see, an advantage to the gospel? And he shows that this came about by God's ordering, who knew how to make a good use even of evil things; not that the vessels of wrath might be of advantage to Him, but that by His own good use of them they might be of advantage to the vessels of mercy. For what could be said more plainly than what is actually said, "As concerning the gospel, indeed, they are enemies for your sakes"? It is, therefore, in the power of the wicked to sin; but that in sinning they should do this or that by that wickedness is not in their power, but in God's, who divides the darkness and regulates it; so that hence even what they do contrary to God's will is not fulfilled except it be God's will. We read in the Acts of the Apostles that when the apostles had been sent away by the Jews, and had come to their own friends, and shown them what great things the priests and elders said to them, they all with one consent lifted up their voices to the Lord and said, "Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein; who, by the mouth of our father David, thy holy servant, hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the peoples imagine vain things ? The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes were gathered together against the Lord, and against His Christ. For in truth, there have assembled together in this city against Thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, Herod and Pilate, and the people of Israel, to do whatever Thy hand and counsel predestinated to be done." See what is said: "As concerning the gospel, indeed, they are enemies for your sakes." Because God's hand and counsel predestinated such things to be done by the hostile Jews as were necessary for the gospel, for our

sakes. But what is it that follows? "But as concerning the election, they are beloved for their fathers' sakes." For are those enemies who perished in their enmity and those of the same people who still perish in their opposition to Christ,--are those chosen and beloved? Away with the thought! Who is so utterly foolish as to say this? But both expressions, although contrary to one another--that is, "enemies" and "beloved"--are appropriate, though not to the same men, yet to the same Jewish people, and to the same carnal seed of Israel, of whom some belonged to the falling away, and some to the blessing of Israel himself. For the apostle previously explained this meaning more dearly when he said, "That which Israel wrought for, he hath not obtained; but the election hath obtained in and the rest were blinded? Yet in both cases it was the very same Israel. Where, therefore, we hear, "Israel hath not obtained," or, "The rest were blinded," there are to be understood the enemies for our sakes; but where we hear, "that the election hath obtained it," there are to be understood the beloved for their father's sakes, to which fathers those things were assuredly promised; because "the promises were made to Abraham and his seed," whence also in that olive-tree is grafted the wild olive-tree of the Gentiles. Now subsequently we certainly ought to fall in with the election, of which he says that it is according to grace, not according to debt, because "there was made a remnant by the election of grace" This election obtained it, the rest bring blinded. As concerning this election, the Israelites were beloved for the sake of their fathers. For they were not called with that calling of which it is said, "Many are called," but with that whereby the chosen are called. Whence also after he had said, "But as concerning the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes," he went on to add those words whence this discussion arose: "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance,"--that is, they are firmly established without change. Those who belong to this calling are all teachable by God; nor can any of them say, "I believed in

order to bring thus called," because the mercy of God anticipated him, because he was so called in order that he might believe. For all who are teachable of God come to the Son because they have heard and learned from the Father through the Son, who most clearly says, "Every one who has heard of the Father, and has learned, cometh unto me." But of such as these none perishes, because "of all that the Father hath given Him, He will lose none." Whoever, therefore, is of these does not perish at all; nor was any who perishes ever of these. For which reason it is said, "They went out from among us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would certainly have continued with us."

**CHAP. 34 [XVII.]--THE SPECIAL CALLING OF THE ELECT IS NOT BECAUSE THEY HAVE BELIEVED, BUT IN ORDER THAT THEY MAY BELIEVE.**

Let us, then, understand the calling whereby they become elected,--not those who are elected because they have believed, but who are elected that they may believe. For the Lord Himself also sufficiently explains this calling when He says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." For if they had been elected because they had believed, they themselves would certainly have first chosen Him by believing in Him, so that they should deserve to be elected. But He takes away this supposition altogether when He says "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." And yet they themselves, beyond a doubt, chose Him when they believed on Him. Whence it is not for any other reason that He says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," than because they did not choose Him that He should choose them, but He chose them that they might choose Him; because His mercy preceded them according to grace, not according to debt. Therefore He chose them out of the world while He was wearing flesh, but as those who were already chosen in Himself

before the foundation of the world. This is the changeless truth concerning predestination and grace. For what is it that the apostle says, "As He hath chosen us in Himself before the foundation of the world"? And assuredly, if this were said because God foreknew that they would believe, not because He Himself would make them believers, the Son is speaking against such a foreknowledge as that when He says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you;" when God should rather have foreknown this very thing, that they themselves would have chosen Him, so that they might deserve to be chosen by Him. Therefore they were elected before the foundation of the world with that predestination in which God foreknew what He Himself would do; but they were elected out of the world with that calling whereby God fulfilled that which He predestinated. For whom He predestinated, them He also called, with that calling, to wit, which is according to the purpose. Not others, therefore, but those whom He predestinated, them He also called; nor other, but those whom He so called, them He also justified; nor others, but those whom He predestinated, called, and justified, them He also glorified; assuredly to that end which has no end. Therefore God elected believers; but He chose them that they might be so, not because they were already so. The Apostle James says: "Has not God chosen the poor in this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which God hath promised to them that love Him?" By choosing them, makes them heirs of the kingdom; because He is rightly said to choose that in them, in order to make which in them He chose them. I ask, who can hear the Lord saying, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you," and can dare to say that men believe in order to be elected, when they are rather elected to believe; lest against the judgment of truth they be found to have first chosen Christ to whom Christ says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen 'you'?"



## **CHAP. 35 [XVIII.]--ELECTION IS FOR THE PURPOSE OF HOLINESS.**

Who can hear the apostle saying, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us in all spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ; as He has chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without spot in His sight; in love predestinating us to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself according to the good pleasure of His will, wherein He hath shown us favour in His beloved Son; in whom we have redemption through His blood, the remission of sins according to the riches of His grace, which hath abounded to us in all wisdom and prudence; that He might show to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He hath purposed in Himself, in the dispensation of the fulness of times, to restore all things in Christ, which are in heaven, and in the earth, in Him: in whom also we have obtained a share, being predestinated according to the purpose; who worketh all things according to the counsel of His will, that we should be to the praise of his glory;" --who, I say, can hear these words with attention and intelligence, and can venture to have any doubt concerning a truth so dear as this which we are defending? God chose Christ's members in Him before the foundation of the world; and how should He choose those who as yet did not exist, except by predestinating them? Therefore He chose us by predestinating us. Would he choose the unholy and the unclean? Now if the question be proposed, whether He would choose such, or rather the holy and unstained, who can ask which of these he may answer, and not give his opinion at once in favour of the holy and pure?

## **CHAP. 36.--GOD CHOSE THE RIGHTEOUS; NOT THOSE WHOM HE FORESAW AS BEING OF THEMSELVES, BUT**

## **THOSE WHOM HE PREDESTINATED FOR THE PURPOSE OF MAKING SO.**

"Therefore," says the Pelagian, "He foreknew who would be holy and immaculate by the choice of free will, and on that account elected them before the foundation of the world in that same foreknowledge of His in which He foreknew that they would be such. Therefore He elected them," says he, "before they existed, predestinating them to be children whom He foreknew to be holy and immaculate. Certainly He did not make them so; nor did He foresee that He would make them so, but that they would be so." Let us, then, look into the words of the apostle and see whether He chose us before the foundation of the world because we were going to be holy and immaculate, or in order that we might be so. "Blessed," says he, "be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us in all spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ; even as He hath chosen us in Himself before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and unspotted." Not, then, because we were to be so, but that we might be so. Assuredly it is certain,--assuredly it is manifest. Certainly we were to be such for the reason that He has chosen us, predestinating us to be such by His grace. Therefore "He blessed us with spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ Jesus, even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and immaculate in His sight, order that we might not in so great a benefit of grace glory concerning the good pleasure of our will. "In which," says he, "He hath shown us favour in His beloved Son,"--in which, certainly, His own will, He hath shown us favour. Thus, it is said, He hath shown us grace by grace, even as it is said, He has made us righteous by righteous . "In whom," he says, "we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches is His grace, which has abounded to us in all was according to His own pleasure, should aid it to become so. But when he had said, "According to His

good pleasure," he added, "which He purposed in Him," that is, in His beloved Son, "in the dispensation of the fulness of times to restore all things in Christ, which are in heaven, and which are in earth, in Him in whom also we too have obtained a lot, being predestinated according to His purpose who worketh all things according to the counsel of His will; that we should be to the praise of His glory."

**CHAP. 37.--WE WERE ELECTED AND PREDESTINATED, NOT BECAUSE WE WERE GOING TO BE HOLY, BUT IN ORDER THAT WE MIGHT BE SO.**

It would be too tedious to argue about the several points. But you see without doubt, you see with what evidence of apostolic declaration this grace is defended, in opposition to which human merits are set up, as if man should first give something for it to be recompensed to him again. Therefore God chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, predestinating us to the adoption of children, not because we were going to be of ourselves holy and immaculate, but He chose and predestinated us that we might be so. Moreover, He did this according to the good pleasure of His will, so that nobody might glory concerning his own will, but about God's will towards himself. He did this according to the riches of His grace, according to His good-will, which He purposed in His beloved Son; in whom we have obtained a share, being predestinated according to the purpose, not ours, but His, who worketh all things to such an extent as that He worketh in us to will also. Moreover, He worketh according to the counsel of His will, that we may be to the praise of His glory. For this reason it is that we cry that no one should glory in man, and, thus, not in himself; but whoever glorieth let him glory in the Lord, that he may be for the praise of His glory. Because He Himself worketh according to His purpose that we may be to the praise of His glory,

and, of course, holy and immaculate, for which purpose He called us, predestinating us before the foundation of the world. Out of this, His purpose, is that special calling of the elect for whom He co-worketh with all things for good, because they are called according to His purpose, and "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

**CHAP. 38 [XIX]--WHAT IS THE VIEW OF THE PELAGIANS, AND WHAT OF THE SEMI-PELAGIANS, CONCERNING PREDESTINATION.**

But these brethren of ours, about whom and on whose behalf we are now discoursing, say, perhaps, that the Pelagians are refuted by this apostolical testimony in which it is said that we are chosen in Christ and predestinated before the foundation of the world, in order that we should be holy and immaculate in His sight in love. For they think that "having received God's commands we are of ourselves by the choice of our free will made holy and immaculate in His sight in love; and since God foresaw that this would be the case," they say, "He therefore chose and predestinated us in Christ before the foundation of the world." Although the apostle says that it was not because He foreknew that we should be such, but in order that we might be such by the same election of His grace, by which He showed us favour in His beloved Son. When, therefore, He predestinated us, He foreknew His own work by which He makes us holy and immaculate. Whence the Pelagian error is rightly refuted by this testimony. "But we say," say they, "that God did not foreknow anything as ours except that faith by which we begin to believe, and that He chose and predestinated us before the foundation of the world, in order that we might be holy and immaculate by His grace and by His work." But let them also hear in this testimony the words where he says, "We have obtained a lot, being predestinated according to His purpose who worketh all things. He, therefore, worketh the beginning of our belief

who worketh all things; because faith itself does not precede that calling of which it is said: "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance;" and of which it is said: "Not of works, but of Him that calleth" (although He might have said, "of Him that believeth"); and the election which the Lord signified when He said: "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." For He chose us, not because we believed, but that we might believe, lest we should be said first to have chosen Him, and so His word be false (which be it far from us to think possible), "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Neither are we called because we believed, but that we may believe; and by that calling which is without repentance it is effected and carried through that we should believe. But all the many things which we have said concerning this matter need not to be repeated.

### **CHAP. 39--THE BEGINNING OF FAITH IS GOD'S GIFT.**

Finally, also, in what follows this testimony, the apostle gives thanks to God on behalf of those who have believed;--not, certainly, because the gospel has been declared to them, but because they have believed. For he says, "In whom also after ye had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the pledge of our inheritance, to the redemption of the purchased possession unto the praise of His glory. Wherefore I also, after I had heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and with reference to all the saints, cease not to give thanks to you."

Their faith was new and recent on the preaching of the gospel to them, which faith when he hears of, the apostle gives thanks to God on their behalf. If he were to give thanks to man for that which he might either think or know that man had not given, it would be

called a flattery or a mockery, rather than a giving of thanks. "Do not err, for God is not mocked;" for His gift is also the beginning of faith, unless the apostolic giving of thanks be rightly judged to be either mistaken or fallacious. What then? Does that not appear as the beginning of the faith of the Thessalonians, for which, nevertheless, the same apostle gives thanks to God when he says, "For this cause also we thank God without ceasing, because when ye had received from us the word of the hearing of God, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God, which effectually worketh in you and which ye believed"? What is that for which he here gives thanks to God? Assuredly it is a vain and idle thing if He to whom he gives thanks did not Himself do the thing. But, since this is not a vain and idle thing, certainly God, to whom he gave thanks concerning this work, Himself did it; that when they had received the word of the hearing of God, they received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God. God, therefore, worketh in the hearts of men with that calling according to His purpose, of which we have spoken a great deal, that they should not hear the gospel in vain, but when they heard it, should be converted and believe, receiving it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth the word of God.

#### **CHAP. 40[XX]--APOSTOLIC TESTIMONY TO THE BEGINNING OF FAITH BEING GOD'S GIFT.**

Moreover, we are admonished that the beginning of men's faith is God's gift, since the apostle signifies this when, in the Epistle to the Colossians, he says, "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same in giving of thanks. Withal praying also for us that God would open unto us the door of His word, to speak the mystery of Christ, for which also I am bonds, that I may so to make it manifest as ought to speak." How is the door of His word opened, except when the sense

of the hearer is opened so that he may believe, and, having made a beginning of faith, may admit those things which are declared and reasoned, for the purpose of building up wholesome doctrine, lest, by a heart closed through unbelief, he reject and repel those things which are spoken? Whence, also, he says to the Corinthians: "But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost. For a great and evident door is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries." What else can be understood here, save that, when the gospel had been first of all preached there by him, many had believed, and there had appeared many adversaries of the same faith, in accordance with that saying of the Lord, "No one cometh unto me, unless it were given him of my Father;" and, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given"? Therefore, there is an open door in those to whom it is given, but there are many adversaries among those to whom it is not given.

#### **CHAP. 41.--FURTHER APOSTOLIC TESTIMONIES.**

And again, the same apostle says to the same people, in his second Epistle: "When I had come to Troas for the gospel of Christ, and a door had been opened unto me in the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus, my brother: but, making my farewell to them, I went away into Macedonia," To whom did he bid farewell but to those who had believed,--to wit, in whose hearts the door was opened for his preaching of the gospel? But attend to what he adds, saying, "Now thanks be unto God, who always causes us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of His knowledge by us in every place: because we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ in them who are saved, and in them who perish: to some, indeed, we are the savour of death unto death, but to some the savour of life unto life." See concerning what this most zealous soldier and invincible defender of grace gives thanks. See concerning what he

gives thanks,--that the apostles are a sweet savour of Christ unto God, both in those who are saved by His grace, and in those who perish by His judgment. But in order that those who little understand these things may be less enraged, he himself gives a warning when he adds the words: "And who is sufficient for these things?" But let us return to the opening of the door by which the apostle signified the beginning of faith in his hearers. For what is the meaning of, "Withal praying also for us that God would open unto us a door of the word," unless it is a most manifest demonstration that even the very beginning of faith is the gift of God? For it would not be sought for from Him in prayer, unless it were believed to be given by Him. This gift of heavenly grace had descended to that seller of purple for whom, as Scripture says in the Acts of the Apostles, "The Lord opened her heart, and she gave heed unto the things which were said by Paul;" for she was so called that she might believe. Because God does what He will in the hearts of men, either by assistance or by judgment; so that, even through their means, may be fulfilled what His hand and counsel have predestinated to be done.

#### **CHAP. 42.--OLD TESTAMENT TESTIMONIES.**

Therefore also it is in vain that objectors have alleged, that what we have proved by Scripture testimony from the books of Kings and Chronicles is not pertinent to the subject of which we are discoursing: such, for instance, as that when God wills that to be done which ought only to be done by the willing men, their hearts are inclined to will this,--inclined, that is to say, by His power, who, in a marvellous and ineffable manner, worketh in us also to will. What else is this than to say nothing, and yet to contradict? Unless perchance, they have given some reason to you for the view that they have taken, which reason you have preferred to say nothing about in your letters. But what that reason can be I do not know. Whether,



possibly, since we have shown that God has so acted on the hearts of men, and has induced the wills of those whom He pleased to this point, that Saul or David should be established as king,--do they not think that these instances are appropriate to this subject, because to reign in this world temporally is not the same thing as to reign eternally with God? And so do they suppose that God inclines the wills of those whom He pleases to the attainment of earthly kingdoms, but does not incline them to the attainment of a heavenly kingdom? But I think that it was in reference to the kingdom of heaven, and not to an earthly kingdom, that it was said, "Incline my heart unto Thy testimonies; or, "The steps of a man are ordered by the Lord, and He will will His way;" )or, "The will is prepared by the Lord;" or, "Let our Lord be with us as with our fathers; let Him not forsake us, nor turn Himself away from us; let Him incline our hearts unto Him, that we may walk in all His ways;" or, "I will give them a heart to know me, and earn that hear;" or, "I will give them another heart, and a new spirit will I give them." Let them also hear this, "I will give my Spirit within you, and I will cause you to walk in my righteousness; and ye shall observe my judgments,, and do them." Let them hear "Man's goings are directed by the Lord, and how can a man understand His ways?" Let them hear, "Every man seemeth right to himself, but the Lord directeth the hearts." Let them hear, "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Let them hear these passages, and whatever others of the kind I have not mentioned in which God is declared to prepare and to convert men's wills, even for the kingdom of heaven and for eternal life. And consider what sort of a thing it is to believe that God worketh men's wills for the foundation of earthly kingdoms, but that men work their own wills for the attainment of the kingdom of heaven.

#### **CHAP. 43 [XXI.]--CONCLUSION.**

I have said a great deal, and, perchance, I could long ago have persuaded you what I wished, and am still speaking this to such intelligent minds as if they were obtuse, to whom even what is too much is not enough. But let them pardon me, for a new question has compelled me to this. Because, although in my former little treatises I had proved by sufficiently appropriate proofs that faith also was the gift of God, there was found this ground of contradiction, viz., that those testimonies were good for this purpose, to show that the increase of faith was God's gift, but that the beginning of faith, whereby a man first of all believes in Christ, is of the man himself, and is not the gift of God,--but that God requires this, so that when it has of God; and that none of them is given freely, although in them God's grace is declared, which is not grace except as being gratuitous. And you see how absurd all this is. Wherefore I determined, as far as I could, to set forth that this very beginning also is God's gift. And if I have done this at a greater length than perhaps those on whose account I did it might wish, I am prepared to be reproached for it by them, so long as they nevertheless confess that, although at greater length than they wished, although with the disgust and weariness of those that understand, I have done what I have done: that is, I have taught that even the beginning of faith, as continence, patience, righteousness, piety, and the rest, concerning which there is no dispute with them, is God's gift. Let this, therefore, be the end of this treatise, lest too great length in this one may give offence.

## **A TREATISE ON THE GIFT OF PERSEVERANCE**

**by AURELIUS AUGUSTIN, BISHOP OF  
HIPPO**

**THE SECOND BOOK.**

ADDRESSED TO PROSPER AND HILARY.

AD. 428 OR 429

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IN THE FIRST PART OF THE BOOK HE PROVES THAT THE PERSEVERANCE BY WHICH A MAN PERSEVERES IN CHRIST TO THE END IS GOD'S GIFT; FOR THAT IT IS A MOCKERY TO ASK OF GOD THAT WHICH IS NOT BELIEVED TO BE GIVEN BY GOD. MOREOVER, THAT IN THE LORD'S PRAYER SCARCELY ANYTHING IS ASKED FOR BUT PERSEVERANCE, ACCORDING TO THE EXPOSITION OF THE MARTYR CYPRIAN, BY WHICH EXPOSITION THE ENEMIES TO THIS GRACE WERE CONVICTED BEFORE THEY WERE BORN. HE TEACHES THAT THE GRACE OF PERSEVERANCE IS NOT GIVEN ACCORDING TO THE MERITS OF THE RECEIVERS, BUT TO SOME IT IS GIVEN BY GOD'S MERCY; TO OTHERS IT IS NOT GIVEN, BY HIS RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT. THAT IT IS INSCRUTABLE WHY, OF ADULTS, ONE RATHER THAN ANOTHER SHOULD BE CALLED; JUST AS, MOREOVER, OF TWO INFANTS IT IS INSCRUTABLE WHY THE ONE SHOULD BE TAKEN, THE OTHER LEFT. BUT THAT IT IS STILL MORE INSCRUTABLE WHY, OF TWO PIOUS PERSONS, TO ONE IT SHOULD BE GIVEN TO PERSEVERE, TO THE OTHER IT SHOULD NOT BE GIVEN; BUT THAT THIS IS MOST CERTAIN, THAT THE FORMER IS OF THE PREDESTINATED, THE LATTER IS NOT. HE OBSERVES THAT THE MYSTERY OF PREDESTINATION IS SET FORTH IN OUR LORD'S WORDS CONCERNING THE PEOPLE OF TYRE AND

SIDON, WHO WOULD HAVE REPENTED IF THE SAME MIRACLES HAD BEEN DONE AMONG THEM WHICH HAD BEEN DONE IN CHORAZIN. HE SHOWS THAT THE CASE OF INFANTS IS OF FORCE TO CONFIRM THE TRUTH OF PREDESTINATION AND GRACE IN OLDER PEOPLE; AND HE ANSWERS THE PASSAGE OF HIS THIRD BOOK ON FREE WILL, UNSOUNDLY ALLEGED ON THIS POINT BY HIS ADVERSARIES. SUBSEQUENTLY, IN THE SECOND PART OF THIS WORK, HE REBUTS WHAT THEY SAY,--TO WIT, THAT THE DEFINITION OF PREDESTINATION IS OPPOSED TO THE USEFULNESS OF EXHORTATION AND REBUKE. HE ASSERTS, ON THE OTHER HAND, THAT IT IS ADVANTAGEOUS TO PREACH PREDESTINATION, SO THAT MAN MAY NOT GLORY IN HIMSELF, BUT IN THE LORD. AS TO THE OBJECTIONS, HOWEVER, WHICH THEY MAKE AGAINST PREDESTINATION, HE SHOWS THAT THE SAME OBJECTIONS MAY BE TWISTED IN NO UNLIKE MANNER EITHER AGAINST GOD'S FOREKNOWLEDGE OR AGAINST THAT GRACE WHICH THEY ALL AGREE TO BE NECESSARY FOR OTHER GOOD THINGS (WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE BEGINNING OF FAITH AND THE COMPLETION OF PERSEVERANCE). FOR THAT THE PREDESTINATION OF THE SAINTS IS NOTHING ELSE THAN GOD'S FOREKNOWLEDGE AND PREPARATION FOR HIS BENEFITS, BY WHICH WHOEVER ARE DELIVERED ARE MOST CERTAINLY DELIVERED. BUT HE BIDS THAT PREDESTINATION SHOULD BE PREACHED IN A HARMONIOUS MANNER, AND NOT IN SUCH A WAY AS TO SEEM TO AN UNSKILFUL MULTITUDE AS IF IT WERE DISPROVED BY ITS VERY PREACHING. LASTLY, HE COMMENDS TO US JESUS CHRIST, AS PLACED BEFORE OUR EYES, AS THE MOST EMINENT INSTANCE OF PREDESTINATION.

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## **CHAP. I [I.]--OF THE NATURE OF THE PERSEVERANCE HERE DISCOURSED OF..**

I HAVE now to consider the subject of perseverance with greater care; for in the former book also I said some things on this subject when I was discussing the beginning of faith. I assert, therefore, that the perseverance by which we persevere in Christ even to the end is the gift of God; and I call that the end by which is finished that life wherein alone there is peril of falling. Therefore it is uncertain whether any one has received this gift so long as he is still alive. For if he fall before he dies, he is, of course, said not to have persevered; and most truly is it said. How, then, should he be said to have received or to have had perseverance who has not persevered? For if any one have continence, and fall away from that virtue and become incontinent,--or, in like manner, if he have righteousness, if patience, if even faith, and fall away, he is rightly said to have had these virtues and to have them no longer; for he was continent, or he was righteous, or he was patient, or he was believing, as long as he was so; but when he ceased to be so, he no longer is what he was. But how should he who has not persevered have ever been persevering, since it is only by persevering that any one shows himself persevering,--and this he has not done? But lest any one should object to this, and say, If from the time at which any one became a believer he has lived--for the sake of argument--ten years, and in the midst of them has fallen from the faith, has he not persevered for five years? I am not contending about words. If it be thought that this also should be called perseverance, as it were for so long as it lasts, assuredly he is not to be said to have had in any degree that perseverance of which we are now discoursing, by which one perseveres in Christ even to the end. And the believer of one year, or of a period as much shorter as may be conceived of, if he has lived faithfully until he died, has rather had this perseverance than the believer of many years'

standing, if a little time before his death he has fallen away from the steadfastness of his faith.

**CHAP. 2 [II.]--FAITH IS THE BEGINNING OF A CHRISTIAN MAN. MARTYRDOM FOR CHRIST'S SAKE IS HIS BEST ENDING.**

This matter being settled, let us see whether this perseverance, of which it was said, "He that persevereth unto the end, the same shall be saved," is a gift of God. And if it be not, how is that saying of the apostle true: "Unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake"? Of these things, certainly, one has respect to the beginning, the other to the end. Yet each is the gift of God, because both are said to be given; as, also, I have already said above. For what is more truly the beginning for a Christian than to believe in Christ? What end is better than to suffer for Christ? But so far as pertains to believing in Christ, whatever kind of contradiction has been discovered, that not the beginning but the increase of faith should be called God's gift,--to this opinion, by God's gift, I have answered enough, and more than enough. But what reason can be given why perseverance to the end should not be given in Christ to him to whom it is given to suffer for Christ, or, to speak more distinctly, to whom it is given to die for Christ? For the Apostle Peter, showing that this is the gift of God, says, "It is better, if the will of God be so, to suffer for well-doing than for evil-doing." When he says, "If the will of God be so," he shows that this is divinely given, and yet not to all saints, to suffer for Christ's sake. For certainly those whom the will of God does not will to attain to the experience and the glory of suffering, do not fail to attain to the kingdom of God if they persevere in Christ to the end. But who can say that this perseverance is not given to those who die in Christ from any weakness of body, or by any kind of accident, although a far more

difficult perseverance is given to those by whom even death itself is undergone for Christ's sake? Because perseverance is much more difficult when the persecutor is engaged in preventing a man's perseverance; and therefore he is sustained in his perseverance unto death. Hence it is more difficult to have the former perseverance,--easier to have the latter; but to Him to whom nothing is difficult it is easy to give both. For God has promised this, saying, "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they may not depart from me." And what else is this than, "Such and so great shall be my fear that I will put into their hearts that they will perseveringly cleave to me"?

### **CHAP. 3.--GOD IS BESOUGHT FOR IT, BECAUSE IT IS HIS GIFT.**

But why is that perseverance asked for from God if it is not given by God? Is that, too, a mocking petition, when that is asked from Him which it is known that He does not give, but, though He gives it not, is in man's power; just as that giving of thanks is a mockery, if thanks are given to God for that which He did not give nor do? But what I have said there, I say also here again: "Be not deceived," says the apostle, "God is not mocked." O man, God is a witness not only of your words, but also of your thoughts. If you ask anything in truth and faith of one who is so rich, believe that you receive from Him from whom you ask, what you ask. Abstain from honouring Him with your lips and extolling yourself over Him in your heart, by believing that you have from yourself what you are pretending to beseech from Him. Is not this perseverance, perchance, asked for from Him? He who says this is not to be rebuked by any arguments, but must be overwhelmed with the prayers of the saints. Is there any of these who does not ask for himself from God that he may persevere in Him, when in that very prayer which is called the Lord's--because the Lord taught it--when it is prayed by the saints,

scarcely anything else is understood to be prayed for but perseverance?

#### **CHAP. 4.--THREE LEADING POINTS OF THE PELAGIAN DOCTRINE.**

Read with a little more attention its exposition in the treatise of the blessed martyr Cyprian, which he wrote concerning this matter, the title of which is, On the Lord's Prayer; and see how many years ago, and what sort of an antidote was prepared against those poisons which the Pelagians were one day to use. For there are three points, as you know, which the catholic Church chiefly maintains against them. One of these is, that the grace of God is not given according to our merits; because even every one of the merits of the righteous is God's gift, and is conferred by God's grace. The second is, that no one lives in this corruptible body, however righteous he may be, without sins of some kind. The third is, that man is born obnoxious to the first man's sin, and bound by the chain of condemnation, unless the guilt which is contracted by generation be loosed by regeneration. Of these three points, that which I have placed last is the only one that is not treated of in the above-named book of the glorious martyr; but of the two others the discourse there is of such perspicuity, that the above-named heretics, modern enemies of the grace of Christ, are found to have been convicted long before they were born. Among these merits of the saints, then, which are no merits unless they are the gifts of God, he says that perseverance also is God's gift, in these words: "We say, 'Hallowed be Thy name;' not that we ask for God that He may be hallowed by our prayers, but that we beseech of Him that His name may be hallowed in us. But by whom is God sanctified, since He Himself sanctifies? Well, because He says, Be ye holy because I also am holy, we ask and entreat that we, who were sanctified in baptism, may persevere in that which we have begun to



be." And a little after, still arguing about that self-same matter, and teaching that we entreat perseverance from the Lord, which we could in no wise rightly and truly do unless it were His gift, he says: "We pray that this sanctification may abide in us; and because our Lord and Judge warns the man that was healed and quickened by Him to sin no more, lest a worse thing happen unto him, we make this supplication in our constant prayers; we ask this, day and night, that the sanctification and quickening which is received from the grace of God may be preserved by His protection." That teacher, therefore, understands that we are asking from Him for perseverance in sanctification, that is, that we should persevere in sanctification, when we who are sanctified say, "Hallowed be Thy name." For what else is it to ask for what we have already received, than that it be given to us also not to cease from its possession? As, therefore, the saint, when he asks God that he may be holy, is certainly asking that he may continue to be holy, so certainly the chaste person also, when he asks that he may be chaste, the continent that he may be continent, the righteous that he may be righteous, the pious that he may be pious, and the like,--which things, against the Pelagians, we maintain to be God's gifts,--are asking, without doubt, that they may persevere in those good things which they have acknowledged that they have received. And if they receive this, assuredly they also receive perseverance itself, the great gift of God, whereby His other gifts are preserved.

#### **CHAP. 5.--THE SECOND PETITION IN THE LORD'S PRAYER.**

What, when we say, "Thy kingdom come," do we ask else, but that that should also come to us which we do not doubt will come to all saints? And therefore here also, what do they who are already holy pray for, save that they may persevere in that holiness which has

been given them? For no otherwise will the kingdom of God come to them; which it is certain will come not to others, but to those who persevere to the end.

### **CHAP. 6 [III.]--THE THIRD PETITION. HOW HEAVEN AND EARTH ARE UNDERSTOOD IN THE LORD'S PRAYER.**

The third petition is, "Thy will be done in heaven and in earth;" or, as it is read in many codices, and is more frequently made use of by petitioners, "As in heaven, so also in earth," which many people understand, "As the holy angels, so also may we do thy will." That teacher and martyr will have heaven and earth, however, to be understood as spirit and flesh, and says that we pray that we may do the will of God with the full concord of both. He saw in these words also another meaning, congruous to the soundest faith, of which meaning I have already spoken above,--to wit, that for unbelievers, who are as yet earth, bearing in their first birth only the earthly man, believers are understood to pray, who, being clothed with the heavenly man, are not unreasonably called by the name of heaven; where he plainly shows that the beginning of faith also is God's gift, since the holy Church prays not only for believers, that faith may be increased or may continue in them, but, moreover, for unbelievers, that they may begin to have what they have not had at all, and against which, besides, they were indulging hostile feelings. Now, however, I am arguing not concerning the beginning of faith, of which I have already spoken much in the former book, but of that perseverance which must be had even to the end,--which assuredly even the saints, who do the will of God, seek when they say in prayer, "Thy will be done." For, since it is already done in them, why do they still ask that it may be done, except that they may persevere in that which they have begun to be? Nevertheless, it may here be said that

the saints do not ask that the will of God may be done in heaven, but that it may be done in earth as in heaven,--that is to say, that earth may imitate heaven, that is, that man may imitate the angel, or that an unbeliever may imitate a believer; and thus that the saints are asking that that may be which is not yet, not that that which is may continue. For, by whatever holiness men may be distinguished, they are not yet equal to the angels of God; not yet, therefore, is the will of God done in them as it is in heaven. And if this be so, in that portion indeed in which we ask that men from unbelievers may become believers, it is not perseverance, but beginning, that seems to be asked for; but in that in which we ask that men may be made equal to the angels of God in doing God's will,--where the saints pray for this, they are found to be praying for perseverance; since no one attains to that highest blessedness which is in the kingdom, unless he shall persevere unto the end in that holiness which he has received on earth.

#### **CHAP. 7 [IV.]--THE FOURTH PETITION.**

The fourth petition is, "Give us this day our daily bread," where the blessed Cyprian shows how here also perseverance is understood to be asked for. Because he says, among other things, "And we ask that this bread should be given to us daily, that we who are in Christ, and daily receive the Eucharist for the food of salvation, may not by the interposition of some heinous sin be separated from Christ's body by being withheld from communicating and prevented from partaking of the heavenly bread." These words of the holy man of God indicate that the saints ask for perseverance directly from God, when with this intention they say, "Give us this day our daily bread," that they may not be separated from Christ's body, but may continue in that holiness in which they allow no crime by which they may deserve to be separated from it.

## **CHAP. 8 [V.]--THE FIFTH PETITION. IT IS AN ERROR OF THE PELAGIANS THAT THE RIGHTEOUS ARE FREE FROM SIN.**

In the fifth sentence of the prayer we say, "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors," in which petition alone perseverance is not found to be asked for. For the sins which we ask to be forgiven us are past, but perseverance, which saves us for eternity, is indeed necessary for the time of this life; but not for the time which is past, but for that which remains even to its end. Yet it is worth the labour to consider for a little, how even already in this petition the heretics who were to arise long after were transfixed by the tongue of Cyprian, as if by the most invincible dart of truth. For the Pelagians dare to say even this: that the righteous man in this life has no sin at all, and that in such men there is even at the present time a Church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, which is the one and only bride of Christ; as if she were not His bride who throughout the whole earth says what she has learnt from Him, "Forgive us our debts." But observe how the most glorious Cyprian destroys these. For when he was expounding that very clause of the Lord's Prayer, he says among other things: "And how necessarily, how providently, and salutarily are we admonished that we are sinners, since we are compelled to entreat for our sins; and while pardon is asked for from God, the soul recalls its own consciousness. Lest any one should flatter himself that he is innocent, and by exalting himself should more deeply perish, he is instructed and taught that he sins daily, in that he is bidden daily to entreat for his sins. Thus, moreover, John also in his Epistle warns us, and says, 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.'" And the rest, which it would be long to insert in this place.

## **CHAP. 9.--WHEN PERSEVERANCE IS GRANTED TO A PERSON, HE CANNOT BUT PERSEVERE.**

Now, moreover, when the saints say, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil," what do they pray for but that they may persevere in holiness? For, assuredly, when that gift of God is granted to them,--which is sufficiently plainly shown to be God's gift, since it is asked of Him,--that gift of God, then, being granted to them that they may not be led into temptation, none of the saints fails to keep his perseverance in holiness even to the end. For there is not any one who ceases to persevere in the Christian purpose unless he is first of all led into temptation. If, therefore, it be granted to him according to his prayer that he may not be led, certainly by the gift of God he persists in that sanctification which by the gift of God he has received.

## **CHAP. 10 [VI.]--THE GIFT OF PERSEVERANCE CAN BE OBTAINED BY PRAYER.**

But you write that "these brethren will not have this perseverance so preached as that it cannot be obtained by prayer or lost by obstinacy." In this they are little careful in considering what they say. For we are speaking of that perseverance whereby one perseveres unto the end, and if this is given, one does persevere unto the end; but if one does not persevere unto the end, it is not given, which I have already sufficiently discussed above. Let not men say, then, that perseverance is given to any one to the end, except when the end itself has come, and he to whom it has been given has been found to have persevered unto the end. Certainly, we say that one whom we have known to be chaste is chaste, whether he should continue or not in the same chastity; and if he should have any other divine endowment which may be kept and lost, we say that he has it as long

as he has it; and if he should lose it, we say that he had it. But since no one has perseverance to the end except he who does persevere to the end, many people may have it, but none can lose it. For it is not to be feared that perchance when a man has persevered unto the end, some evil will may arise in him, so that he does not persevere unto the end. This gift of God, therefore, may be obtained by prayer, but when it has been given, it cannot be lost by contumacy. For when any one has persevered unto the end, he neither can lose this gift, nor others which he could lose before the end. How, then, can that be lost, whereby it is brought about that even that which could be lost is not lost?

## **CHAP. II.--EFFECT OF PRAYER FOR PERSEVERANCE.**

But, lest perchance it be said that perseverance even to the end is not indeed lost when it has once been given,--that is, when a man has persevered unto the end,--but that it is lost, in some sense, when a man by contumacy so acts that he is not able to attain to it; just as we say that a man who has not persevered unto the end has lost eternal life or the kingdom of God, not because he had already received and actually had it, but because he would have received and had it if he had persevered;--let us lay aside controversies of words, and say that some things even which are not possessed, but are hoped to be possessed, may be lost. Let any one who dares, tell me whether God cannot give what He has commanded to be asked from Him. Certainly he who affirms this, I say not is a fool, but he is mad. But God commanded that His saints should say to Him in prayer, "Lead us not into temptation." Whoever, therefore, is heard when he asks this, is not led into the temptation of contumacy, whereby he could or would be worthy to lose perseverance in holiness.

## **CHAP. 12.--OF HIS OWN WILL A MAN FORSAKES GOD, SO THAT HE IS DESERVEDLY FORSAKEN OF HIM.**

But, on the other hand, "of his own will a man forsakes God, so as to be deservedly forsaken by God." Who would deny this? But it is for that reason we ask not to be led into temptation, so that this may not happen. And if we are heard, certainly it does not happen, because God does not allow it to happen. For nothing comes to pass except what either He Himself does, or Himself allows to be done. Therefore He is powerful both to turn wills from evil to good, and to convert those that are inclined to fall, or to direct them into a way pleasing to Himself. For to Him it is not said in vain, "O God, Thou shalt turn again and quicken us;" it is not vainly said, "Give not my foot to be moved;" it is not vainly said, "Give me not over, O Lord, from my desire to the sinner;" finally, not to mention many passages, since probably more may occur to you, it is not vainly said, "Lead us not into temptation." For whoever is not led into temptation, certainly is not led into the temptation of his own evil will; and he who is not led into the temptation of his own evil will, is absolutely led into no temptation. For "every one is tempted," as it is written, "when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed;" "but God tempteth no man," --that is to say, with a hurtful temptation. For temptation is moreover beneficial by which we are not deceived or overwhelmed, but proved, according to that which is said, "Prove me, O Lord, and try me." Therefore, with that hurtful temptation which the apostle signifies when he says, "Lost by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labour be in vain," "God tempteth no man," as I have said,--that is, He brings or leads no one into temptation. For to be tempted and not to be led into temptation is not evil,--nay, it is even good; for this it is to be proved. When, therefore, we say to God, "Lead us not into temptation," what do we say but, "Permit us not to be led"? Whence some pray in this manner, and it is read in many

codices, and the most blessed Cyprian thus uses it: "Do not suffer us to be led into temptation." In the Greek gospel, however, I have never found it otherwise than, "Load us not into temptation." We live, therefore, more securely if we give up the whole to God, and do not entrust ourselves partly to Him and partly to ourselves, as that venerable martyr saw. For when he would expound the same clause of the prayer, he says among other things, "But when we ask that we may not come into temptation, we are reminded of our infirmity and weakness while we thus ask, lest any should insolently vaunt himself,--lest any should proudly and arrogantly assume anything to himself,--lest any should take to himself the glory either of confession or suffering as his own; since the Lord Himself, teaching humility, said, 'Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the Spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak.' So that when a humble and submissive confession comes first and all is attributed to God, whatever is sought for suppliantly, with the fear of God, may be granted by His own loving-kindness."

### **CHAP. 13 [VII.]--TEMPTATION THE CONDITION OF MAN.**

If, then, there were no other proofs, this Lord's Prayer alone would be sufficient for us on behalf of the grace which I am defending; because it leaves us nothing wherein we may, as it were, glory as in our own, since it shows that our not departing from God is not given except by God, when it shows that it must be asked for from God. For he who is not led into temptation does not depart from God. This is absolutely not in the strength of free will, such as it now is; but it had been in man before he fell. And yet how much this freedom of will availed in the excellence of that primal state appeared in the angels; who, when the devil and his angels fell, stood in the truth, and deserved to attain to that perpetual security of not falling, in which we are most certain that they are now established. But, after the fall



of man, God willed it to pertain only to His grace that man should approach to Him; nor did He will it to pertain to aught but His grace that man should not depart from Him.

**CHAP. 14.--IT IS GOD'S GRACE BOTH THAT MAN COMES TO HIM, AND THAT MAN DOES NOT DEPART FROM HIM.**

This grace He placed "in Him in whom we have obtained a lot, being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things." And thus as He worketh that we come to Him, so He worketh that we do not depart. Wherefore it was said to Him by the mouth of the prophet, "Let Thy hand be upon the man of Thy right hand, and upon the Son of man whom Thou madest strong for Thyself, and we will not depart from Thee." This certainly is not the first Adam, in whom we departed from Him, but the second Adam, upon whom His hand is placed, so that we do not depart from Him. For Christ altogether with His members is--for the Church's sake, which is His body--the fulness of Him. When, therefore, God's hand is upon Him, that we depart not from God, assuredly God's work reaches to us (for this is God's hand); by which work of God we are caused to be abiding in Christ with God--not, as in Adam, departing from God. For "in Christ we have obtained a lot, being predestinated according to His purpose who worketh all things." This, therefore, is God's hand, not ours, that we depart not from God. That, I say, is His hand who said, "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they depart not from me."

**CHAP. 15.--WHY GOD WILLED THAT HE SHOULD BE ASKED FOR THAT WHICH HE MIGHT GIVE WITHOUT PRAYER.**

Wherefore, also He willed that He should be asked that we may not be led into temptation, because if we are not led, we by no means

depart from Him. And this might have been given to us even without our praying for it, but by our prayer He willed us to be admonished from whom we receive these benefits. For from whom do we receive but from Him from whom it is right for us to ask? Truly in this matter let not the Church look for laborious disputations, but consider its own daily prayers. It prays that the unbelieving may believe; therefore God converts to the faith. It prays that believers may persevere; therefore God gives perseverance to the end. God foreknew that He would do this. This is the very predestination of the saints, "whom He has chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and unspotted before Him in love; predestinating them unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, in which He hath shown them favour in His beloved Son, in whom they have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace, which has abounded towards them in all wisdom and prudence; that He might show them the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Him, in the dispensation of the fulness of times to restore all things in Christ which are in heaven and which are in earth; in Him, in whom also we have obtained a lot, being predestinated according to His purpose who worketh all things." Against a trumpet of truth so clear as this, what man of sober and watchful faith can receive any human arguments?

#### **CHAP. 16 [VIII.]--WHY IS NOT GRACE GIVEN ACCORDING TO MERIT?**

But "why," says one, "is not the grace of God given according to men's merits?" I answer, Because God is merciful. "Why, then," it is asked, "is it not given to all?" And here I reply, Because God is a Judge. And thus grace is given by Him freely; and by His righteous

judgment it is shown in some what grace confers on those to whom it is given. Let us not then be ungrateful, that according to the good pleasure of His will a merciful God delivers so many to the praise of the glory of His grace from such deserved perdition; as, if He should deliver no one therefrom, He would not be unrighteous. Let him, therefore, who is delivered love His grace. Let him who is not delivered acknowledge his due. If, in remitting a debt, goodness is perceived, in requiring it, justice--unrighteousness is never found to be with God.

**CHAP. 17.--THE DIFFICULTY OF THE DISTINCTION MADE IN THE CHOICE OF ONE AND THE REJECTION OF ANOTHER.**

"But why," it is said, "in one and the same case, not only of infants, but even of twin children, is the judgment so diverse?" Is it not a similar question, "Why in a different case is the judgment the same?" Let us recall, then, those labourers in the vineyard who worked the whole day, and those who toiled one hour. Certainly the case was different as to the labour expended, and yet there was the same judgment in paying the wages. Did the murmurers in this case hear anything from the householder except, Such is my will? Certainly such was his liberality towards some, that there could be no injustice towards others. And both these classes, indeed, are among the good. Nevertheless, so far as it concerns justice and grace, it may be truly said to the guilty who is condemned, also concerning the guilty who is delivered, "Take what thine is, and go thy way;" "I will give unto this one that which is not due;" "Is it not lawful for me to do what I will? is thine eye evil because I am good?" And how if he should say, "Why not to me also?" He will hear, and with reason, "Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?" And although assuredly in the one case you see a most benignant benefactor, and in your own case a

most righteous exactor, in neither case do you behold an unjust God. For although He would be righteous even if He were to punish both, he who is delivered has good ground for thankfulness, he who is condemned has no ground for finding fault.

### **CHAP. 18.--BUT WHY SHOULD ONE BE PUNISHED MORE THAN ANOTHER?**

"But if," it is said, "it was necessary that, although all were not condemned, He should still show what was due to all, and so He should commend His grace more freely to the vessels of mercy; why in the same case will He punish me more than another, or deliver him more than me?" I say not this. If you ask wherefore; because I confess that I can find no answer to make. And if you further ask why is this, it is because in this matter, even as His anger is righteous and as His mercy is great, so His judgments are unsearchable.

### **CHAP. 19.--WHY DOES GOD MINGLE THOSE WHO WILL PERSEVERE WITH THOSE WHO WILL NOT?**

Let the inquirer still go on, and say, "Why is it that to some who have in good faith worshipped Him He has not given to persevere to the end?" Why except because he does not speak falsely who says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, doubtless they would have continued with us." Are there, then, two natures of men? By no means. If there were two natures there would not be any grace, for there would be given a gratuitous deliverance to none if it were paid as a debt to nature. But it seems to men that all who appear good believers ought to receive perseverance to the end. But God has judged it to be better to mingle some who would not persevere with a certain number of His saints, so that those for whom security from temptation in this life is not desirable may not be secure. For that which the apostle says, checks many from

mischievous elation: "Wherefore let him who seems to stand take heed lest he fall." But he who falls, falls by his own will, and he who stands, stands by God's will. "For God is able to make him stand;" therefore he is not able to make himself stand, but God. Nevertheless, it is good not to be high-minded, but to fear. Moreover, it is in his own thought that every one either falls or stands. Now, as the apostle says, and as I have mentioned in my former treatise, "We are not sufficient to think anything of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." Following whom also the blessed Ambrose ventures to say, "For our heart is not in our own power, nor are our thoughts." And this everybody who is humbly and truly pious feels to be most true.

#### **CHAP. 20.--AMBROSE ON GOD'S CONTROL OVER MEN'S THOUGHTS.**

And when Ambrose said this, he was speaking in that treatise which he wrote concerning Flight from the World, wherein he taught that this world was to be fled not by the body, but by the heart, which he argued could not be done except by God's help. For he says: "We hear frequent discourse concerning fleeing from this world, and I would that the mind was as careful and solicitous as the discourse is easy; but what is worse, the enticement of earthly lusts constantly creeps in, and the pouring out of vanities takes possession of the mind; so that what you desire to avoid, this you think of and consider in your mind. And this is difficult for a man to beware of, but impossible to get rid of. Finally, the prophet bears witness that it is a matter of wish rather than of accomplishment, when he says, 'Incline my heart to Thy testimonies, and not to covetousness.' For our heart and our thoughts are not in our own power, and these, poured forth unexpectedly, confuse our mind and soul, and draw them in a different direction from that which you have proposed to yourself; they recall you to worldly things, they interpose things of time, they

suggest voluptuous things, they inweave enticing things, and in the very moment when we are seeking to elevate our mind, we are for the most part filled with vain thoughts and cast down to earthly things." Therefore it is not in the power of men, but in that of God, that men have power to become sons of God. Because they receive it from Him who gives pious thoughts to the human heart, by which it has faith, which worketh by love; for the receiving and keeping of which benefit, and for carrying it on perseveringly unto the end, we are not sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, in whose power is our heart and our thoughts.

#### **CHAP. 21 [IX.]--INSTANCES OF THE UNSEARCH- ABLE JUDGMENTS OF GOD.**

Therefore, of two infants, equally bound by original sin, why the one is taken and the other left; and of two wicked men of already mature years, why this one should be so called as to follow Him that calleth, while that one is either not called at all, or is not called in such a manner,--the judgments of God are unsearchable. But of two pious men, why to the one should be given perseverance unto the end, and to the other it should not be given, God's judgments are even more unsearchable. Yet to believers it ought to be a most certain fact that the former is of the predestinated, the latter is not. "For if they had been of us," says one of the predestinated, who had drunk this secret from the breast of the Lord, "certainly they would have continued with us." What, I ask, is the meaning of, "They were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would certainly have continued with us"? Were not both created by God--both born of Adam--both made from the earth, and given from Him who said, "I have created all breath," souls of one and the same nature? Lastly, had not both been called, and followed Him that called them? and had not both become, from wicked men, justified men, and both been renewed by the layer of

regeneration? But if he were to hear this who beyond all doubt knew what he was saying, he might answer and say: These things are true. In respect of all these things, they were of us. Nevertheless, in respect of a certain other distinction, they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they certainly would have continued with us. What then is this distinction? God's books lie open, let us not turn away our view; the divine Scripture cries aloud, let us give it a hearing. They were not of them, because they had not been "called according to the purpose;" they had not been chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; they had not gained a lot in Him; they had not been predestinated according to His purpose who worketh all things. For if they had been this, they would have been of them, and without doubt they would have continued with them.

**CHAP. 22.--IT IS AN ABSURDITY TO SAY THAT THE DEAD WILL BE JUDGED FOR SINS WHICH THEY WOULD HAVE COMMITTED IF THEY HAD LIVED.**

For not to say how possible it may be for God to convert the wills of men averse and opposed to His faith, and to operate on their hearts so that they yield to no adversities, and are overcome by no temptation so as to depart from: Him,--since He also can do what the apostle says, namely, not allow them to be tempted above that which they are able;--not, then, to say this, God foreknowing that they would fall, was certainly able to take them away from this life before that fall should occur. Are we to return to that point of still arguing how absurdly it is said that dead men are judged even for those sins which God foreknew that they would have committed if they had lived? which is so abhorrent to the feelings of Christians, or even of human beings, that one is even ashamed to rebut it. Why should it not be said that even the gospel: itself has been preached, with so much labour still preached in vain, if men could be even without

hearing the gospel, according to the contumacy or obedience which God foreknew that they would have had if they had heard it? Tyre and Sidon would not have been condemned, although more slightly than those cities in which, although they did not believe, wonderful works were done by Christ the Lord; because if they had been done in them, they would have repented in dust and ashes, as the utterances of the Truth declare, in which words of His the Lord Jesus shows to us the loftier mystery of predestination.

**CHAP. 23.--WHY FOR THE PEOPLE OF TYRE AND SIDON, WHO WOULD HAVE BELIEVED, THE MIRACLES WERE NOT DONE WHICH WERE DONE IN OTHER PLACES WHICH DID NOT BELIEVE.**

For if we are asked why such miracles were done among those who, when they saw them, would not believe them, and were not done among those who would have believed them if they had seen them, what shall we answer? Shall we say what I have said in that book wherein I answered some six questions of the Pagans, yet without prejudice of other matters which the wise can inquire into? This indeed I said, as you know, when it was asked why Christ came after so long a time: "that at those times and in those places in which His gospel was not preached, He foreknew that all men would, in regard of His preaching, be such as many were in His bodily presence,-- people, namely, who would not believe on Him, even though the dead were raised by Him." Moreover, a little after in the same book, and on the same question, I say, "What wonder, if Christ knew in former ages that the world was so filled with unbelievers, that He was, with reason, unwilling for His gospel to be preached to them whom He foreknew to be such as would not believe either His words or His miracles"? Certainly we cannot say this of Tyre and Sidon; and in their case we recognise that those divine judgments had reference



to those causes of predestination, without prejudice to which hidden causes I said that I was then answering such questions as those. Certainly it is easy to accuse the unbelief of the Jews, arising as it did from their free will, since they refused to believe in such great wonders done among themselves. And this the Lord, reproaching them, declares when He says, "Woe unto thee, Chorazin and Bethsaida, because if the mighty works had been done in Tyre and Sidon which have been done in you, they would long ago have repented in dust and ashes." But can we say that even the Tyrians and Sidonians would have refused to believe such mighty works done among them, or would not have believed them if they had been done, when the Lord Himself bears witness to them that they would have repented with great humility if those signs of divine power had been done among them? And yet in the day of judgment they will be punished; although with a less punishment than those cities which would not believe the mighty works done in them. For the Lord goes on to say, "Nevertheless, I say unto you, it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you." Therefore the former shall be punished with greater severity, the latter with less; but yet they shall be punished. Again, if the dead are judged even in respect of deeds which they would have done if they had lived, assuredly since these would have been believers if the gospel had been preached to them with so great miracles, they certainly ought not to be punished; but they will be punished. It is therefore false that the dead are judged in respect also of those things which they would have done if the gospel had reached them when they were alive. And if this is false, there is no ground for saying, concerning infants who perish because they die without baptism, that this happens in their case deservedly, because God foreknew that if they should live and the gospel should be preached to them, they would hear it with unbelief. It remains, therefore, that they are kept bound by original sin alone, and for this alone they go into condemnation;

and we see that in others in the same case this is not remitted, except by the gratuitous grace of God in regeneration; and that, by His secret yet righteous judgment--because there is no unrighteousness with God--that some, who even after baptism will perish by evil living, are yet kept in this life until they perish, who would not have perished if bodily death had forestalled their lapse into sin, and so come to their help. Because no dead man is judged by the good or evil things which he would have done if he had not died, otherwise the Tyrians and Sidonians would not have suffered the penalties according to what they did; but rather according to those things that they would have done, if those evangelical mighty works had been done in them, they would have obtained salvation by great repentance, and by the faith of Christ.

**CHAP. 24 [X.]--IT MAY BE OBJECTED THAT THE PEOPLE OF TYRE AND SIDON MIGHT, IF THEY HAD HEARD, HAVE BELIEVED, AND HAVE SUBSEQUENTLY LAPSED FROM THEIR FAITH.**

A certain catholic disputant of no mean reputation so expounded this passage of the gospel as to say, that the Lord foreknew that the Tyrians and Sidonians would have afterwards departed from the faith, although they had believed the miracles done among them; and that in mercy He did not work those miracles there, because they would have been liable to severer punishment if they had forsaken the faith which they had once held, than if they had at no time held it. In which opinion of a learned and exceedingly acute man, why am I now concerned to say what is still reasonably to be asked, when even this opinion serves me for the purpose at which I aim? For if the Lord in His mercy did not do mighty works among them, since by these works they might possibly become believers, so that they might not be more severely punished when they should subsequently

become unbelievers, as He foreknew that they would,--it is sufficiently and plainly shown that no dead person is judged for those sins which He foreknew that he would have done, if in some manner he were not helped not to do them; just as Christ is said to have come to the aid of the Tyrians and Sidonians, if that opinion be true, who He would rather should not come to the faith at all, than that by a much greater wickedness they should depart from the faith, as, if they had come to it, He foresaw they would have done. Although if it be said, "Why was it not provided that they should rather believe, and this gift should be bestowed on them, that before they forsook the faith they should depart from this life"? I am ignorant what reply can be made. For he who says that to those who would forsake their faith it would have been granted, as a kindness, that they should not begin to have what, by a more serious impiety, they would subsequently forsake, sufficiently indicates that a man is not judged by that which it is foreknown he would have done ill, if by any act of kindness he may be prevented from doing it. Therefore it is an advantage also to him who is taken away, lest wickedness should alter his understanding. But why this advantage should not have been given to the Tyrians and Sidonians, that they might believe and be taken away, lest wickedness should alter their understanding, he perhaps might answer who was pleased in such a way to solve the above question; but, as far as concerns what I am discussing, I see it to be enough that, even according to that very opinion, men are shown not to be judged in respect of those things which they have not done, even although they may have been foreseen as certain to have done them. However, as I have said, let us think shame even to refute this opinion, whereby sins are supposed to be punished in people who die or have died because they have been foreknown as certain to do them if they had lived; lest we also may seem to have thought it to be of some importance, although we would rather repress it by argument than pass it over in silence.

## **CHAP. 25 [XI.]--GOD'S WAYS, BOTH IN MERCY AND JUDGMENT, PAST FINDING OUT.**

Accordingly, as says the apostle, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy," who both comes to the help of such infants as He will, although they neither will nor run, since He chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world as those to whom He intended to give His grace freely,--that is, with no merits of theirs, either of faith or of works, preceding; and does not come to the help of those who are more mature, although He foresaw that they would believe His miracles if they should be done among them, because He wills not to come to their help, since in His predestination He, secretly indeed, but yet righteous]y, has otherwise determined concerning them. For "there is no unrighteousness with God;" but "His judgments are un-searchable, and His ways are past finding out; all the ways of the Lord are mercy and truth."

Therefore the mercy is past finding out by which He has mercy on whom He will, no merits of his own preceding; and the truth is unsearchable by which He hardeneth whom He will, even although his merits may have preceded, but merits for the most part common to him with the man on whom He has mercy. As of two twins, of which one is taken and the other left, the end is unequal, while the deserts are common, yet in these the one is in such wise delivered by God's great goodness, that the other is condemned by no injustice of God's. For is there unrighteousness with God? Away with the thought! but His ways are past finding out. Therefore let us believe in His mercy in the case of those who are delivered, and in His truth in the case of those who are punished, without any hesitation; and let us not endeavour to look into that which is inscrutable, nor to trace that which cannot be found out. Because out of the mouth of babes

and sucklings He perfects His praise, so that what we see in those whose deliverance is preceded by no good deservings of theirs, and in those whose condemnation is only preceded by original sin, common alike to both,--this we by no means shrink from as occurring in the case of grown-up people, that is, because we do not think either that grace is given to any one according to his own merits, or that any one is punished except for his own merits, whether they are alike who are delivered and who are punished, or have unequal degrees of evil; so that he who thinketh he standeth may take heed lest he fall, and he who glorieth may glory not in himself, but in the Lord.

**CHAP. 26.--THE MANICHEANS DO NOT RECEIVE ALL THE BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, AND OF THE NEW ONLY THOSE THAT THEY CHOOSE.**

But wherefore is "the case of infants not allowed," as you write, "to be alleged as an example for their elders," by men who do not hesitate to affirm against the Pelagians that there is original sin, which entered by one man into the world, and that from one all have gone into condemnation? This, the Manicheans, too, do not receive, who not only reject all the Scriptures of the Old Testament as of authority, but even receive those which belong to the New Testament in such a manner as that each man, by his own prerogative as it were, or rather by his own sacrilege, takes what he likes, and rejects what he does not like,--in opposition to whom I treated in my writings on Free Will, whence they think that they have a ground of objection against me. I have been unwilling to deal plainly with the very laborious questions that occurred, lest my work should become too long, in a case which, as opposed to such perverse men, I could not have the assistance of the authority of the sacred Scriptures. And I was able,--as I actually did, whether anything of the divine testimonies might be true or not, seeing that I did not definitely introduce them into the

argument,--nevertheless, by certain reasoning, to conclude that God in all things is to be praised, without any necessity of believing, as they would have us, that there are two co-eternal, confounded substances of good and evil.

#### **CHAP. 27.--REFERENCE TO THE " RETRACTATIONS."**

Finally, in the first book of the Retractations, which work of mine you have not yet read, when I had come to the reconsidering of those same books, that is, on the subject of Free Will, I thus spoke: "In these books," I say, "many things were so discussed that on the occurring of some questions which either I was not able to elucidate, or which required a long discussion at once, they were so deferred as that from either side, or from all sides, of those questions in which what was most in harmony with the truth did not appear, yet my reasoning might be conclusive for this, namely, that whichever of them might be true, God might be believed, or even be shown, to be worthy of praise. Because that discussion was undertaken for the sake of those who deny that the origin of evil is derived from the free choice of the will, and contend that God,--if He be so,--as the Creator of all natures, is worthy of blame; desiring in that manner, according to the error of their impiety (for they are Manicheans), to introduce a certain immutable nature of evil co-eternal with God." Also, after a little time, in another place I say: "Then it was said, From this misery, most righteously inflicted on sinners, God's grace delivers, because man of his own accord, that is, by free will, could fall, but could not also rise. To this misery of just condemnation belong the ignorance and the difficulty which every man suffers from the beginning of his birth, and no one is delivered from that evil except by the grace of God. And this misery the Pelagians will not have to descend from a just condemnation, because they deny original sin; although even if the ignorance and difficulty were the natural

beginnings of man, God would not even thus deserve to be reproached, but to be praised, as I have argued in the same third book. Which argument must be regarded as against the Manicheans, who do not receive the holy Scriptures of the Old Testament, in which original sin is narrated; and whatever thence is read in the apostolic epistles, they contend was introduced with a detestable impudence by the corrupters of the Scriptures, assuming that it was not said by the apostles. But against the Pelagians that must be maintained which both Scriptures commend, as they profess to receive them." These things I said in my first book of Retractions, when I was reconsidering the books on Free Will. Nor, indeed, were these things all that were said by me there about these books, but there were many others also, which I thought it would be tedious to insert in this work for you, and not necessary; and this I think you also will judge when you have read all. Although, therefore, in the third book on Free Will I have in such wise argued concerning infants, that even if what the Pelagians say were true,--that ignorance and difficulty, without which no man is born, are elements, not punishments, of our nature,--still the Manicheans would be overcome, who will have it that the two natures, to wit, of good and evil; are co-eternal. Is, therefore, the faith to be called in question or forsaken, which the catholic Church maintains against those very Pelagians, asserting as she does that it is original sin, the guilt of which, contracted by generation, must be remitted by regeneration? And if they confess this with us, so that we may at once, in this matter of the Pelagians, destroy error, why do they think that it must be doubted that God can deliver even infants, to whom He gives His grace by the sacrament of baptism, from the power of darkness, and translate them into the kingdom of the Son of His love? In the fact, therefore, that He gives that grace to some, and does not give it to others. why will they not stag to the Lord His mercy and judgment? Why, however, is it given to these, rather than to those,--who has

known the mind of the Lord? who is able to look into unsearchable things? who to trace out that which is past finding out?

**CHAP. 28 [XII.]--GOD'S GOODNESS AND RIGHTEOUSNESS SHOWN IN ALL.**

It is therefore settled that God's grace is not given according to the deserts of the recipients, but according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise and glory of His own grace; so that he who glorieth may by no means glory in himself, but in the Lord, who gives to those men to whom He will, because He is merciful, what if, however, He does not give, He is righteous: and He does not give to whom He will not, that He may make known the riches of His glory to the vessels of mercy. For by giving to some what they do not deserve, He has certainly willed that His grace should be gratuitous, and thus genuine grace; by not giving to all, He has shown what all deserve. Good in His goodness to some, righteous in the punishment of others; both good in respect of all, because it is good when that which is due is rendered, and righteous in respect of all, since that which is not due is given without wrong to any one.

**CHAP. 29.--GOD'S TRUE GRACE COULD BE DEFENDED EVEN IF THERE WERE NO ORIGINAL SIN, AS PELAGIUS MAINTAINS.**

But God's grace, that is, true grace without merits, is maintained, even if infants, when baptized, according to the view of the Pelagians, are not plucked out of the power of darkness, because they are held guilty of no sin, as the Pelagians think, but are only transferred into the Lord's kingdom: for even thus, without any good merits, the kingdom is given to those to whom it is given; and without any evil merits it is not given to them to whom it is not given. And this we are in the habit of saying in opposition to the same Pelagians, when they



object to us that we attribute God's grace to fate, when we say that it is given not in respect to our merits. For they themselves rather attribute God's grace to fate in the case of infants, if they say that when there is no merit it is fate. Certainly, even according to the Pelagians themselves, no merits can be found in infants to cause that some of them should be admitted into the kingdom, and others should be alienated from the kingdom. But now, just as in order to show that God's grace is not given according to our merits, I preferred to maintain this truth in accordance with both opinions,-- both in accordance with our own, to wit, who say that infants are bound by original sin, and according to that of the Pelagians, who deny that there is original sin, and yet I cannot on that account doubt that infants have what He can pardon them who saves His people from their sins: so in the third book on Free Will, according to both views, I have withstood the Manicheans, whether ignorance and difficulty be punishments or elements of nature without which no man is born; and yet I hold one of these views. There, moreover, it is sufficiently evidently declared by me, that is not the nature of man as he was ordained, but his punishment as condemned.

### **CHAP. 30.--AUGUSTIN CLAIMS THE RIGHT TO GROW IN KNOWLEDGE.**

Therefore it is in vain that it is prescribed to me from that old book of mine, that I may not argue the case as I ought to argue it in respect of infants; and that thence I may not persuade my opponents by the light of a manifest truth, that God's grace is not given according to men's merits. For if, when I began my books concerning Free Will as a layman, and finished them as a presbyter, I still doubted of the condemnation of infants not born again, and of the deliverance of infants that were born again, no one, as I think, would be so unfair and envious as to hinder my progress, and judge that I must continue

in that uncertainty. But it can more correctly be understood that it ought to be believed that I did not doubt in that matter, for the reason that they against whom my purpose was directed seemed to me in such wise to be rebutted, as that whether there was a punishment of original sin in infants, according to the truth, or whether there was not, as some mistaken people think, yet in no degree should such a confusion of the two natures be believed in, to wit, of good and evil, as the error of the Manicheans introduces. Be it therefore far from us so to forsake the case of infants as to say to ourselves that it is uncertain whether, being regenerated in Christ, if they die in infancy they pass into eternal salvation; but that, not being regenerated, they pass into the second death. Because that which is written, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men," cannot be rightly understood in any other manner; nor from that eternal death which is most righteously repaid to sin does any deliver any one, small or great, save He who, for the sake of remitting our sins, both original and personal, died without any sin of His own, either original or personal. But why some rather than others? Again and again we say, and do not shrink from it "O man, who art thou that repliest against God?" " His judgments are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out." And let us add this, "Seek not out the things that are too high for thee, and search not the things that are above thy strength."

**CHAP. 31.-- INFANTS ARE NOT JUDGED ACCORDING TO THAT WHICH THEY ARE FOREKNOWN AS LIKELY TO DO IF THEY SHOULD LIVE.**

For you see, beloved, how absurd it is, and how foreign from soundness of faith and sincerity of truth, for us to say that infants, when they die, should be judged according to those things which they are foreknown to be going to do if they should live. For to this

opinion, from which certainly every human feeling, on however little reason it may be founded, and especially every Christian feeling, revolts, they are compelled to advance who have chosen in such wise to be withdrawn from the error of the Pelagians as still to think that they must believe, and, moreover, must profess in argument, that the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, by which alone after the fall of the first man, in whom we all fell, help is afforded to us, is given according to our merits. And this be lief Pelagius himself, before the Eastern bishops as judges, condemned in fear of his own condemnation. And if this be not said of the good or bad works of those who have died, which they would have done if they had lived,--and thus of no works, and works that would never exist, even in the foreknowledge of God,--if this, therefore, be not said, and you see under how great a mistake it is said, what will remain but that we confess, when the darkness of contention is removed, that the grace of God is not given according to our merits, which position the catholic Church defends against the Pelagian heresy; and that we see this in more evident truth especially in infants? For God is not compelled by fate to come to the help of these infants, and not to come to the help of those,--since the case is alike to both. Or shall we think that human affairs in the case of infants are not managed by Divine Providence, but by fortuitous chances, when rational souls are either to be condemned or delivered, although, indeed, not a sparrow falls to the ground without the will of our Father which is in heaven? Or must we so attribute it to the negligence of parents that infants die without baptism, as that heavenly judgments have nothing to do with it; as if they themselves who in this way die badly had of their own will chosen the negligent parents for themselves of whom they were born? What shall I say when an infant expires some time before he can possibly be advantaged by the ministry of baptism? For often when the parents are eager and the ministers prepared for giving baptism to the infants, it still is not given, because God does not

choose; since He has not kept it in this life for a little while in order that baptism might be given it. What, moreover, when sometimes aid could be afforded by baptism to the children of unbelievers, that they should not go into perdition, and could not be afforded to the children of believers? In which case it is certainly shown that there is no acceptance of persons with God; otherwise He would rather deliver the children of His worshippers than the children of His enemies.

### **CHAP. 32 [XIII.]--THE INSCRUTABILITY OF GOD'S FREE PURPOSES.**

But now, since we are now treating of the gift of perseverance, why is it that aid is afforded to the person about to die who is not baptized, while to the baptized person about to fall, aid is not afforded, so as to die before? Unless, perchance, we shall still listen to that absurdity by which it is said that it is of no advantage to any one to die before his fall, because he will be judged according to those actions which God foreknew that he would have done if he had lived. Who can hear with patience this perversity, so violently opposed to the soundness of the faith? Who can bear it? And yet they are driven to say this who do not confess that God's grace is not bestowed in respect of our deservings. They, however, who will not say that any one who has died is judged according to those things which God foreknew that he would have done if he had lived, considering with how manifest a falsehood and how great an absurdity this would be said, have no further reason to say, what the Church condemned in the Pelagians, and caused to be condemned by Pelagius himself,--that the grace of God, namely, is given according to our merits,--when they see some infants not regenerated taken from this life to eternal death, and others regenerated, to eternal life; and those themselves that are regenerated, some going hence, persevering even to the end, and

others kept in this life even until they fall, who certainly would not have fallen if they had departed hence before their lapse; and again some falling, but not departing from this life until they return, who certainly would have perished if they had departed before their return.

**CHAP. 33.--GOD GIVES BOTH INITIATORY AND PERSEVERING GRACE ACCORDING TO HIS OWN WILL.**

From all which it is shown with sufficient clearness that the grace of God, which both begins a man's faith and which enables it to persevere unto the end, is not given according to our merits, but is given according to His own most secret and at the same time most righteous, wise, and beneficent will; since those whom He predestinated, them He also called, with that calling of which it is said, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." To which calling there is no man that can be said by men with any certainty of affirmation to belong, until he has departed from this world; but in this life of man, which is a state of trial upon the earth, he who seems to stand must take heed lest he fall. Since (as I have already said before) those who will not persevere are, by the most foreseeing will of God, mingled with those who will persevere, for the reason that we may learn not to mind high things, but to consent to the lowly, and may "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do for His good pleasure." We therefore will, but God worketh in us to will also. We therefore work, but God worketh in us to work also for His good pleasure. This is profitable for us both to believe and to say,--this is pious, this is true, that our confession be lowly and submissive, and that all should be given to God. Thinking, we believe; thinking, we speak; thinking, we do whatever we do; but, in respect of what concerns the way of piety and the true worship of God, we are not sufficient to think

anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God. For "our heart and our thoughts are not in our own power;" whence the same Ambrose who says this says also: "But who is so blessed as in his heart always to rise upwards? And how can this be done without divine help? Assuredly, by no means. Finally," he says, "the same Scripture affirms above, 'Blessed is the man whose help is of Thee; O Lord, ascent is in his heart.'" Assuredly, Ambrose was not only enabled to say this by reading in the holy writings, but as of such a man is to be without doubt believed, he felt it also in his own heart. Therefore, as is said in the sacraments of believers, that we should lift up our hearts to the Lord, is God's gift; for which gift they to whom this is said are admonished by the priest after this word to give thanks to our Lord God Himself; and they answer that it is "meet and right so to do." For, since our heart is not in our own power, but is lifted up by the divine help, so that it ascends and takes cognizance of those things which are above, where Christ is sitting at the right hand of God, and, not those things that are upon the earth, to whom are thanks to be given for so great a gift as this unless to our Lord God who doeth this,--who in so great kindness has chosen us by delivering us from the abyss of this world, and has predestinated us before the foundation of the world?

#### **CHAP. 34 [XIV.]--THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION NOT OPPOSED TO THE ADVANTAGE OF PREACHING.**

But they say that the "definition of predestination is opposed to the advantage of preaching," --as if, indeed, it were opposed to the preaching of the apostle! Did not that teacher of the heathen so often, in faith and truth, both commend predestination, and not cease to preach the word of God? Because he said, "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure," did he not also exhort that we should both will and do what is pleasing to

God? or because he said, "He who hath begun a good work in you shall carry it on even unto the day of Christ Jesus," did he on that account cease to persuade men to begin and to persevere unto the end? Doubtless, our Lord Himself commanded men to believe, and said, "Believe in God, believe also in me:" and yet His opinion is not therefore false, nor is His definition idle when He says, "No man cometh unto me "--that is, no man believeth in me--"except it has been given him of my Father." Nor, again, because this definition is true, is the former precept vain. Why, therefore, do we think the definition of predestination useless to preaching, to precept, to exhortation, to rebuke,--all which things the divine Scripture repeats frequently,--seeing that the same Scripture commends this doctrine?

### **CHAP. 35.--WHAT PREDESTINATION IS.**

Will any man dare to say that God did not foreknow those to whom He would give to believe, or whom He would give to His Son, that of them He should lose none? And certainly, if He foreknew these things, He as certainly foreknew His own kindnesses, wherewith He condescends to deliver us. This is the predestination of the saints,--nothing else; to wit, the foreknowledge and the preparation of God's kindnesses, whereby they are most certainly delivered, whoever they are that are delivered. But where are the rest left by the righteous divine judgment except in the mass of ruin, where the Tyrians and the Sidonians were left? who, moreover, might have believed if they had seen Christ's wonderful miracles. But since it was not given to them to believe, the means of believing also were denied them. From which fact it appears that some have in their understanding itself a naturally divine gift of intelligence, by which they may be moved to the faith, if they either hear the words or behold the signs congruous to their minds; and yet if, in the higher judgment of God, they are not by the predestination of grace separated from the mass of perdition,

neither those very divine words nor deeds are applied to them by which they might believe if they only heard or saw such things. Moreover, in the same mass of ruin the Jews were left, because they could not believe such great and eminent mighty works as were done in their sight. For the gospel has not been silent about the reason why they could not believe, since it says: "But though He had done such great miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him; that the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? And, therefore, they could not believe, because that Isaiah said again, He hath blinded their eyes and hardened their heart, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them." Therefore the eyes of the Tyrians and Sidonians were not so blinded nor was their heart so hardened, since they would have believed if they had seen such mighty works, as the Jews saw. But it did not profit them that they were able to believe, because they were not predestinated by Him whose judgments are inscrutable and His ways past finding out. Neither would inability to believe have been a hindrance to them, if they had been so predestinated as that God should illuminate those blind eyes, and should will to take away the stony heart from those hardened ones. But what the Lord said of the Tyrians and Sidonians may perchance be understood in another way: that no one nevertheless comes to Christ unless it were given him, and that it is given to those who are chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, he confesses beyond a doubt who hears the divine utterance, not with the deaf ears of the flesh, but with the ears of the heart; and yet this predestination, which is plainly enough unfolded even by the words of the gospels, did not prevent the Lord's saying as well in respect of the commencement, what I have a little before mentioned, "Believe in God; believe also in me," as in respect of perseverance, "A man ought always to pray, and not to faint." For



they hear these things and do them to whom it is given; but they do them not, whether they hear or do not hear, to whom it is not given. Because, "To you," said He, "it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." Of these, the one refers to the mercy, the other to the judgment of Him to whom our soul cries, "I will sing of mercy and judgment unto Thee, O Lord."

### **CHAP. 36.--THE PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL AND THE PREACHING OF PREDESTINATION THE TWO PARTS OF ONE MESSAGE.**

Therefore, by the preaching of predestination, the preaching of a persevering and progressive faith is not to be hindered; and thus they may hear what is necessary to whom it is given that they should obey. For how shall they hear without a preacher? Neither, again, is the preaching of a progressive faith which continues even to the end to hinder the preaching of predestination, so that he who is living faithfully and obediently may not be lifted up by that very obedience, as if by a benefit of his own, not received; but that he that glorieth may glory in the Lord. For "we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own." And this, Cyprian most faithfully saw and most fearlessly explained, and thus he pronounced predestination to be most assured. For if we must boast in nothing, seeing that nothing is our own, certainly we must not boast of the most persevering obedience. Nor is it so to be called our own, as if it were not given to us from above. And, therefore, it is God's gift, which, by the confession of all Christians, God foreknew that He would give to His people, who were called by that calling whereof it was said, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." This, then, is the predestination which we faithfully and humbly preach. Nor yet did the same teacher and doer, who both believed on Christ and most perseveringly lived in holy obedience, even to suffering for Christ,

cease on that account to preach the gospel, to exhort to faith and to pious manners, and to that very perseverance to the end, because he said, "We must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own;" and here he declared without ambiguity the true grace of God, that is, that which is not given in respect of our merits; and since God foreknew that He would give it, predestination was announced beyond a doubt by these words of Cyprian; and if this did not prevent Cyprian from preaching obedience, it certainly ought not to prevent us.

### **CHAP. 37.--EARS TO HEAR ARE A WILLINGNESS TO OBEY.**

Although, therefore, we say that obedience is the gift of God, we still exhort men to it. But to those who obediently hear the exhortation of truth is given the gift of God itself--that is, to hear obediently; while to those who do not thus hear it is not given. For it was not some one only, but Christ who said, "No man cometh unto me, except it were given him of my Father;" and, "To you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." And concerning continence He says, "Not all receive this saying, but they to whom it is given." And when the apostle would exhort married people to conjugal chastity, he says, "I would that all men were even as I myself; but every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, another after that;" where he plainly shows not only that continence is a gift of God, but even the chastity of those who are married. And although these things are true, we still exhort to them as much as is given to any one of us to be able to exhort, because this also is His gift in whose hand are both ourselves and our discourses. Whence also says the apostle, "According to this grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise architect, I have laid the foundation." And in another place he says, "Even as the Lord hath given to every man: I have planted, Apollos has watered, but God has given the increase.

Therefore neither is he that planteth anything, nor he that watereth, but God that giveth the increase." And thus as only he preaches and exhorts rightly who has received this gift, so assuredly he who obediently hears him who rightly exhorts and preaches is he who has received this gift. Hence is what the Lord said, when, speaking to those who had their fleshly ears open, He nevertheless told them, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear;" which beyond a doubt he knew that not all had. And from whom they have, whosoever they be that have them, the Lord Himself shows when He says, "I will give them a heart to know me, and ears to hear." Therefore, having ears is itself the gift of obeying, so that they who had that came to Him, to whom "no one comes unless it were given to him of His Father." Therefore we exhort and preach, but they who have ears to hear obediently hear us, while in them who have them not, it comes to pass what is written, that hearing they do not hear,--hearing, to wit, with the bodily sense, they do not hear with the assent of the heart. But why these should have ears to hear, and those have them not,--that is, why to these it should be given by the Father to come to the Son, while to those it should not be given,--who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been His counsellor? Or who art thou, O man, that repliest against God? Must that which is manifest be denied, because that which is hidden cannot be comprehended? Shall we, I say, declare that what we see to be so is not so, because we cannot find out why it is so?

**CHAP. 38 [XV.]--AGAINST THE PREACHING OF PREDESTINATION THE SAME OBJECTIONS MAY BE ALLEGED AS AGAINST PREDESTINATION.**

But they say, as you write: "That no one can be aroused by the incentives of rebuke if it be said in the assembly of the Church to the multitude of hearers: The definite meaning of God's will concerning

predestination stands in such wise, that some of you will receive the will to obey and will come out of unbelief unto faith, or will receive perseverance and abide in the faith; but others who are lingering in the delight of sins have not yet arisen, for the reason that the aid of pitying grace has not yet indeed raised you up. But yet, if there are any whom by His grace He has predestinated to be chosen, who are not yet called, ye shall receive that grace by which you may will and be chosen; and if any obey, if ye are predestinated to be rejected, the strength to obey shall be withdrawn from you, so that you may cease to obey." Although these things may be said, they ought not so to deter us from confessing the true grace of God,-- that is, the grace which is not given to us in respect of our merits,--and from confessing the predestination of the saints in accordance therewith, even as we are not deterred from confessing God's foreknowledge, although one should thus speak to the people concerning it, and say: "Whether you are now living righteously or unrighteously, you shall be such by and by as the Lord has foreknown that you will be,-- either good, if He has foreknown you as good, or bad, if He has foreknown you as bad." For if on the hearing of this some should be turned to torpor and slothfulness, and from striving should go headlong to lust after their own desires, is it therefore to be counted that what has been said about the foreknowledge of God is false? If God has foreknown that they will be good, will they not be good, whatever be the depth of evil in which they are now engaged? And if He has foreknown them evil, will they not be evil, whatever goodness may now be discerned in them? There was a man in our monastery, who, when the brethren rebuked him for doing some things that ought not to be done, and for not doing some things that ought to be done, replied, "Whatever I may now be, I shall be such as God has foreknown that I shall be." And this man certainly both said what was true, and was not profited by this truth for good, but so far made way in evil as to desert the society of the monastery, and become a

dog returned to his vomit; and, nevertheless, it is uncertain what he is yet to become. For the sake of souls of this kind, then, is the truth which is spoken about God's foreknowledge either to be denied or to be kept back,--at such times, for instance, when, if it is not spoken, other errors are incurred?

### **CHAP. 39 [XVI]--PRAYER AND EXHORTATION.**

There are some, moreover, who either do not pray at all, or pray coldly, because, from the Lord's words, they have learnt that God knows what is necessary for us before we ask it of Him. Must the truth of this declaration be given up, or shall we think that it should be erased from the gospel because of such people? Nay, since it is manifest that God has prepared some things to be given even to those who do not pray for them, such as the beginning of faith, and other things not to be given except to those who pray for them, such as perseverance even unto the end, certainly he who thinks that he has this latter from himself does not pray to have it. Therefore we must take care lest, while we are afraid of exhortation growing lukewarm, prayer should be stifled and arrogance stimulated.

### **CHAP. 40.--WHEN THE TRUTH MUST BE SPOKEN, WHEN KEPT BACK.**

Therefore let the truth be spoken, especially when any question impels us to declare it; and let them receive it who are able, lest, perchance, while we are silent on account of those who cannot receive it, they be not only defrauded of the truth but be taken captive by falsehood, who are able to receive the truth whereby falsehood may be avoided. For it is easy, nay, and it is useful, that some truth should be kept back because of those who are incapable of apprehending it. For whence is that word of our Lord: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now"? And

that of the apostle: "I could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal: as if unto babes in Christ I have given you to drink milk, and not meat, for hitherto ye were not able, neither yet indeed now are ye able" ? Although, in a certain manner of speaking, it might happen that what is said should be both milk to infants and meat for grown-up persons. As "in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," what Christian can keep it back? Who can receive it? Or what in sound doctrine can be found more comprehensive? And yet this is not kept back either from infants or from grown-up people, nor is it hidden from infants by those who are mature. But the reason of keeping back the truth is one, the necessity of speaking the truth is another. It would be a tedious business to inquire into or to put down all the reasons for keeping back the truth; of which, nevertheless, there is this one,--lest we should make those who do not understand worse, while wishing to make those who do understand more learned; although these latter do not become more learned when we withhold any such thing on the one hand, but also do not become worse. When, however, a truth is of such a nature that he who cannot receive it is made worse by our speaking it, and he who can receive it is made worse by our silence concerning it, what do we think is to be done? Must we not speak the truth, that he who can receive it may receive it, rather than keep silence, so that not only neither may receive it, but that even he who is more intelligent should himself be made worse? For if he should hear and receive it, by his means also many might learn. For in proportion as he is more capable of learning, he is the more fitted for teaching others. The enemy of grace presses on and urges in all ways to make us believe that grace is given according to our deservings, and thus grace is no more grace; and are we unwilling to say what we can say by the testimony of Scripture? Do we fear, forsooth, to offend by our speaking him who is not able to receive the

truth? and are we not afraid lest by our silence he who can receive the truth may be involved in falsehood?

**CHAP. 41.--PREDESTINATION DEFINED AS ONLY GOD'S DISPOSING OF EVENTS IN HIS FOREKNOWLEDGE.**

For either predestination must be preached, in the way and degree in which the Holy Scripture plainly declares it, so that in the predestinated the gifts and calling of God may be without repentance; or it must be avowed that God's grace is given according to our merits,--which is the opinion of the Pelagians; although that opinion of theirs, as I have often said already, may be read in the Proceedings of the Eastern bishops to have been condemned by the lips of Pelagius himself. Further, those on whose account I am discoursing are only removed from the heretical perversity of the Pelagians, inasmuch as, although they will not confess that they who by God's grace are made obedient and so abide, are predestinated, they still confess, nevertheless, that this grace precedes their will to whom it is given; in such a way certainly as that grace may not be thought to be given freely, as the truth declares, but rather according to the merits of a preceding will, as the Pelagian error says, in contradiction to the truth. Therefore, also, grace precedes faith; otherwise, if faith precedes grace, beyond a doubt will also precedes it, because there cannot be faith without will. But if grace precedes faith because it precedes will, certainly it precedes all obedience; it also precedes love, by which alone God is truly and pleasantly obeyed. And all these things grace works in him to whom it is given, and in whom it precedes all these things. [XVII.] Among these benefits there remains perseverance unto the end, which is daily asked for in vain from the Lord, if the Lord by His grace does not effect it in him whose prayers He hears. See now how foreign it is from the truth to deny that perseverance even to the end of this life is

the gift of God; since He Himself puts an end to this life when He wills, and if He puts an end before a fall that is threatening, He makes the man to persevere even unto the end. But more marvellous and more manifest to believers is the largess of God's goodness, that this grace is given even to infants, although there is no obedience at that age to which it may be given. To whomsoever, therefore, God gives His gifts, beyond a doubt He has foreknown that He will bestow them on them, and in His foreknowledge He has prepared them for them. Therefore, those whom He predestinated, them He also called with that calling which I am not reluctant often to make mention of, of which it is said, "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." For the ordering of His future works in His foreknowledge, which cannot be deceived and changed, is absolute, and is nothing but, predestination. But, as he whom God has foreknown to be chaste, although he may regard it as uncertain, so acts as to be chaste, so he whom He has predestinated to be chaste, although he may regard that as uncertain, does not, therefore, fail to act so as to be chaste because he hears that he is to be what he will be by the gift of God. Nay, rather, his love rejoices, and he is not puffed up as if he had not received it. Not only, therefore, is he not hindered from this work by the preaching of predestination, but he is even assisted to it, so that although he glories he may glory in the Lord.

**CHAP. 42.--THE ADVERSARIES CANNOT DENY PREDESTINATION TO THOSE GIFTS OF GRACE WHICH THEY THEMSELVES ACKNOWLEDGE, AND THEIR EXHORTATIONS ARE NOT HINDERED BY THIS PREDESTINATION NEVERTHELESS.**

And what I said of chastity, can be said also of faith, of piety, of love, of perseverance, and, not to enumerate single virtues, it may be said with the utmost truthfulness of all the obedience with which God is



obeyed. But those who place only the beginning of faith and perseverance to the end in such wise in our power as not to regard them as God's gifts, nor to think that God works on our thoughts and wills so as that we may have and retain them, grant, nevertheless, that He gives other things,--since they are obtained from Him by the faith of the believer. Why are they not afraid that exhortation to these other things, and the preaching of these other things, should be hindered by the definition of predestination? Or, perchance, do they say that such things are not predestinated? Then they are not given by God, or He has not known that He would give them. Because, if they are both given, and He foreknew that He would give them, certainly He predestinated them. As, therefore, they themselves also exhort to chastity, charity, piety, and other things which they confess to be God's gifts, and cannot deny that they are also foreknown by Him, and therefore predestinated; nor do they say that their exhortations are hindered by the preaching of God's predestination, that is, by the preaching of God's foreknowledge of those future gifts of His: so they may see that neither are their exhortations to faith or to perseverance hindered, even although those very things may be said, as is the truth, to be gifts of God, and that those things are foreknown, that is, predestinated to be given; but let them rather see that by this preaching of predestination only that most pernicious error is hindered and overthrown, whereby it is said that the grace of God is given according to our deservings, so that he who glories may glory not in the Lord, but in himself.

#### **CHAP. 43.--FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE FOREGOING ARGUMENT.**

And in order that I may more openly unfold this for the sake of those who are somewhat slow of apprehension, let those who are endowed with an intelligence that flies in advance bear with my delay. The

Apostle James says, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." It is written also in the Proverbs of Solomon, "Because the Lord giveth wisdom." And of continency it is read in the book of Wisdom, whose authority has been used by great and learned men who have commented upon the divine utterances long before us; there, therefore, it is read, "When I knew that no one can be continent unless God gives it, and that this was of wisdom, to know whose gift this was." Therefore these are God's gifts,--that is, to say nothing of others, wisdom and continency. Let those also acquiesce: for they are not Pelagians, to contend against such a manifest truth as this with hard and heretical perversity. "But," say they, "that these things are given to us of God is obtained by faith, which has its beginning from us;" and both to begin to have this faith, and to abide in it even to the end, they contend is our own doing, as if we received it not from the Lord. This, beyond a doubt, is in contradiction to the apostle when he says, "For what hast thou that thou hast not received?" It is in contradiction also to the saying of the martyr Cyprian, "That we must boast in nothing, since nothing is our own." When we have said this, and many other things which it is wearisome to repeat, and have shown that both the commencement of faith and perseverance to the end are gifts of God; and that it is impossible that God should not foreknow any of His future gifts, as well what should be given as to whom they should be given; and that thus those whom He delivers and crowns are predestinated by Him; they think it well to reply, "that the assertion of predestination is opposed to the advantage of preaching, for the reason that when this is heard no one can be stirred up by the incentives of rebuke." When they say this, "they are unwilling that it should be declared to men, that coming to the faith and abiding in the faith are God's gifts, lest despair rather than encouragement should appear to be suggested, inasmuch as they who hear think that it is uncertain to human

ignorance on whom God bestows, or on whom He does not bestow, these gifts." Why, then, do they themselves also preach with us that wisdom and continency are God's gifts? But if, when these things are declared to be God's gifts, there is no hindrance of the exhortation with which we exhort men to be wise and continent; what is after all the reason for their thinking that the exhortation is hindered wherewith we exhort men to come to the faith, and to abide in it to the end, if these also are said to be God's gifts, as is proved by the Scriptures, which are His witnesses ?

#### **CHAP. 44.--EXHORTATION TO WISDOM, THOUGH WISDOM IS GOD'S GIFT.**

Now, to say nothing more of continency, and to argue in this place of wisdom alone, certainly the Apostle James above mentioned says, "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, modest, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, inestimable, without simulation." Do you not see, I beseech you, how this wisdom descends from the Father of Lights, laden with many and great benefits? Because, as the same apostle says, "Every excellent gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of Lights." Why, then--to set aside other matters--do we rebuke the impure and contentious, to whom we nevertheless preach that the gift of God is wisdom, pure and peaceable; and are not afraid that they should be influenced, by the uncertainty of the divine will, to find in this preaching more of despair than of exhortation; and that they should not be stirred up by the incentives of rebuke rather against us than against themselves, because we rebuke them for not having those things which we ourselves say are not produced by human will, but are given by the divine liberality ? Finally, why did the preaching of this grace not deter the Apostle James from rebuking restless souls, and saying, "If ye have bitter

envying, and contentions are in your hearts, glory not, and be not liars against the truth. This is not the wisdom that cometh down from above, but is earthly, animal, devilish; for where envying and contention are, there are inconstancy and every evil work"? As, therefore, the restless are to be rebuked, both by the testimony of the divine declarations, and by those very impulses of ours which they have in common with ourselves; and is it no argument against this rebuke that we declare the peaceful wisdom, whereby the contentions are corrected and healed, to be the gift of God; unbelievers are in such wise to be rebuked, as those who do not abide in the faith, without any hindrance to that rebuke from the preaching of God's grace, although that preaching commends that very grace and the continuance in it as the gifts of God. Because, although wisdom is obtained from faith, even as James himself, when he had said, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given," immediately added, "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering: "it is not, nevertheless, because faith is given before it is asked for by him to whom it is given, that it must therefore be said not to be the gift of God, but to be of ourselves, because it is given to us without our asking for it! For the apostle very plainly says, "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." From whom, therefore, are peace and love, from Him also is faith; wherefore, from Him we ask not only that it may be increased to those that possess it, but also that it may be given to those that possess it not.

#### **CHAP. 45.--EXHORTATION TO OTHER GIFTS OF GOD IN LIKE MANNER.**

Nor do those on whose account I am saying these things, who cry out that exhortation is checked by the preaching of predestination and

grace, exhort to those gifts alone which they contend are not given by God, but are from ourselves, such as are the beginning of faith, and perseverance in it even to the end. This certainly they ought to do, in such a way as only to exhort unbelievers to believe, and believers to continue to believe. But those things which with us they do not deny to be God's gifts, so as that with us they demolish the error of the Pelagians, such as modesty, continence, patience, and other virtues that pertain to a holy life, and are obtained by faith from the Lord, they ought to show as needing to be prayed for, and to pray for only, either for themselves or others; but they ought not to exhort any one to strive after them and retain them. But when they exhort to these things, according to their ability, and confess that men ought to be exhorted,--certainly they show plainly enough that exhortations are not hindered by that preaching, whether they are exhortations to faith or to perseverance to the end, because we also preach that such things are God's gifts, and are not given by any man to himself, but are given by God.

#### **CHAP. 46.--A MAN WHO DOES NOT PERSEVERE FAILS BY HIS OWN FAULT.**

But it is said, "It is by his own fault that any one deserts the faith, when he yields and consents to the temptation which is the cause of his desertion of the faith." Who denies it? But because of this, perseverance in the faith is not to be said not to be a gift of God. For it is this that a man daily asks for when he says, "Lead us not into temptation;" and if he is heard, it is this that he receives. And thus as he daily asks for perseverance, he assuredly places the hope of his perseverance not in himself, but in God. I, however, am loth to exaggerate the case with my words, but I rather leave it to them to consider, and see what it is of which they have persuaded themselves--to wit, "that by the preaching of predestination, more of

despair than of exhortation is impressed upon the hearers." For this is to say that a man then despairs of his salvation when he has learned to place his hope not in himself, but in God, although the prophet cries, "Cursed is he who has his hope in man."

#### **CHAP. 47.--PREDESTINATION IS SOMETIMES SIGNIFIED UNDER THE NAME OF FOREKNOWLEDGE.**

These gifts, therefore, of God, which are given to the elect who are called according to God's purpose, among which gifts is both the beginning of belief and perseverance in the faith to the termination of this life, as I have proved by such a concurrent testimony of reasons and authorities,--these gifts of God, I say, if there is no such predestination as I am maintaining, are not foreknown by God. But they are foreknown. This, therefore, is the predestination which I maintain. [XVIII.] Consequently sometimes the same predestination is signified also under the name of foreknowledge; as says the apostle, "God has not rejected His people whom He foreknew." Here, when he says, "He foreknew," the sense is not rightly understood except as "He predestinated," as is shown by the context of the passage itself. For he was speaking of the remnant of the Jews which were saved, while the rest perished. For above he had said that the prophet had declared to Israel, "All day long I have stretched forth my hands to an unbelieving and a gainsaying people." And as if it were answered, What, then, has become of the promises of God to Israel? he added in continuation, "I say, then, has God cast away His people? God forbid! for I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin." Then he added the words which I am now treating: "God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew." And in order to show that the remnant had been left by God's grace, not by any merits of their works, he went on to add, "Know ye not what the Scripture saith in Elias, in what way he

maketh intercession with God against Israel? " and the rest. "But what," says he, "saith the answer of God unto him? `I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee before Baal.'" For He says not, "There are left to me," or "They have reserved themselves to me," but, "I have reserved to myself." "Even so, then, at this present time also there is made a remnant by the election of grace. And if of grace, then it is no more by works; otherwise grace is no more grace." And connecting this with what I have above quoted, "What then?" and in answer to this inquiry, he says, "Israel hath not obtained that which he was seeking for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." Therefore, in the election, and in this remnant which were made so by the election of grace, he wished to be understood the people which God did not reject, because He foreknew them. This is that election by which He elected those, whom He willed, in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without spot in His sight, in love, predestinating them unto the adoption of sons. No one, therefore, who understands these things is permitted to doubt that, when the apostle says, "God hath not cast away His people whom He foreknew," He intended to signify predestination. For He foreknew the remnant which He should make so according to the election of grace. That is, therefore, He predestinated them; for without doubt He foreknew if He predestinated; but to have predestinated is to have foreknown that which He should do.

#### **CHAP. 48 [XIX.] -- PRACTICE OF CYPRIAN AND AMBROSE.**

What, then, hinders us, when we read of God's foreknowledge in some commentators on God's word, and they are treating of the calling; of the elect, from understanding the same predestination? For they would perchance have rather used in this matter this word

which, moreover, is better understood, and which is not inconsistent with, nay, is in accordance with, the truth which is declared concerning the predestination of grace. This I know, that no one has been able to dispute, except erroneously, against that predestination which I am maintaining in accordance with the Holy Scriptures. Yet I think that they who ask for the opinions of commentators on this matter ought to be satisfied with men so holy and so laudably celebrated everywhere in the faith and Christian doctrine as Cyprian and Ambrose, of whom I have given such clear testimonies; and that for both doctrines--that is, that they should both believe absolutely and preach everywhere that the grace of God is gratuitous, as we must believe and declare it to be; and that they should not think that preaching opposed to the preaching whereby we exhort the indolent or rebuke the evil; because these celebrated men also, although they were preaching God's grace in such a manner as that one of them said, "That we must boast in nothing, because nothing is our own; " and the other, "Our heart and our thoughts are not in our own power;" yet ceased not to exhort and rebuke, in order that the divine commands might be obeyed. Neither were they afraid of its being said to them, "Why do you exhort us, and why do you rebuke us, if no good thing that we have is from us, and if our hearts are not in our own power?" These holy men could by no means fear that such things should be said to them, since they were of the mind to understand that it is given to very few to receive the teaching of salvation through God Himself, or through the angels of heaven, without any human preaching to them; but that it is given to many to believe in God through human agency. Yet, in whatever manner the word of God is spoken to man, beyond a doubt for man to hear it in such a way as to obey it, is God's gift.

**CHAP. 49.--FURTHER REFERENCES TO CYPRIAN AND AMBROSE.**



Wherefore, the above-mentioned most excellent commentators on the divine declarations both preached the true grace of God as it ought to be preached,--that is, as a grace preceded by no human deservings,--and urgently exhorted to the doing of the divine commandments, that they who might have the gift of obedience should hear what commands they ought to obey. For if any merits of ours precede grace, certainly it is the merit of some deed, or word, or thought, wherein also is understood a good will itself. But he very briefly summed up the kinds of all deservings who said, "We must glory in nothing, because nothing is our own." And he who says, "Our heart and our thoughts are not in our own power," did not pass over acts and words also, for there is no act or word of man which does not proceed from the heart and the thought. But what more could that most glorious martyr and most luminous doctor Cyprian say concerning this matter, than when he impressed upon us that it behoves us to pray, in the Lord's Prayer, even for the adversaries of the Christian faith, showing what he thought of the beginning of the faith, that it also is God's gift, and pointing out that the Church of Christ prays daily for perseverance unto the end, because none but God gives that perseverance to those who have persevered? Moreover, the blessed Ambrose, when he was expounding the passage where the Evangelist Luke says, "It seemed good to me also," says, "What he declares to have seemed good to himself cannot have seemed good to him alone. For not alone by human will did it seem good, but as it pleased Him who speaks in me, Christ, who effects that that which is good may also seem good to us: for whom He has mercy on He also calls. And therefore he who follows: Christ may answer, when he is asked why he wished to become a Christian, 'It seemed good to me also.' And when he says this, he does not deny that it seemed good to God; for the will of men is prepared by God. For it is God's grace that God should be honoured by the saint." Moreover, in the same work,--that is, in the exposition of the same

Gospel, when he had come to that place where the Samaritans would not receive the Lord when His face was as going to Jerusalem,--he says, "Learn at the same time that He would not be received by those who were not converted in simpleness of mind. For if He had been willing, He would have made them devout who were undevout. And why they would not receive Him, the evangelist himself mentioned, saying, 'Because His face was as of one going towards Jerusalem.' But the disciples earnestly desired to be received into Samaria. But God calls those whom He makes worthy, and makes religious whom He will." What more evident, what more manifest do we ask from commentators on God's word, if we are pleased to hear from them what is clear in the Scriptures? But to these two, who ought to be enough, let us add also a third, the holy Gregory, who testifies that it is the gift of God both to believe in God and to confess what we believe, saying, "I beg of you confess the Trinity of one godhead; but if ye wish otherwise, say that it is of one nature, and God will be besought that a voice shall be given to you by the Holy Spirit ;" that is, God will be besought to allow a voice to be given to you by which you may confess what you believe. "For He will give, I am certain, He who gave what is first, will give also what is second." He who gave belief, will also give confession.

#### **CHAP. 50.--OBEDIENCE NOT DISCOURAGED BY PREACHING GOD'S GIFTS.**

Such doctors, and so great as these, when they say that there is nothing of which we may boast as if of our own which God has not given us, and that our very heart and our thoughts are not in our own power; and when they give the whole to God, and confess that from Him we receive that we are converted to Him in such wise as to continue,--that that which is good appears also to us to be good, and we wish for it,--that we honour God and receive Christ,--that from

undevout people we are made devout and religious,--that we believe in the Trinity itself, and also confess with our voice what we believe:--certainly attribute all these things to God's grace, acknowledge them as God's gifts, and testify that they come to us from Him, and are not from ourselves. But will any one say that they in such wise confessed that grace of God as to venture to deny His foreknowledge, which not only learned but unlearned men also confess ? Again, if they had so known that God gives these things that they were not ignorant that He foreknew that He would give them, and could not have been ignorant to whom He would give them: beyond a doubt they had known the predestination which, as preached by the apostles, we laboriously and diligently maintain against the modern heretics. Nor would it be with any manner of justice said, nevertheless, to them because they preach obedience, and fervently exhort, to the extent of the ability of each one, to its practice, "If you do not wish that the obedience to which you are stirring us up should grow cold in our heart, forbear to preach to us that grace of God by which you confess that God gives what you are exhorting us to do."

#### **CHAP. 51 [XX.]--PREDESTINATION MUST BE PREACHED.**

Wherefore, if both the apostles and the teachers of the Church who succeeded them and imitated them did both these things,--that is, both truly preached the grace of God which is not given according to our merits, and inculcated by wholesome precepts a pious obedience,--what is it which these people of our time think themselves rightly bound by the invincible force of truth to say, "Even if what is said of the predestination of God's benefits be true, yet it must not be preached to the people"? It must absolutely be preached, so that he who has ears to hear, may hear. And who has them if he has not received them from Him who says, "I will give them a heart to know me, and ears to hear"? Assuredly, he who has

not received may reject; while, yet, he who receives may take and drink, may drink and live. For as piety must be preached, that, by him who has ears to hear, God may be rightly worshipped; modesty must be preached, that, by him who has ears to hear, no illicit act may be perpetrated by his fleshly nature; charity must be preached, that, by him who has ears to hear, God and his neighbours may be loved;--so also must be preached such a predestination of God's benefits that he who has ears to hear may glory, not in himself, but in the Lord.

**CHAP. 52.--PREVIOUS WRITINGS ANTICIPATIVELY REFUTED THE PELAGIAN HERESY.**

But in respect of their saying "that it was not necessary that the hearts of so many people of little intelligence should be disquieted by the uncertainty of this kind of disputation, since the catholic faith has been defended for so many, years, with no less advantage, without this definition of predestination, as well against others as especially against the Pelagians, in so many books that have gone before, as well of catholics and others as our own;" --I much wonder that they should say this, and not observe--to say nothing of other writings in this place--that those very treatises of mine were both composed and published before the Pelagians had begun to appear; and that they do not see in how many passages of those treatises I was unawares cutting down a future Pelagian heresy, by preaching the grace by which God delivers us from evil errors and from our habits, without any preceding merits of ours,--doing this according to His gratuitous mercy. And this I began more fully to apprehend in that disputation which I wrote to Simplicianus, the bishop of the Church of Milan, of blessed memory, in the beginning of my episcopate, when, moreover, I both perceived and asserted that the beginning of faith is God's gift.

## **CHAP. 53.--AUGUSTIN'S "CONFESSIONS."**

And which of my smaller works has been able to be more generally and more agreeably known than the books of my Confessions ? And although I published them before the Pelagian heresy had come into existence, certainly in them I said to my God, and said it frequently, "Give what Thou commandest, and command what Thou willest." Which words of mine, Pelagius at Rome, when they were mentioned in his presence by a certain brother and fellow bishop of mine, could not bear; and contradicting somewhat too excitedly, nearly came to a quarrel with him who had mentioned them. But what, indeed, does God primarily and chiefly command, but that we believe on Him ? And this, therefore, He Himself gives, if it is well said to Him, "Give what Thou commandest." And, moreover, in those same books, in respect of what I have related concerning my conversion, when God converted me to that faith which, with a most miserable and raging talkativeness, I was destroying, do you not remember that it was so narrated how I showed that I was granted to the faithful and daily tears of my mother, that I should not perish ? Where certainly I declared that God by His grace converted to the true faith the wills of men, which were not only averse to it, but even adverse to it. Further, in what manner I besought God concerning my growth in perseverance, you know, and you are able to review if you wish it. Therefore, that all the gifts of God which in that work I either asked for or praised, were foreknown by God that He would give, and that He could never be ignorant of the persons to whom He would give them, who can dare, I will not say to deny, but even to doubt? This is the manifest and assured predestination of the saints, which subsequently necessity compelled me more carefully and laboriously to defend when I was already disputing against the Pelagians. For I learnt that each special heresy introduced its own peculiar questions into the Church--against which the sacred Scripture might be more

carefully defended than if no such necessity compelled their defence. And what compelled those passages of Scripture in which predestination is commended to be defended more abundantly and clearly by that labour of mine, than the fact that the Pelagians say that God's grace is given according to our merits; for what else is this than an absolute denial of grace ?

#### **CHAP. 54 [XXI.]--BEGINNING AND END OF FAITH IS OF GOD.**

Therefore that this opinion, which is displeasing to God, and hostile to those gratuitous benefits of God whereby we are delivered, may be destroyed, I maintain that both the beginning of faith and the perseverance therein, even to the end, are, according to the Scriptures--of which I have already quoted many--God's gifts. Because if we say that the beginning of faith is of ourselves, so that by it we deserve to receive other gifts of God, the Pelagians conclude that God's grace is given according to our merits. And this the catholic faith held in such dread, that Pelagius himself, in fear of condemnation, condemned it. And, moreover, if we say that our perseverance is of ourselves, not of God, they answer that we have the beginning of our faith of ourselves in such wise as the end, thus arguing that we have that beginning of ourselves much more, if of ourselves we have the continuance unto the end, since to perfect is much greater than to begin; and thus repeatedly they conclude that the grace of God is given according to our merits. But if both are God's gifts, and God foreknew that He would give these His gifts (and who can deny this?), predestination must be preached,--that God's true grace, that is, the grace which is not given according to our merits, may be maintained with insuperable defence.

## **CHAP. 55.--TESTIMONY OF HIS PREVIOUS WRITINGS AND LETTERS.**

And, indeed, in that treatise of which the title is, Of Rebuke and Grace, which could not suffice for all my lovers, I think that I have so established that it is the gift of God also to persevere to the end, as I have either never before or almost never so expressly and evidently maintained this in writing, unless my memory deceives me. But I have now said this in a way in which no one before me has said it. Certainly the blessed Cyprian, in the Lord's Prayer, as I have already shown, so explained our petitions as to say that in its very first petition we were asking for perseverance, asserting that we pray for it when we say, "Hallowed be Thy name," although we have been already hallowed in baptism,--so that we may persevere in that which we have begun to be. Let those, however, to whom, in their love for me, I ought not to be ungrateful, who profess that they embrace, over and above that which comes into the argument, all my views, as you write,--let those, I say, see whether, in the latter portions of the first book of those two which I wrote in the beginning of my episcopate, before the appearance of the Pelagian heresy, to Simplicianus, the bishop of Milan, there remained anything whereby it might be called in question that God's grace is not given according to our merits; and whether I have not there sufficiently argued that even the beginning of faith is God's gift; and whether from what is there said it does not by consequence result, although it is not expressed, that even perseverance to the end is not given, except by Him who has predestinated us to His kingdom and glory. Then, did not I many years ago publish that letter which I had already written to the holy Paulinus, bishop of Nola, against the Pelagians, which they have lately begun to contradict? Let them also look into that letter which I sent to Sixtus, the presbyter of the Roman Church? when we contended in a very sharp conflict against the Pelagians,

and they will find it such as is that one to Paulinus. Whence they may gather that the same sort of things were already said and written several years ago against the Pelagian heresy, and that it is to be wondered at that these should now displease them; although I should wish that no one would so embrace all my views as to follow me, except in those things in which he should see me not to have erred. For I am now writing treatises in which I have undertaken to retract my smaller works, for the purpose of demonstrating that even I myself have not in all things followed myself; but I think that, with God's mercy, I have written progressively, and not begun from perfection; Since, indeed, I speak more arrogantly than truly, if even now I say that I have at length in this age of mine arrived at perfection, without any error in what I write. But the difference is in the extent and the subject of an error, and in the facility with which any one corrects it, or the pertinacity with which one endeavours to defend his error. Certainly there is good hope of that man whom the last day of this life shall find so progressing that whatever was wanting to his progress may be added to him, and that he should be adjudged rather to need perfecting than punishment.

#### **CHAP. 56.--GOD GIVES MEANS AS WELL AS END.**

Wherefore if I am unwilling to appear ungrateful to men who have loved me, because some advantage of my labour has attained to them before they loved me, how much rather am I unwilling to be ungrateful to God, whom we should not love unless He had first loved us and made us to love Him ! since love is of Him, as they have said whom He made not only His great lovers, but also His great preachers. And what is more ungrateful than to deny the grace of God itself, by saying that it is given to us according to our merits ? And this the catholic faith shuddered at in the Pelagians, and this it objected to Pelagius himself as a capital crime; and this Pelagius



himself condemned, not indeed from love of God's truth, but yet for fear of his own condemnation. But whoever as a faithful catholic is horrified to say that the grace of God is given according to our merits, let him not withdraw faith itself from God's grace, whereby he obtained mercy that he should be faithful; and thus let him attribute also perseverance to the end to God's grace, whereby he obtains the mercy which he daily asks for, not to be led into temptation. But between the beginning of faith and the perfection of perseverance there are those means whereby we live righteously, which they themselves are agreed in regarding as given by God to us at the prayer of faith. And all these things--the beginning of faith, to wit, and His other gifts even to the end--God foreknew that He would bestow on His called. It is a matter therefore, of too excessive contentiousness to contradict predestination, or to doubt concerning predestination.

**CHAP. 57 [XXII.]--HOW PREDESTINATION MUST BE PREACHED SO AS NOT TO GIVE OFFENCE.**

And yet this doctrine must not be preached to congregations in such a way as to seem to an unskilled multitude, or a people of slower understanding, to be in some measure confuted by that very preaching of it. Just as even the foreknowledge of God, which certainly men cannot deny, seems to be refuted if it be said to them, "Whether you run or sleep, you shall be that which He who cannot be deceived has foreknown you to be." And it is the part of a deceitful or an unskilled physician so to compound even a useful medicament, that it either does no good or does harm. But it must be said, "So run that you may lay hold ; and thus by your very running you may know yourselves to be foreknown as those who should run lawfully:" and in whatever other manner the foreknowledge of God may be so preached, that the slothfulness of man may be repulsed.

## **CHAP. 58.--THE DOCTRINE TO BE APPLIED WITH DISCRIMINATION.**

Now, therefore, the definite determination of God's will concerning predestination is of such a kind that some from unbelief receive the will to obey, and are converted to the faith or persevere in the faith, while others who abide in the delight of damnable sins, even if they have been predestinated, have not yet arisen, because the aid of pitying grace has not yet lifted them up. For if any are not yet called whom by His grace He has predestinated to be elected, they will receive that grace whereby they may will to be elected, and may be so; and if any obey, but have not been predestinated to His kingdom and glory, they are for a season, and will not abide in the same obedience to the end. Although, then, these things are true, yet they must not be so said to the multitude of hearers as that the address may be applied to themselves also, and those words of those people may be said to them which you have set down in your letter, and which I have above introduced: "The definite determination of God's will concerning predestination is of such a kind that some of you from unbelief shall receive the will to obey, and come to the faith." What need is there for saying, "Some of you"? For if we speak to God's Church, if we speak to believers, why do we say that "some of them" had come to the faith, and seem to do a wrong to the rest, when we may more fittingly say the definite determination of the will of God concerning predestination is of such a kind that from unbelief you shall receive the will to obey, and come to the faith, and shall receive perseverance, and abide to the end?

## **CHAP. 59.--OFFENCE TO BE AVOIDED.**

Neither is what follows by any means to be said,--that is, "But others of you who abide in the delight of sins have not yet arisen, because

the aid of pitying grace has not yet lifted you up;" when it may be and ought to be well and conveniently said, "But if any of you are still delaying in the delightfulness of damnable sins, lay hold of the most wholesome discipline; and yet when you have done this be not lifted up, as if by your own works, nor boast as if you had not received this. For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do for His good will, and your steps are directed by the Lord, so that you choose His way. But of your own good and righteous course, learn carefully that it is attributable to the predestination of divine grace."

#### **CHAP. 60.--THE APPLICATION TO THE CHURCH IN GENERAL.**

Moreover, what follows where it is said, "But yet if any of you are not yet called, whom by his grace He has predestinated to be called, you shall receive that grace whereby you shall will to be, and be, elected," is said more hardly than it could be said if we consider that we are speaking not to men in general, but to the Church of Christ. For why is it not rather said thus: "And if any of you are not yet called, let us pray for them that they may be called. For perchance they are so predestinated as to be granted to our prayers, and to receive that grace whereby they may will, and be made elected "? For God, who fulfilled all that He predestinated, has willed us also to pray for the enemies of the faith, that we might hence understand that He Himself also gives to the unbelievers the gift of faith, and makes willing men out of those that were unwilling.

#### **CHAP. 61.--USE OF THE THIRD PERSON RATHER THAN THE SECOND.**

But now I marvel if any weak brother among the Christian congregation can hear in any way with patience what is connected with these words, when it is said to them, "And if any of you obey, if

you are predestinated to be rejected, the power of obeying will be withdrawn from you, that you may cease to obey." For what does saying this seem, except to curse, or in a certain way to predict evils? But if, however, it is desirable or necessary to say anything concerning those who do not persevere, why is it not rather at least said in such a way as was a little while ago said by me,--first of all, so that this should be said, not of them who hear in the congregation, but about others to them; that is, that it should not be said, "If any of you obey, if you are predestinated to be rejected," but, "If any obey," and the rest, using the third person of the verb, not the second ? For it is not to be said to be desirable, but abominable, and it is excessively harsh and hateful to fly as it were into the face of an audience with abuse, when he who speaks to them says, "And if there are any of you who obey, and are predestinated to be rejected, the power of obedience shall be withdrawn from you, that you may cease to obey." For what is wanting to the doctrine if it is thus expressed: "But if any obey, and are not predestinated to His kingdom and glory, they are only for a season, and shall not continue in that obedience unto the end"? Is not the same thing said both more truly and more fittingly, so that we may seem not as it were to be desiring so much for them, as to relate of others the evil which they hate, and think does not belong to them, by hoping and praying for better things ? But in that manner in which they think that it must be said, the same judgment may be pronounced almost in the same words also of God's foreknowledge, which certainly they cannot deny, so as to say, "And if any of you obey, if you are foreknown to be rejected you shall cease to obey." Doubtless this is very true, assuredly it is; but it is very monstrous, very inconsiderate, and very unsuitable, not by its false declaration, but by its declaration not wholesomely applied to the health of human infirmity.

**CHAP. 62.--PRAYER TO BE INCULCATED, NEVERTHELESS.**

But I do not think that manner which I have said should be adopted in the preaching of predestination ought to be sufficient for him who speaks to the congregation, except he adds this, or something of this kind, saying, "You, therefore, ought also to hope for that perseverance in obedience from the Father of Lights, from whom cometh down every excellent gift and every perfect gift, and to ask for it in your daily prayers; and in doing this ought to trust that you are not aliens from the predestination of His people, because it is He Himself who bestows even the power of doing this. And far be it from you to despair of yourselves, because you are bidden to have your hope in Him, not in yourselves. For cursed is every one who has hope in man; and it is good rather to trust in the Lord than to trust in man, because blessed are all they that put their trust in Him. Holding this hope, serve the Lord in fear, and rejoice unto Him with trembling. Because no one can be certain of the life eternal which God who does not lie has promised to the children of promise before the times of eternity,--no one, unless that life of his, which is a state of trial upon the earth, is completed. But He will make us to persevere in Himself unto the end of that life, since we daily say to Him, 'Lead us not into temptation.'" When these things and things of this kind are said, whether to few Christians or to the multitude of the Church, why do we fear to preach the predestination of the saints and the true grace of God,--that is, the grace which is not given according to our merits,--as the Holy Scripture declares it? Or, indeed, must it be feared that a man should then despair of himself when his hope is shown to be placed in God, and should not rather despair of himself if he should, in his excess of pride and unhappiness, place it in himself?

## **CHAP. 63 [XXIII.]--THE TESTIMONY OF THE WHOLE CHURCH IN HER PRAYERS.**

And I wish that those who are slow and weak of heart, who cannot, or cannot as yet, understand the Scriptures or the explanations of them, would so hear or not hear our arguments in this question as to consider more carefully their prayers, which the Church has always used and will use, even from its beginnings until this age shall be completed. For of this matter, which I am now compelled not only to mention, but even to protect and defend against these new heretics, the Church has never been silent in its prayers, although in its discourses it has not thought that it need be put forth, as there was no adversary compelling it. For when was not prayer made in the Church for unbelievers and its opponents that they should believe? When has any believer had a friend, a neighbour, a wife, who did not believe, and has not asked on their behalf from the Lord for a mind obedient to the Christian faith? And who has there ever been who has not prayed for himself that he might abide in the Lord? And who has dared, not only with his voice, but even in thought, to blame the priest who invokes the Lord on behalf of believers, if at any time he has said, "Give to them, O Lord, perseverance in Thee to the end!" and has not rather responded, over such a benediction of his, as well with confessing lips as believing heart, "Amen"? Since in the Lord's Prayer itself the believers do not pray for anything else, especially when they say that petition, "Lead us not into temptation," save that they may persevere in holy obedience. As, therefore, the Church has both been born and grows and has grown in these prayers, so it has been born and grows and has grown in this faith, by which faith it is believed that God's grace is not given according to the merits of the receivers. For, certainly, the Church would not pray that faith should be given to unbelievers, unless it believed that God converts to Himself both the averse and adverse wills of men. Nor would the

Church pray that it might persevere in the faith of Christ, not deceived nor overcome by the temptations of the world, unless it believed that the Lord has our heart in His power, in such wise as that the good which we do not hold save by our own will, we nevertheless do not hold except He worketh in us to will also. For if the Church indeed asks these things from Him, but thinks that the same things are given to itself by itself, it makes use of prayers which are not true, but perfunctory,--which be far from us ! For who truly groans, desiring to receive what he prays for from the Lord, if he thinks that he receives it from himself, and not from the Lord?

**CHAP. 64.--IN WHAT SENSE THE HOLY SPIRIT SOLICITS FOR US, CRYING, ABBA, FATHER.**

And this especially since "we know not what to pray for as we ought," says the apostle, "but the Spirit Himself maketh intercession for us with groanings that cannot be uttered; and He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to God." What is "the Spirit Himself maketh intercession," but, "causes to make intercession," "with groanings that cannot be uttered," but "truthful," since the Spirit is truth ? For He it is of whom the apostle says in another place, "God hath sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, "crying, Abba, Father!" And here what is the meaning of "crying," but "making to cry," by that figure of speech whereby we call a day that makes people glad, a glad day? And this he makes plain elsewhere when he says, "For you have not received the Spirit of bondage again in fear, but you have received the Spirit of the adoption of sons, in whom we cry, Abba, Father." He there said, "crying," but here, "in whom we cry;" opening up, that is to say, the meaning with which he said "crying,"--that is, as I have already explained, "causing to cry," when we understand that this is also itself the gift of God, that with a

true heart and spiritually we cry to God. Let them, therefore, observe how they are mistaken who think that our seeking, asking, knocking is of ourselves, and is not given to us; and say that this is the case because grace is preceded by our merits; that it follows them when we ask and receive, and seek and find, and it is opened to us when we knock. And they will not understand that this is also of the divine gift, that we pray; that is, that we ask, seek, and knock. For we have received the spirit of adoption of sons, in which we cry, Abba, Father. And this the blessed Ambrose also said. For he says, "To pray to God also is the work of spiritual grace, as it is written, No one says, Jesus is the Lord, but in the Holy Spirit."

#### **CHAP. 65.--THE CHURCH'S PRAYERS IMPLY THE CHURCH'S FAITH.**

These things, therefore, which the Church asks from the Lord, and always has asked from the time she began to exist, God so foreknew that He would give to His called, that He has already given them in predestination itself; as the apostle declares without any ambiguity. For, writing to Timothy, he says, "Labour along with the gospel according to the power of God, who saves us, and calls us with His holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the times of eternity, but is now made manifest by the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ." Let him, therefore, say that the Church at any time has not had in its belief the truth of this predestination and grace, which is now maintained with a more careful heed against the late heretics; let him say this who dares to say that at any time it has not prayed, or not truthfully prayed, as well that unbelievers might believe, as that believers might persevere. And if the Church has always prayed for these benefits, it has always believed them to be certainly God's gifts; nor was it ever right for it to deny that they were



foreknown by Him. And thus Christ's Church has never failed to hold the faith of this predestination, which is now being defended with new solicitude against these modern heretics.

**CHAP. 66 [XXIV.]--RECAPITULATION AND EXHORTATION.**

But what more shall I say? I think that I have taught sufficiently, or rather more than sufficiently, that both the beginning of faith in the Lord, and continuance in the Lord unto the end, are God's gifts. And other good things which pertain to a good life, whereby God is rightly worshipped, even they themselves on whose behalf I am writing this treatise concede to be God's gifts. Further, they cannot deny that God has foreknown all His gifts, and the people on whom He was going to bestow them. As, therefore, other things must be preached so that he who preaches them may be heard with obedience, so predestination must be preached so that he who hears these things with obedience may glory not in man, and therefore not in himself, but in the Lord; for this also is God's precept, and to hear this precept with obedience--to wit, that he who glories should glory in the Lord --in like manner as the rest, is God's gift. And he who has not this gift,--I shrink not from saying it,--whatever others he has, has them in vain. That the Pelagians may have this we pray, and that our own brethren may have it more abundantly. Let us not, therefore, be prompt in arguments and indolent in prayers. Let us pray, dearly beloved, let us pray that the God of grace may give even to our enemies, and especially to our brethren and lovers, to understand and confess that after that great and unspeakable ruin wherein we have all fallen in one, no one is delivered save by God's grace, and that grace is not repaid according to the merits of the receivers as if it were due, but is given freely as true grace, with no merits preceding.

## **CHAP. 67.--THE MOST EMINENT INSTANCE OF PREDESTINATION IS CHRIST JESUS.**

But there is no more illustrious instance of predestination than Jesus Himself, concerning which also I have already argued in the former treatise; and in the end of this I have chosen to insist upon it. There is no more eminent instance, I say, of predestination than the Mediator Himself. If any believer wishes thoroughly to understand this doctrine, let him consider Him, and in Him he will find himself also. The believer, I say; who in Him believes and confesses the true human nature that is our own however singularly elevated by assumption by God the Word into the only Son of God, so that He who assumed, and what He assumed, should be one person in Trinity. For it was not a Quaternity that resulted from the assumption of man, but it remained a Trinity, inasmuch as that assumption ineffably made the truth of one person in God and man. Because we say that Christ was not only God, as the Manichean heretics contend; nor only man, as the Photinian heretics assert; nor in such wise man as to have less of anything which of a certainty pertains to human nature,--whether a soul, or in the soul itself a rational mind, or flesh not taken of the woman, but made from the Word converted and changed into flesh,--all which three false and empty notions have made the three various and diverse parties of the Apollinarian heretics; but we say that Christ was true God, born of God the Father without any beginning of time; and that He was also true or very man, born of human mother in the certain fulness of time; and that His humanity, whereby He is less than the Father, does not diminish aught from His divinity, whereby He is equal to the Father. For both of them are One Christ--who, moreover, most truly said in respect of the God, "I and the Father are one;" and most truly said in respect of the man, "My Father is greater than I." He, therefore, who made of the seed of David this righteous man, who

never should be unrighteous, without any merit of His preceding will, is the same who also makes righteous men of unrighteous, without any merit of their will preceding; that He might be the head, and they His members. He, therefore, who made that man with no precedent merits of His, neither to deduce from His origin nor to commit by His will any sin which should be remitted to Him, the same makes believers on Him with no preceding merits of theirs, to whom He forgives all sin. He who made Him such that He never had or should have an evil will, the same makes in His members a good will out of an evil one. Therefore He predestinated both Him and us, because both in Him that He might be our head, and in us that we should be His body, He foreknew that our merits would not precede, but that His doings should.

#### **CHAP. 68.--CONCLUSION.**

Let those who read this, if they understand, give God thanks, and let those who do not understand, pray that they may have the inward Teacher, from whose presence comes knowledge and understanding.s But let those who think that I am in error, consider again and again carefully what is here said, lest perchance they themselves may be mistaken. And when, by means of those who read my writings, I become not only wiser, but even more perfect, I acknowledge God's favour to me; and this I especially look for at the hands of the teachers of the Church, if what I write comes into their hands, and they condescend to acknowledge it.

**A WORK ON THE PROCEEDINGS OF  
PELAGIUS,  
IN ONE BOOK,  
  
ADDRESSED TO BISHOP AURELIUS [OF  
CARTHAGE], BY  
AURELIUS AUGUSTIN.**

WRITTEN ABOUT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE YEAR A.D.  
417.

THE SEVERAL HEADS OF ERROR WHICH WERE ALLEGED AGAINST PELAGIUS AT THE SYNOD IN PALESTINE, WITH HIS ANSWERS TO EACH CHARGE, ARE MINUTELY DISCUSSED. AUGUSTIN SHOWS THAT, ALTHOUGH PELAGIUS WAS ACQUITTED BY THE SYNOD, THERE STILL CLAVE TO HIM THE SUSPICION OF HERESY; AND THAT THE ACQUITTAL OF THE ACCUSED BY THE SYNOD WAS SO CONTRIVED, THAT THE HERESY ITSELF WITH WHICH HE WAS CHARGED WAS UNHESITATINGLY CONDEMNED.

CHAP. 1.--INTRODUCTION.

AFTER there came into my hands, holy father Aurelius, the ecclesiastical proceedings, by which fourteen bishops of the province of Palestine pronounced Pelagius a catholic, my hesitation, in which I was previously reluctant to make any lengthy or confident statement about the defence which he had made, came to an end. This defence, indeed, I had already read in a paper which he himself forwarded to me. Forasmuch, however, as I received no letter therewith from him,

I was afraid that some discrepancy might be detected between my statement and the record of the ecclesiastical proceedings; and that, should Pelagius perhaps deny that he had sent me any paper (and it would have been difficult for me to prove that he had, when there was only one witness), I should rather seem guilty in the eyes of those who would readily credit his denial, either of an underhanded falsification, or else (to say the least) of a reckless credulity. Now, however, when I am to treat of matters which are shown to have actually transpired, and when, as it appears to me, all doubt is removed whether he really acted in the way described, your holiness, and everybody who reads these pages, will no doubt be able to judge, with greater readiness and certainty, both of his defence and of this my treatment of it.

#### CHAP. 2 [I.]--THE FIRST ITEM IN THE ACCUSATION, AND PELAGIUS' ANSWER.

First of all, then, I offer to the Lord my God, who is also my defence and guide, unspeakable thanks, because I was not misled in my views respecting our holy brethren and fellow-bishops who sat as judges in that case. His answers, indeed, they trot without reason approved; because they had not to consider how he had in his writings stated the points which were objected against him, but what he had to say about them in his reply at the pending examination. A case of unsoundness in the faith is one thing, one of incautious statement is another thing. Now sundry objections were urged against Pelagius out of a written complaint, which our holy brethren and fellow-bishops in Gaul, Heros and Lazarus, presented, being themselves unable to be present, owing (as we afterwards learned from credible information) to the severe indisposition of one of them. The first of these was, that he writes, in a certain book of his, this: "No man can be without sin unless he has acquired a knowledge of the law." After

this had been read out, the synod inquired: "Did you, Pelagius, express yourself thus?" Then in answer he said: "I certainly used the words, but not in the sense in which they understand them. I did not say that a man is unable to sin who has acquired a knowledge of the law; but that he is by the knowledge of the law assisted towards not sinning, even as it is written, 'He hath given them a law for help'" Upon hearing this, the synod declared: "The words which have been spoken by Pelagius are not different from the Church." Assuredly they are not different, as he expressed them in his answer; the statement, however, which was produced from his book has a different meaning. But this the bishops, who were Greek-speaking men, and who heard the words through an interpreter, were not concerned with discussing. All they had to consider at the moment was, what the man who was under examination said was his meaning,--not in what words his opinion was alleged to have been expressed in his book.

### CHAP. 3.--DISCUSSION OF PELAGIUS' FIRST ANSWER.

Now to say that "a man is by the knowledge of the law assisted towards not sinning," is a different assertion from saying that "a man cannot be without sin unless he has acquired a knowledge of the law." We see, for example, that corn-floors may be threshed without threshing-sledges,--however much these may assist the operation if we have them; and that boys can find their way to school without the pedagogue,--however valuable for this may be the office of pedagogues; and that many persons recover from sickness without physicians,--although the doctor's skill is clearly of greatest use; and that men sometimes live on other aliments besides bread,--however valuable the use of bread must needs be allowed to be; and many other illustrations may occur to the thoughtful reader, without our prompting. From which examples we are undoubtedly reminded that

there are two sorts of aids. Some are indispensable, and without their help the desired result could not be attained. Without a ship, for instance, no man could take a voyage; no man could speak without a voice; without legs no man could walk; without light nobody could see; and so on in numberless instances. Amongst them this also may be reckoned, that without God's grace no man can live rightly. But then, again, there are other helps, which render us assistance in such a way that we might in some other way effect the object to which they are ordinarily auxiliary in their absence. Such are those which I have already mentioned,--the threshing-sledges for threshing corn, the pedagogue for conducting the child, medical art applied to the recovery of health, and other like instances. We have therefore to inquire to which of these two classes belongs the knowledge of the law,--in other words, to consider in what way it helps us towards the avoidance of sin. If it be in the sense of indispensable aid without which the end cannot be attained; not only was Pelagius' answer before the judges true, but what he wrote in his book was true also. If, however, it be of such a character that it helps indeed if it is present, but even if it be absent, then the result is still possible to be attained by some other means,--his answer to the judges was still true, and not unreasonably did it find favour with the bishops that "man is assisted not to sin by the knowledge of the law;" but what he wrote in his book is not true, that "there is no man without sin except him who has acquired a knowledge of the law,"--a statement which the judges left undiscussed, as they were ignorant of the Latin language, and were content with the confession of the man who was pleading his cause before them, especially as no one was present on the other side who could oblige the interpreter to expose his meaning by an explanation of the words of his book, and to show why it was that the brethren were not groundlessly disturbed. For but very few persons are thoroughly acquainted with the law. The mass of the members of Christ, who are scattered abroad everywhere, being

ignorant of the very profound and complicated contents of the law, are commended by the piety of simple faith and unfailing hope in God, and sincere love. Endowed with such gifts, they trust that by the grace of God they may be purged from their sins through our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### CHAP. 4 [II.]--THE SAME CONTINUED.

If Pelagius, as he possibly might, were to say in reply to this, that that very thing was what he meant by "the knowledge of the law, without which a man is unable to be free from sins," which is communicated by the teaching of faith to converts and to babes in Christ, and in which candidates for baptism are catechetically instructed with a view to their knowing the creed, certainly this is not what is usually meant when any one is said to have a knowledge of the law. This phrase is only applied to such persons as are skilled in the law. But if he persists in describing the knowledge of the law by the words in question, which, however few in number, are great in weight, and are used to designate all who are faithfully baptized according to the prescribed rule of the Churches; and if he maintains that it was of this that he said, "No one is without sin, but the man who has acquired the knowledge of the law,"--a knowledge which must needs be conveyed to believers before they attain to the actual remission of sins,--even in such case there would crowd around him a countless multitude, not indeed of angry disputants, but of crying baptized infants, who would exclaim,--not, to be sure, in words, but in the very truthfulness of innocence,--"What is it, O what is it that you have written: 'He only can be without sin who has acquired a knowledge of the law?' See here are we, a large flock of lambs, without sin, and yet we have no knowledge of the law." Now surely they with their silent tongue would compel him to silence, or, perhaps, even to confess that he was corrected of his great



perverseness; or else (if you will), that he had already for some time entertained the opinion which he acknowledged before his ecclesiastical examiners, but that he had failed before to express his opinion in words of sufficient care,--that his faith, therefore, should be approved, but this book revised and amended. For, as the Scripture says: "There is that slippeth in his speech, but not in his heart." Now if he would only admit this, or were already saying it, who would not most readily forgive those words which he had committed to writing with too great heedlessness and neglect, especially on his declining to defend the opinion which the said words contain, and affirming that to be his proper view which the truth approves? This we must suppose would have been in the minds of the pious judges themselves, if they could only have duly understood the contents of his Latin book, thoroughly interpreted to them, as they understood his reply to the synod, which was spoken in Greek, and therefore quite intelligible to them, and adjudged it as not alien from the Church. Let us go on to consider the other cases.

#### CHAP. 5 [III.]--THE SECOND ITEM IN THE ACCUSATION; AND PELAGIUS' ANSWER.

The synod of bishops then proceeded to say: "Let another section be read." Accordingly there was read the passage in the same book wherein Pelagius had laid down the position that "all men are ruled by their own will." On this being read, Pelagius said in answer: "This I stated in the interest of free will. God is its helper whenever it chooses good; man, however, when sinning is himself in fault, as under the direction of a free will." Upon hearing this, the bishops exclaimed: "Nor again is this opposed to the doctrine of the Church." For who indeed could condemn or deny the freedom of the will, when God's help is associated with it? His opinion, therefore, as thus explained in his answer, was, with good reason, deemed satisfactory

by the bishops. And yet, after all, the statement made in his book, "All men are ruled by their own will," ought without doubt to have deeply disturbed the brethren, who had discovered what these men are accustomed to dispute against the grace of God. For it is said, "All men are ruled by their own will," as if God rules no man, and the Scripture says in vain, "Save Thy people, and bless Thine inheritance; rule them, and lift them up for ever." They would not, of course, stay, if they are ruled only by their own will without God, even as sheep which have no shepherd: which, God forbid for us. For, unquestionably to be led is something more compulsory than to be ruled. He who is ruled at the same time does something himself, indeed, when ruled by God, it is with the express view that he should also act rightly; whereas the man who is led can hardly be understood to do any thing himself at all. And yet the Saviour's helpful grace is so much better than our own wills and desires, that the apostle does not hesitate to say: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." And our free will can do nothing better for us than to submit itself to be led by Him who can do nothing amiss; and after doing this, not to doubt that it was helped to do it by Him of whom it is said in the psalm, "He is my God, His mercy shall go before me."

#### CHAP. 6.--PELAGIUS' ANSWER EXAMINED.

Indeed, in this very book which contains these statements, after laying down the position, "All men are governed by their own will, and every one is submitted to his own desire," Pelagius goes on to adduce the testimony of Scripture, from which it is evident enough that no man ought to trust to himself for direction. For on this very subject the Wisdom of Solomon declares: "I myself also am a mortal man like unto all; and the offspring of him that was first made of the earth," --with other similar words to the conclusion of the paragraph,

where we read: "For all men have one entrance into life, and the like going out therefrom: wherefore I prayed and understanding was given to me; I called, and the Spirit of Wisdom came into me." Now is it not clearer than light itself, how that this man, on duly considering the wretchedness of human frailty, did not dare to commit himself to his own direction, but prayed, and understanding was given to him, concerning which the apostle says: "But we have the understanding of the Lord;" and called, and the Spirit of Wisdom entered into him? Now it is by this Spirit, and not by the strength of their own will, that they who are God's children are governed and led.

#### CHAP. 7.--THE SAME CONTINUED.

As for the passage from the psalm, "He loved cursing, and it shall come upon him; and he willed not blessing, so it shall be far removed from him," which he quoted in the same book of Chapters, as if to prove that "all men are ruled by their own will," who can be ignorant that this is a fault not of nature as God created it, but of human will which departed from God? The fact indeed is, that even if he had not loved cursing, and had willed blessing, he would in this very case, too, deny that his will had received any assistance from God; in his ingratitude and impiety, moreover, he would submit himself to be ruled by himself, until he found out by his penalties that, sunk as he was into ruin, without God to govern him he was utterly unable to direct his own self. In like manner, from the passage which he quoted in the same book under the same head, "He hath set fire and water before thee; stretch forth thy hand unto whether thou wilt; before man are good and evil, life and death, and whichever he liketh shall be given to him," it is manifest that, if he applies his hand to fire, and if evil and death please him, his human will effects all this; but if, on the contrary, he loves goodness and life, not alone does his will

accomplish the happy choice, but it is assisted by divine grace. The eye indeed is sufficient for itself, for not seeing, that is, for darkness; but for seeing, it is in its own light not sufficient for itself unless the assistance of a clear external light is rendered to it. God forbid, however, that they who are "the called according to His purpose, whom He also foreknew, and predestinated to be conformed to the likeness of His Son," should be given up to their own desire to perish. This is suffered only by "the vessels of wrath," who are perfected for perdition; in whose very destruction, indeed, God "makes known the riches of His glory on the vessels of His mercy." Now it is on this account that, after saying, "He is my God, His mercy shall go before me," he immediately adds, "My God will show me vengeance: upon my enemies." That therefore happens to them which is mentioned in Scripture, "God gave them up to the lusts of their own heart." This, however, does not happen to the predestinated, who are ruled by the Spirit of God, for not in vain is their cry: "Deliver me not, O Lord, to the sinner, according to my desire." With regard, indeed, to the evil lusts which assail them, their prayer has ever assumed some such shape as this: "Take away from me the concupiscence of the belly; and let not the desire of lust take hold of me. Upon those whom He governs as His subjects does God bestow this gift; but not upon those who think themselves capable of governing themselves, and who, in the stiff-necked confidence of their own will, disdain to have Him as their ruler.

#### CHAP, 8.--THE SAME CONTINUED.

This being the case, how must God's children, who have learned the truth of all this and rejoice at being ruled and led by the Spirit of God, have been affected when they heard or read that Pelagius had declared in writing that "all men are governed by their own will, and that every one is submitted to his own desire?" And yet, when

questioned by the bishops, he fully perceived what an evil impression these words of his might produce, and told them in answer that "he had made such an assertion in the interest of free will,"--adding at once, "God is its helper whenever it chooses good; whilst man is himself in fault when he sins, as being under the influence of a free will." Although the pious judges approved of this sentiment also, they were unwilling to consider or examine how incautiously he had written, or indeed in what sense he had employed the words found in his book. They thought it was enough that he had made such a confession concerning free will, as to admit that God helped the man who chose the good, whereas the man who sinned was himself to blame, his own will sufficing for him in this direction. According to this, God rules those whom He assists in their choice of the good. So far, then, as they rule anything themselves, they rule it rightly, since they themselves are ruled by Him who is right and good.

#### CHAP. 9.--THE THIRD ITEM IN THE ACCUSATION; AND PELAGIUS' ANSWER.

Another statement was read which Pelagius had placed in his book, to this effect: "In the day of judgment no forbearance will be shown to the ungodly and the sinners, but they will be consumed in eternal fires." This induced the brethren to regard the statement as open to the objection, that it seemed so worded as to imply that all sinners whatever were to be punished with an eternal punishment, without excepting even those who hold Christ as their foundation, although "they build thereupon wood, hay, stubble," concerning whom the apostle writes: "If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he shall himself be saved, yet so as by fire." When, however, Pelagius responded that "he had made his assertion in accordance with the Gospel, in which it is written concerning sinners, "These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into life

eternal," it was impossible for Christian judges to be dissatisfied with a sentence which is written in the Gospel, and was spoken by the Lord; especially as they knew not what there was in the words taken from Pelagius' book which could so disturb the brethren, who were accustomed to hear his discussions and those of his followers. Since also they were absent who presented the indictment against Pelagius to the holy bishop Eulogius, there was no one to urge him that he ought to distinguish, by some exception, between those sinners who are to be saved by fire, and those who are to be punished with everlasting perdition. If, indeed, the judges had come to understand by these means the reason why the objection had been made to his statement, had he then refused to allow the distinction, he would have been justly open to blame.

CHAP. 10.--PELAGIUS' ANSWER EXAMINED. ON ORIGEN'S ERROR CONCERNING THE NON-ETERNITY OF THE PUNISHMENT OF THE DEVIL AND THE DAMNED.

But what Pelagius added, "Who believes differently is an Origenist," was approved by the judges, because in very deed the Church most justly abominates the opinion of Origen, that even they whom the Lord says are to be punished with everlasting punishment, and the devil himself and his angels, after a time, however protracted, will be purged, and released from their penalties, and shall then cleave to the saints who reign with God in the association of blessedness. This additional sentence, therefore, the synod pronounced to be "not opposed to the Church,"--not in accordance with Pelagius, but rather in accordance with the Gospel, that such ungodly and sinful men shall be consumed by eternal fires as the Gospel determines to be worthy of such a punishment; and that he is a sharer in Origen's abominable opinion, who affirms that their punishment can possibly ever come to an end, when the Lord has said it is to be eternal.

Concerning those sinners, however, of whom the apostle declares that "they shall be saved, yet so as by fire, after their work has been burnt up," inasmuch as no objectionable opinion in reference to them was manifestly charged against Pelagius, the synod determined nothing. Wherefore he who says that the ungodly and sinner, whom the truth consigns to eternal punishment, can ever be liberated therefrom, is not unfitly designated by Pelagius as an "Origenist." But, on the other hand, he who supposes that no sinner whatever deserves mercy in the judgment of God, may be designated by whatever name Pelagius is disposed to give to him, only it must at the same time be quite understood that this error is not received as truth by the Church. "For he shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy."

#### CHAP. II.--THE SAME CONTINUED.

But how this judgment is to be accomplished, it is not easy to understand from Holy Scripture; for there are many modes therein of describing that which is to come to pass only in one mode, In one place the Lord declares that He will "shut the door" against those whom He does not admit into His kingdom; and that, on their clamorously demanding admission, "Open unto us, . . . we have eaten and drunk in Thy presence," and so forth, as the Scripture describes, "He will say unto them in answer, I know you not, . . . all ye workers of iniquity." In another passage He reminds us that He will command "all which would not that He should reign over them to be brought to Him, and be slain in His presence." In another place, again, He tells us that He will come with His angels in His majesty; and before Him shall be gathered all nations, and He shall separate them one from another; some He will set on His right hand, and after enumerating their good works, will award to them eternal life; and others on His left hand, whose barrenness in all good works He will

expose, will He condemn to everlasting fire. In two other passages He deals with that wicked and slothful servant, who neglected to trade with His money, and with the man who was found at the feast without the wedding garment,--and He orders them to be bound hand and foot, and to be cast into outer darkness. And in yet another scripture, after admitting the five virgins who were wise, He shuts the door against the other five foolish ones." Now these descriptions,--and there are others which at the instant do not occur to me,--are all intended to represent to us the future judgment, which of course will be held not over one, or over five, but over multitudes. For if it were a solitary case only of the man who was cast into outer darkness for not having on the wedding garment, He would not have gone on at once to give it a plural turn, by saying: "For many are called, but few are chosen;" whereas it is plain that, after the one was cast out and condemned, many still remained behind in the house. However, it would occupy us too long to discuss all these questions to the full. This brief remark, however, I may make, without prejudice (as they say in pecuniary affairs) to some better discussion, that by the many descriptions which are scattered throughout the Holy Scriptures there is signified to us but one mode of final judgment, which is inscrutable to us,--with only the variety of deservings preserved in the rewards and punishments. Touching the particular point, indeed, which we have before us at present, it is sufficient to remark that, if Pelagius had actually said that all sinners whatever without exception would be punished in an eternity of punishment by everlasting fire, then whosoever had approved of this judgment would, to begin with, have brought the sentence down on his own head. "For who will boast that he is pure from sins?" Forasmuch, however, as he did not say all, nor certain, but made an indefinite statement only,--and afterwards, in explanation, declared that his meaning was according to the words of the Gospel,--his opinion was affirmed by the judgment of the bishops to be true; but



it does not even now appear what Pelagius really thinks on the subject, and in consequence there is no indecency in inquiring further into the decision of the episcopal judges.

#### CHAP.12 [IV.]--THE FOURTH ITEM IN THE ACCUSATION; AND PELAGIUS' ANSWER.

It was further objected against Pelagius, as if he had written in his book, that "evil does not enter our thoughts." In reply, however, to this charge, he said: "We made no such statement. What we did say was, that the Christian ought to be careful not to have evil thoughts." Of this, as it became them, the bishops approved. For who can doubt that evil ought not to be thought of? And, indeed, if what he said in his book about "evil not being thought" runs in this form, "neither is evil to be thought of," the ordinary meaning of such words is "that evil ought not even to be thought of." Now if any person denies this, what else does he in fact say, than that evil ought to be thought of? And if this were true, it could not be said in praise of love that "it thinketh no evil!" But after all, the phrase about "not entering into the thoughts" of righteous and holy men is not quite a commendable one, for this reason, that what enters the mind is commonly called a thought, even when assent to it does not follow. The thought, however, which contracts blame, and is justly forbidden, is never unaccompanied with assent. Possibly those men had an incorrect copy of Pelagius' writings, who thought it proper to object to him that he had used the words: "Evil does not enter into our thoughts;" that is, that whatever is evil never enters into the thoughts of righteous and holy men. Which is, of course, a very absurd statement. For whenever we censure evil things, we cannot enunciate them in words, unless they have been thought. But, as we said before, that is termed a culpable thought of evil which carries with it assent.

CHAP. 13 [V.]--THE FIFTH ITEM OF THE ACCUSATION; AND PELAGIUS' ANSWER.

After the judges had accorded their approbation to this answer of Pelagius, another passage which he had written in his book was read aloud: "The kingdom of heaven was promised even in the Old Testament." Upon this, Pelagius remarked in vindication: "This can be proved by the Scriptures: but heretics, in order to disparage the Old Testament, deny this. I, however, simply followed the authority of the Scriptures when I said this; for in the prophet Daniel it is written: 'The saints shall receive the kingdom of the Most. High.'" After they had heard this answer, the synod said: "Neither is this opposed to the Church's faith."

CHAP. 14.--EXAMINATION OF THIS POINT. THE PHRASE "OLD TESTAMENT" USED IN TWO SENSES. THE HEIR OF THE OLD TESTAMENT. IN THE OLD TESTAMENT THERE WERE HEIRS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Was it therefore without reason that our brethren were moved by his words to include this charge among the others against him? Certainly not. The fact is, that the phrase Old Testament is constantly employed in two different ways,--in one, following the authority of the Holy Scriptures; in the other, following the most common custom of speech. For the Apostle Paul says, in his Epistle to the Galatians: "Tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond-maid, the other by a free woman. . . . Which things are an allegory: for these are the two testaments; the one which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and is conjoined with the Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children; whereas the Jerusalem which is above is free, and is the

mother of us all." Now, inasmuch as the Old Testament belongs to bondage, whence it is written, "Cast out the bond-woman and her son, for the son of the bond-woman shall not be heir with my son Isaac," but the kingdom of heaven to liberty; what has the kingdom of heaven to do with the Old Testament? Since, however, as I have already remarked, we are accustomed, in our ordinary use of words, to designate all those Scriptures of the law and the prophets which were given previous to the Lord's incarnation, and are embraced together by canonical authority, under the name and title of the Old Testament, what man who is ever so moderately informed in ecclesiastical lore can be ignorant that the kingdom of heaven could be quite as well promised in those early Scriptures as even the New Testament itself, to which the kingdom of heaven belongs? At all events, in those ancient Scriptures it is most distinctly written: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will consummate a new testament with the house of Israel and with the house of Jacob; not according to the testament that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand, to lead them out of the land of Egypt." This was done on Mount Sinai. But then there had not yet risen the prophet Daniel to say: "The saints shall receive the kingdom of the Most High." For by these words he foretold the merit not of the Old, but of the New Testament. In the same manner did the same prophets foretell that Christ Himself would come, in whose blood the New Testament was consecrated. Of this Testament also the apostles became the ministers, as the most blessed Paul declares: "He hath made us able ministers of the New Testament; not in its letter, but in spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." In that testament, however, which is properly called the Old, and was given on Mount Sinai, only earthly happiness is expressly promised. Accordingly that land, into which the nation, after being led through the wilderness, was conducted, is called the land of promise, wherein peace and royal power, and the gaining of victories over enemies,

and an abundance of children and of fruits of the ground, and gifts of a similar kind are the promises of the Old Testament. And these, indeed, are figures of the spiritual blessings which appertain to the New Testament; but yet the man who lives under God's law with those earthly blessings for his sanction, is precisely the heir of the Old Testament, for just such rewards are promised and given to him, according to the terms of the Old Testament, as are the objects of his desire according to the condition of the old man. But whatever blessings are there figuratively set forth as appertaining to the New Testament require the new man to give them effect. And no doubt the great apostle understood perfectly well what he was saying, when he described the two testaments as capable of the allegorical distinction of the bond-woman and the free,--attributing the children of the flesh to the Old, and to the New the children of the promise: "They," says he, "which are the children of the flesh, are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." The children of the flesh, then, belong to the earthly Jerusalem, which is in bondage with her children; whereas the children of the promise belong to the Jerusalem above, the free, the mother of us all, eternal in the heavens. Whence we can easily see who they are that appertain to the earthly, and who to the heavenly kingdom. But then the happy persons, who even in that early age were by the grace of God taught to understand the distinction now set forth, were thereby made the children of promise, and were accounted in the secret purpose of God as heirs of the New Testament; although they continued with perfect fitness to administer the Old Testament to the ancient people of God, because it was divinely appropriated to that people in God's distribution of the times and seasons.

CHAP. 15.--THE SAME CONTINUED.

How then should there not be a feeling of just disquietude entertained by the children of promise, children of the free Jerusalem, which is eternal in the heavens, when they see that by the words of Pelagius the distinction which has been drawn by Apostolic and catholic authority is abolished, and Agar is supposed to be by some means on a par with Sarah? He therefore does injury to the scripture of the Old Testament with heretical impiety, who with an impious and sacrilegious face denies that it was inspired by the good, supreme, and very God,--as Marcion does, as Manichaeus does, and other pests of similar opinions. On this account (that I may put into as brief a space as I can what my own views are on the subject), as much injury is done to the New Testament, when it is put on the same level with the Old Testament, as is inflicted on the Old itself when men deny it to be the work of the supreme God of goodness. Now, when Pelagius in his answer gave as his reason for saying that even in the Old Testament there was a promise of the kingdom of heaven, the testimony of the prophet Daniel, who most plainly foretold that the saints should receive the kingdom of the Most High, it was fairly decided that the statement of Pelagius was not opposed to the catholic faith, although not according to the distinction which shows that the earthly promises of Mount Sinai are the proper characteristics of the Old Testament; nor indeed was the decision an improper one, considering that mode of speech which designates all the canonical Scriptures which were given to men before the Lord's coming in the flesh by the title of the "Old Testament." The kingdom of the Most High is of course none other than the kingdom of God; otherwise, anybody might boldly contend that the kingdom of God is one thing, and the kingdom of heaven another.

CHAP, 16 [VI.]--THE SIXTH ITEM OF THE ACCUSATION, AND PELAGIUS' REPLY.

The next objection was to the effect that Pelagius in that same book of his wrote thus "A man is able, if he likes, to be without sin;" and that writing to a certain widow he said, flatteringly: "In thee piety may find a dwelling-place, such as she finds nowhere else; in thee righteousness, though a stranger, can find a home; truth, which no one any longer recognises, can discover an abode and a friend in thee; and the law of God, which almost everybody despises, may be honoured by thee alone." And in another sentence he writes to her: "O how happy and blessed art thou, when that righteousness which we must believe to flourish only in heaven has found a shelter on earth only in thy heart!" In another work addressed to her, after reciting the prayer of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and teaching her in what manner saints ought to pray, he says: "He worthily raises his hands to God, and with a good conscience does he pour out his prayer, who is able to say, 'Thou, O Lord, knowest how holy, and harmless, and pure from all injury and iniquity and violence, are the hands which I stretch out to Thee; how righteous, and pure, and free from all deceit, are the lips with which I offer to Thee my supplication, that Thou wouldst have mercy upon me.'" To all this Pelagius said in answer: "We asserted that a man could be without sin, and could keep God's commandments if he wished; for this capacity has been given to him by God. But we never said that any man could be found who at no time whatever, from infancy to old age, had committed sin: but that if any person were converted from his sins, he could by his own labour and God's grace be without sin; and yet not even thus would he be incapable of change ever afterwards. As for the other statements which they have made against us, they are not to be found in our books, nor have we at any time said such things." Upon hearing this vindication, the synod put this question to him: "You have denied having ever written such words; are you therefore ready to anathematize those who do hold these opinions?" Pelagius answered: "I anathematize them as fools,

not as heretics, for there is no dogma." The bishops then pronounced their judgment in these words: "Since now Pelagius has with his own mouth anathematized this vague statement as foolish verbiage, justly declaring in his reply, 'That a man is able with God's assistance and grace to be without sin,' let him now proceed to answer the other heads of accusation against him."

#### CHAP. 17.--EXAMINATION OF THE SIXTH CHARGE AND ANSWERS.

Well, now, had the judges either the power or the right to condemn these unrecognised and vague words, when no person on the other side was present to assert that Pelagius had written the very culpable sentences which were alleged to have been addressed by him to the widow? In such a matter, it surely could not be enough to produce a manuscript, and to read out of it words as his, if there were not also witnesses forthcoming in case he denied, on the words being read out, that they ever dropped from his pen. But even here the judges did all that lay in their power to do, when they asked Pelagius whether he would anathematize the persons who held such sentiments as he declared he had never himself propounded either in speech or in writing. And when he answered that he did anathematize them as fools, what right had the judges to push the inquiry any further on the matter, in the absence of Pelagius' opponents?

#### CHAP. 18.--THE SAME CONTINUED.

But perhaps the point requires some consideration, whether he was right in saying that "such as held the opinions in question deserved anathema, not as heretics, but as fools, since it was no dogma." The question, when fairly confronted, is no doubt far from being an unimportant one,--how far a man deserves to be described as a

heretic; on this occasion, however, the judges acted rightly in abstaining from it altogether. If any one, for example, were to allege that eaglets are suspended in the talons of the parent bird, and so exposed to the rays of the sun, and such as wink are flung to the ground as spurious, the light being in some mysterious way the gauge of their genuine nature, he is not to be accounted a heretic, if the story happens to be untrue. And, since it occurs in the writings of the learned and is very commonly received as fact, ought it to be considered a foolish thing to mention it, even though it be not true? much less ought our credit, which gains for us the name of being trustworthy, to be affected, on the one hand injuriously if the story be believed by us, or beneficially if disbelieved? If, to go a step further in illustration, any one were from this opinion to contend that there existed in birds reasonable souls, from the notion that human souls at intervals passed into them, then indeed we should have to reject from our mind and ears alike an idea like this as the rankest heresy; and even if the story about the eagles were true (as there are many curious facts about bees before our eyes, that are true), we should still have to consider, and demonstrate, the great difference that exists between the condition of creatures like these, which are quite irrational, however surprising in their powers of sensation, and the nature which is common (not to men and beasts, but) to men and angels. There are, to be sure, a great many foolish things said by foolish and ignorant persons, which yet fail to prove them heretics. One might instance the silly talk so commonly heard about the pursuits of other people, from persons who have never learned these pursuits,--equally hasty and untenable whether in the shape of excessive and indiscriminate praise of those they love, or of blame in the case of those they happen to dislike. The same remark might be made concerning the usual current of human conversation: whenever it does touch on a subject which requires dogmatic accuracy of statement, but is thrown out at random or suggested by the



passing moment, it is too often pervaded by foolish levity, whether uttered by the mouth or expressed in writing. Many persons, indeed, when gently reminded of their reckless gossip, have afterwards much regretted their conduct; they scarcely recollected what they had never uttered with a fixed purpose, but had poured forth in a sheer volley of casual and unconsidered words. It is, unhappily, almost impossible to be quite clear of such faults. Who is he "that slippeth not in his tongue," and "offendeth not in word?" It, however, makes all the difference in the world, to what extent, and from what motive, and whether in fact at all, a man when warned of his fault corrects it, or obstinately clings to it so as to make a dogma and settled opinion of that which he had not at first uttered on purpose, but only in levity. Although, then, it turns out eventually that every heretic is a fool, it does not follow that every fool must immediately be named a heretic. The judges were quite right in saying that Pelagius had anathematized the vague folly under consideration by its fitting designation for even if it were heresy, there could be no doubt of its being foolish prattle. Whatever, therefore, it was, they designated the offence under a general name. But whether the quoted words had been used with any definitely dogmatic purpose, or only in a vague and indeterminate sense, and with an unmeaningness which should be capable of an easy correction, they did not deem it necessary to discuss on the present occasion, since the man who was on his trial before them denied that the words were his at all, in whatever sense they had been employed.

#### CHAP. 19.--THE SAME CONTINUED.

Now it so happened that, while we were reading this defence of Pelagius in the small paper which we received at first, there were present certain holy brethren, who said that they had in their possession some hortatory or consolatory works which Pelagius had

addressed to a widow lady whose name did not appear, and they advised us to examine whether the words which he had abjured for his own occurred anywhere in these books. They were not themselves aware whether they did or not. The said books were accordingly read through, and the words in question were actually discovered in them. Moreover, they who had produced the copy of the book, affirmed that for now almost four years they had had these books as Pelagius', nor had they once heard a doubt expressed about his authorship. Considering, then, from the integrity of these servants of God, which was very well known to us, how impossible it was for them to use deceit in the matter, the conclusion seemed inevitable, that Pelagius must be supposed by us to have rather been the deceiver at his trial before the bishops; unless we should think it possible that something may have been published, even for so many years, in his name, although not actually composed by him; for our informants did not tell us that they had received the books from Pelagius himself, nor had they ever heard him admit his own authorship. Now, in my own case, certain of our brethren have told me that sundry writings have found their way into Spain under my name. Such persons, indeed, as had read my genuine writings could not recognise those others as mine; although by other persons my authorship of them was quite believed.

CHAP. 20.--THE SAME CONTINUED. PELAGIUS  
ACKNOWLEDGES THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE IN DECEPTIVE  
TERMS.

There can be no doubt that what Pelagius has acknowledged as his own is as yet very obscure. I suppose, however, that it will become apparent in the subsequent details of these proceedings. Now he says: "We have affirmed that a man is able to be without sin, and to keep the commandments of God if he wishes, inasmuch as God has

given him this ability. But we have not said that any man can be found, who from infancy to old age has never committed sin; but that if any person were converted from his sins, he could by his own exertion and God's grace be without sin; and yet not even thus would he be incapable of change afterwards." Now it is quite uncertain what he means in these words by the grace of God; and the judges, catholic as they were, could not possibly understand by the phrase anything else than the grace which is so very strongly recommended to us in the apostle's teaching. Now this is the grace whereby we hope that we can be delivered from the body of this death through our Lord Jesus Christ, [VII.] and for the obtaining of which we pray that we may not be led into temptation. This grace is not nature, but that which renders assistance to frail and corrupted nature. This grace is not the knowledge of the law, but is that of which the apostle says: "I will not make void the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." Therefore it is not "the letter that killeth, but the life-giving spirit." For the knowledge of the law, without the grace of the Spirit, produces all kinds of concupiscence in man; for, as the apostle says, "I had not known sin but by the law: I had not known lust, unless the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence." By saying this, however, he blames not the law; he rather praises it, for he says afterwards: "The law indeed is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." And he goes on to ask: "Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, wrought death in me by that which is good." And, again, he praises the law by saying: "We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do know not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good." Observe, then, he knows the law, praises it, and consents to it; for what it commands, that he also wishes; and what it forbids, and

condemns, that he also hates: but for all that, what he hates, that he actually does. There is in his mind, therefore, a knowledge of the holy law of God, but still his evil concupiscence is not cured. He has a good will within him, but still what he does is evil. Hence it comes to pass that, amidst the mutual struggles of the two laws within him,--"the law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and making him captive to the law of sin," --he confesses his misery; and exclaims in such words as these: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death? The grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord."

#### CHAP. 21 [VIII.]--THE SAME CONTINUED.

It is not nature, therefore, which, sold as it is under sin and wounded by the offence, longs for a Redeemer and Saviour; nor is it the knowledge of the law--through which comes the discovery, not the expulsion, of sin--which delivers us from the body of this death; but it is the Lord's good grace through our Lord Jesus Christ.

#### CHAP. 21 [IX.]--THE SAME CONTINUED.

This grace is not dying nature, nor the slaying letter, but the vivifying spirit; for already did he possess nature with freedom of will, because he said: "To will is present with me." Nature, however, in a healthy condition and without a flaw, he did not possess, for he said: "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth nothing good." Already had he the knowledge of God's holy law, for he said: "I had not known sin but through the law;" yet for all that, he did not possess strength and power to practise and fulfil righteousness, for he complained: "What I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." And again, "How to accomplish that which is good I find not." Therefore it is not from the liberty of the human will, nor from the precepts of the law, that there comes deliverance from the body of this death; for both of these he

had already,--the one in his nature, the other in his learning; but all he wanted was the help of the grace of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

CHAP. 22 [X.]--THE SAME CONTINUED. THE SYNOD SUPPOSED THAT THE GRACE ACKNOWLEDGED BY PELAGIUS WAS THAT WHICH WAS SO THOROUGHLY KNOWN TO THE CHURCH.

This grace, then, which was most completely known in the catholic Church (as the bishops were well aware), they supposed Pelagius made confession of, when they heard him say that "a man, when converted from his sins, is able by his own exertion and the grace of God to be without sin." For my own part, however, I remembered the treatise which had been given to me, that I might refute it, by those servants of God, who had been Pelagius' followers.<sup>14</sup> They, notwithstanding their great affection for him, plainly acknowledged that the passage was his; when, on this question being proposed, because he had already given offence to very many persons from advancing views against the grace of God, he most expressly admitted that "what he meant by God's grace was that, when our nature was created, it received the capacity of not sinning, because it was created with free will." On account, therefore, of this treatise, I cannot help feeling still anxious, whilst many of the brethren who are well acquainted with his discussions, share in my anxiety, lest under the ambiguity which notoriously characterizes his words there lies some latent reserve, and lest he should afterwards tell his followers that it was without prejudice to his own doctrine that he made any admissions,--discoursing thus: "I no doubt asserted that a man was able by his own exertion and the grace of God to live without sin; but you know very well what I mean by grace; and you may recollect reading that grace is that in which we are created by God with a free will." Accordingly, while the bishops understood him to mean the

grace by which we have by adoption been made new creatures, not that by which we were created (for most plainly does Holy Scripture instruct us in the former sense of grace as the true one), ignorant of his being a heretic, they acquitted him as a catholic. I must say that my suspicion is excited also by this, that in the work which I answered, he most openly said that "righteous Abel never sinned at all." Now, however, he thus expresses himself: "But we did not say that any man could be found who at no time whatever, from infancy to old age, has committed sin; but that, if any man were converted from his sins, he could by his own labour and God's grace be without sin." When speaking of righteous Abel, he did not say that after being converted from his sins he became sinless in a new life, but that he never committed sin at all, If, then, that book be his, it must of course be corrected and amended from his answer. For I should be sorry to say that he was insincere in his more recent statement; lest perhaps he should say that he had forgotten what he had previously written in the book we have quoted. Let us therefore direct our view to what afterwards occurred. Now, from the sequel of these ecclesiastical proceedings, we can by God's help show that, although Pelagius, as some suppose, cleared himself in his examination, and was at all events acquitted by his judges (who were, however, but human beings after all), that this great heresy, which we should be most unwilling to see making further progress or becoming aggravated in guilt, was undoubtedly itself condemned.

#### CHAP. 23 [XI.]--THE SEVENTH ITEM OF THE ACCUSATION: THE BREVIATES OF COELESTIUS OBJECTED TO PELAGIUS.

Then follow sundry statements charged against Pelagius, which are said to be found among the opinions of his disciple Coelestius: how that "Adam was created mortal, and would have died whether he had sinned or not sinned; that Adam's sin injured only himself and not

the human race; that the law no less than the gospel leads us to the kingdom; that there were sinless men previous to the coming of Christ; that new-born infants are in the same condition as Adam was before the fall; that the whole human race does not, on the one hand, die through Adam's death or transgression, nor, on the other hand, does the whole human race rise again through the resurrection of Christ." These have been so objected to, that they are even said to have been, after a full hearing, condemned at Carthage by your holiness and other bishops associated with you. I was not present on that occasion, as you will recollect; but afterwards, on my arrival at Carthage, I read over the Acts of the synod, some of which I perfectly well remember, but I do not know whether all the tenets now mentioned occur among them. But what matters it if some of them were possibly not mentioned, and so not included in the condemnation of the synod when it is quite clear that they deserve condemnation? Sundry other points of error were next alleged against him, connected with the mention of my own name. They had been transmitted to me from Sicily, some of our Catholic brethren there being perplexed by questions of this kind; and I drew up a reply to them in a little work addressed to Hilary, who had consulted me respecting them in a letter. My answer, in my opinion, was a sufficient one. These are the errors referred to: "That a man is able to be without sin if he wishes. That infants, even if they die unbaptized, have eternal life. That rich men, even if they are baptized, unless they renounce all, have, whatever good they may seem to have done, nothing of it reckoned to them; neither can they possess the kingdom of God."

CHAP. 24.--PELAGIUS' ANSWER TO THE CHARGES BROUGHT TOGETHER UNDER THE SEVENTH ITEM.

The following, as the proceedings testify, was Pelagius' own answer to these charges against him: "Concerning a man's being able indeed to be without sin, we have spoken," says he, "already; concerning the fact, however, that before the Lord's coming there were persons without sin, we say now that, previous to Christ's advent, some men lived holy and righteous lives, according to the teaching of the sacred Scriptures. The rest were not said by me, as even their testimony goes to show, and for them, I do not feel that I am responsible. But for the satisfaction of the holy synod, I anathematize those who either now hold, or have ever held, these opinions." After hearing this answer of his, the synod said: "With regard to these charges aforesaid, Pelagius has in our presence given us sufficient and proper satisfaction, by anathematizing the opinions which were not his." We 'see, therefore, and maintain that the most pernicious evils of this heresy have been condemned, not only by Pelagius, but also by the holy bishops who presided over that inquiry:--that "Adam was made mortal;" (and, that the meaning of this statement might be more clearly understood, it was added, "and he would have died whether he had sinned or not sinned;") that his Sin injured only himself and not the human race; that the law, no less than the gospel, leads us to the kingdom of heaven; that new born infants are in the same condition that Adam was before the fall; that the entire human race does not, on the one hand, die through Adam's death and transgression, nor, on the other hand, does the whole human race rise again through the resurrection of Christ; that infants, even if they die unbaptized, have eternal life; that rich men even if baptized, unless they renounce and give up all, have, whatever good they may seem to have done nothing of it reckoned to them, neither can they possess the kingdom of God;--all these opinions, at any rate, were clearly condemned in that ecclesiastical court,--Pelagius pronouncing the anathema, and the bishops the interlocutory sentence.



CHAP. 25.--THE PELAGIANS FALSELY PRETENDED THAT THE EASTERN CHURCHES WERE ON THEIR SIDE.

Now, by reason of these questions, and the very contentious assertions of these tenets, which are everywhere accompanied with heated feelings, many weak brethren were disturbed. We have accordingly, in the anxiety of that love which it becomes us to feel towards the Church of Christ through His grace, and out of regard to Marcellinus of blessed memory (who was extremely vexed day by day by these disputers, and who asked my advice by letter), been obliged to write on some of these questions, and especially on the baptism of infants. On this same subject also I afterwards, at your request, and assisted by your prayers, delivered an earnest address, to the best of my ability, in the church of the Majores, holding in my hands an epistle of the most glorious martyr Cyprian, and reading therefrom and applying his words on the very matter, in order to remove this dangerous error out of the hearts of sundry persons, who had been persuaded to take up with the opinions which, as we see, were condemned in these proceedings. These opinions it has been attempted by their promoters to force upon the minds of some of the brethren, by threatening, as if from the Eastern Churches, that unless they adopted the said opinions, they would be formally condemned by those Churches. Observe, however, that no less than fourteen bishops of the Eastern Church, assembled in synod in the land where the Lord manifested His presence in the days of His flesh, refused to acquit Pillages unless he condemned these opinions as opposed to the Catholic faith. Since, therefore, he was then acquitted because he anathematized such views, it follows beyond a doubt that the said opinions were condemned. This, indeed, will appear more clearly still, and on still stronger evidence, in the sequel.

## CHAP. 26.--THE ACCUSATIONS IN THE SEVENTH ITEM, WHICH PILLAGES CONFESSED.

Let us now see what were the two points out of all that were alleged which Pillages was unwilling to anathematize, and admitted to be his own opinions, but to remove their offensive aspect explained in what sense he held them. "That a man," says he, "is able to be without sin has been asserted already." Asserted no doubt, and we remember the assertion quite well; but still it was mitigated, and approved by the judges, in that God's grace was added, concerning which nothing was said in the original draft of his doctrine. Touching the second, however, of these points, we ought to pay careful attention to what he said in answer to the charge against him. "Concerning the fact, indeed," says he, "that before the Lord's coming there were persons without sin, we now again assert that previous to Christ's advent some men lived holy and righteous lives, according to the teaching of the sacred Scriptures." He did not dare to say: "We now again assert that previous to Christ's advent there were persons without sin," although this had been laid to his charge after the very words of Coelestius. For he perceived how dangerous such a statement was, and into what trouble it would bring him. So he reduced the sentence to these harmless dimensions: "We again assert that before the coming of Christ there were persons who led holy and righteous lives." Of course there were: who would deny it? But to say this is a very different thing from saying that they lived "without sin." Because, indeed, those ancient worthies lived holy and righteous lives, they could for that very reason better confess: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." In the present day, also, many men live holy and righteous lives; but yet it is no untruth they utter when in their prayer they say: "Forgive us our debts, even as we forgive our debtors." This avowal was accordingly acceptable to the judges, in the sense in which Pelagius

solemnly declared his belief; but certainly not in the sense which Coelestius, according to the original charge against him, was said to hold. We must now treat in detail of the topics which still remain, to the best of our ability.

#### CHAP. 27 [XII.] --THE EIGHTH ITEM IN THE ACCUSATION.

Pelagius was charged with having said: "That the Church here is without spot or wrinkle." It was on this point that the Donatists also were constantly at conflict with us in our conference. We used, in their case, to lay especial stress on the mixture of bad men with good, like that of the chaff with the wheat; and we were led to this idea by the similitude of the threshing-floor. We might apply the same illustration in answer to our present opponents, unless indeed they would have the Church consist only of good men, whom they assert to be without any sin whatever, that so the Church might be without spot or wrinkle. If this be their meaning, then I repeat the same words as I quoted just now; for how can they be members of the Church, of whom the voice of a truthful humility declares, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us?" or how could the Church offer up that prayer which the Lord taught her to use, "Forgive us our debts," if in this world the Church is without a spot or blemish? In short, they must themselves submit to be strictly catechised respecting themselves: do they really allow that they have any sins of their own? If their answer is in the negative, then they must be plainly told that they are deceiving themselves, and the truth is not in them. If, however, they shall acknowledge that they do commit sin, what is this but a confession of their own wrinkle and spot? They therefore are not members of the Church; because the Church is without spot and wrinkle, while they have both spot and wrinkle.

CHAP. 28.--PELAGIUS' REPLY TO THE EIGHTH ITEM OF ACCUSATION.

But to this objection he replied with a watchful caution such as the catholic judges no doubt approved. "It has," says he, "been asserted by me,-- but in such a sense that the Church is by the laver cleansed from every spot and wrinkle, and in this purity the Lord wishes her to continue." Whereupon the synod said: "Of this also we approve." And who amongst us denies that in baptism the sins of all men are remitted, and that all believers come up spotless and pure from the laver of regeneration? Or what catholic Christian is there who wishes not, as his Lord also wishes, and as it is meant to be, that the Church should remain always without spot or wrinkle? For in very deed God is now in His mercy and truth bringing it about, that His holy Church should be conducted to that perfect state in which she is to remain without spot or wrinkle for evermore. But between the laver, where all past stains and deformities are removed, and the kingdom, where the Church will remain for ever without any spot or wrinkle, there is this present intermediate time of prayer, during which her cry must of necessity be: "Forgive us our debts." Hence arose the objection against them for saying that "the Church here on earth is without spot or wrinkle;" from the doubt whether by this opinion they did not boldly prohibit that prayer whereby the Church in her present baptized state entreats day and night for herself the forgiveness of her sins. On the subject of this intervening period between the remission of sins which takes place in baptism, and the perpetuity of sinlessness which is to be in the kingdom of heaven, no proceedings ensued with Pelagius, and no decision was pronounced by the bishops. Only he thought that some brief indication ought to be given that he had not expressed himself in the way which the accusation against him seemed to state. As to his saying, "This has been asserted by me,--but in such a sense," what else did he mean to convey than

the idea that he had not in fact expressed himself in the same manner as he was supposed to have done by his accusers? That, however, which induced the judges to say that they were satisfied with his answer was baptism as the means of being washed from our sins; and the kingdom of heaven, in which the holy Church, which is now in process of cleansing, shall continue in a sinless state for ever: this is clear from the evidence, so far as I can form an opinion.

#### CHAP. 29 [XIII.]--THE NINTH ITEM OF THE ACCUSATION; AND PELAGIUS' REPLY.

The next objections were urged out of the book of Coelestius, following the contents of each several chapter, but rather according to the sense than the words. These indeed he expatiates on rather fully; they, however, who presented the indictment against Pelagius said that they had been unable at the moment to adduce all the words. In the first chapter, then, of Coelestius' book they alleged that the following was written: "That we do more than is commanded us in the law and the gospel." To this Pelagius replied: "This they have set down as my statement. What we said, however, was in keeping with the apostle's assertion concerning virginity, of which Paul writes: 'I have no commandment of the Lord.'" Upon this the synod said: "This also the Church receives." I have read for myself the meaning which Coelestius gives to this in his book,--for he does not deny that the book is his. Now he made this statement obviously with the view of persuading us that we possess through the nature of free will so great an ability for avoiding sin, that we are able to do more than is commanded us; for a perpetual virginity is maintained by very many persons, and this is not commanded; whereas, in order to avoid sin, it is sufficient to fulfil what is commanded. When the judges, however, accepted Pelagius' answer, they did not take it to convey the idea that those persons keep all the commandments of

the law and the gospel who over and above maintain the state of virginity, which is not commanded,--but only this, that virginity, which is not commanded, is something more than conjugal chastity, which is commanded; so that to observe the one is of course more than to keep the other; whereas, at the same time, neither can be maintained without the grace of God, inasmuch as the apostle, in speaking of this very subject, says: "But I would that all men were even as I myself. Every man, however, hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that." And even the Lord Himself, upon the disciples remarking, "If the case of the man be so with his wife, it is not expedient to marry" (or, as it may be better expressed in Latin, "it is not expedient to take a wife"), said to them: "All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given." This, therefore, is the doctrine which the bishops of the synod declared to be received by the Church, that the state of virginity, persevered in to the last, which is not commanded, is more than the chastity of married life, which is commanded. In what view Pelagius or Coelestius regarded this subject, the judges were not aware.

CHAP. 30 [XIV.]--THE TENTH ITEM IN THE ACCUSATION. THE MORE PROMINENT POINTS OF COELESTIUS' WORK CONTINUED.

After this we find objected against Pelagius some other points of Coelestius' teaching,--prominent ones, and undoubtedly worthy of condemnation; such, indeed, as would certainly have involved Pelagius in condemnation, if he had not anathematized them in the synod. Under his third head Coelestius was alleged to have written: "That God's grace and assistance is not given for single actions, but is imparted in the freedom of the will, or in the law and in doctrine." And again: "That God's grace is given in proportion to our deserts; because, were He to give it to sinful persons, He would seem to be

unrighteous." And from these words he inferred that "therefore grace itself has been placed in my will, according as I have been either worthy or unworthy of it. For if we do all things by grace, then whenever we are overcome by sin, it is not we who are overcome, but God's grace, which wanted by all means to help us, but was not able." And once more he says: "If, when we conquer sin, it is by the grace of God; then it is He who is in fault whenever we are conquered by sin, because He was either altogether unable or unwilling to keep us safe." To these charges Pelagius replied: "Whether these are really the opinions of Coelestius or not, is the concern of those who say that they are. For my own part, indeed, I never entertained such views; on the contrary, I anathematize every one who does entertain them." Then the synod said: "This holy synod accepts you for your condemnation of these impious words." Now certainly there can be no mistake, in regard to these opinions, either as to the clear way in which Pelagius pronounced on them his anathema, or as to the absolute terms in which the bishops condemned them. Whether Pelagius or Coelestius, or both of them, or neither of them, or other persons with them or in their name, have ever held or still hold these sentiments,--may be doubtful or obscure; but nevertheless by this judgment of the bishops it has been declared plainly enough that they have been condemned, and that Pelagius would have been condemned along with them, unless he had himself condemned them too. Now, after this trial, it is certain that whenever we enter on a controversy touching opinions of this kind, we only discuss an already condemned heresy.

#### CHAP. 31.--REMARKS ON THE TENTH ITEM.

I shall make my next remark with greater satisfaction. In a former section I expressed a fear that, when Pelagius said that "a man was able by the help of God's grace to live without sin," he perhaps meant

by the term "grace" the capability possessed by nature as created by God with a free will, as it is understood in that book which I received as his and to which I replied; and that by these means he was deceiving the

judges, who were ignorant of the circumstances. Now, however, since he anathematizes those persons who hold that "God's grace and assistance is not given for single actions, but is imparted in the freedom of the will, or in the law and in doctrine," it is quite evident that he really means the grace which is preached in the Church of Christ, and is conferred by the ministration of the Holy Ghost for the purpose of helping us in our single actions, whence it is that we pray for needful and suitable grace that we enter not into any temptation. Nor, again, have I any longer a fear that, when he said, "No man can be without sin unless he has acquired a knowledge of the law," and added this explanation of his words, that "he posited in the knowledge of the law, help towards the avoidance of sin," he at all meant the said knowledge to be considered as tantamount to the grace of God; for, observe, he anathematizes such as hold this opinion. See, too, how he refuses to hold our natural free will, or the law and doctrine, as equivalent to that grace of God which helps us through our single actions. What else then is left to him but to understand that grace which the apostle tells us is given by "the supply of the Spirit?" and concerning which the Lord said: "Take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Nor, again, need I be under any apprehension that, when he asserted, "All men are ruled by their own will," and afterwards explained that he had made that statement "in the interest of the freedom of our will, of which God is the helper whenever it makes choice of good," that he perhaps here also held God's helping grace as synonymous with our natural free will and the teaching of the law. For inasmuch as he rightly



anathematized the persons who hold that God's grace or assistance is not given for single actions, but lies in the gift of free will, or in the law and doctrine, it follows, of course, that God's grace or assistance is given us for single actions,--free will, or the law and the doctrine, being left out of consideration; and thus through all the single actions of our life, when we act rightly, we are ruled and directed by God; nor is our prayer a useless one, wherein we say: "Order my steps according to Thy word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me."

#### CHAP. 32.--THE ELEVENTH ITEM OF THE ACCUSATION.

But what comes afterwards again fills me with anxiety. On its being objected to him, from the fifth chapter of Coelestius' book, that " they say that every individual has the ability to possess all powers and graces, thus taking away that 'diversity of graces, which the apostle teaches," Pelagius replied: "We have certainly said so much; but yet they have laid against us a malignant and blundering charge. We do not take away the diversity of graces; but we declare that God gives to the person, who has proved himself worthy to receive them, all graces, even as He conferred them on the Apostle Paul." Hereupon the Synod said: "You accordingly do yourself hold the doctrine of the Church touching the gift of the graces, which are collectively possessed by the apostle." Here some one may say, "Why then is he anxious? Do you on your side deny that all the powers and graces were combined in the apostle?" For my own part, indeed, if all those are to be understood which the apostle has himself mentioned together in one passage,--as, I suppose, the bishops understood Pelagius to mean when they approved of his answer, and pronounced it to be in keeping with the sense of the Church,--then I do not doubt that the apostle had them all; for he says: "And God hath set some in the Church, first, apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers;

after that miracles; then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues." What then? shall we say that the Apostle Paul did not possess all these gifts himself? Who would be bold enough to assert this? The very fact that he was an apostle showed, of course, that he possessed the grace of the apostolate. He possessed also that of prophecy; for was not that a prophecy of his in which he says: "In the last times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils?" He was, moreover, "the teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity? He performed miracles also and cures; for he shook off from his hand, unhurt, the biting viper; and the cripple stood upright on his feet at the apostle's word, and his strength was at once restored. It is not clear what he means by helps, for the term is of very wide application; but who can say that he was wanting even in this grace, when through his labours such helps were manifestly afforded towards the salvation of mankind? Then as to his possessing the grace of "government," what could be more excellent than his administration, when the Lord at that time governed so many churches by his personal agency, and governs them still in our day through his epistles? And in respect of the "diversities of tongues," what tongues could have been wanting to him, when he says himself: "I thank my God that I speak with tongues more than you all?"

It being thus inevitable to suppose that not one of these was wanting to the Apostle Paul, the judges approved of Pelagius' answer, wherein he said "that all graces were conferred upon him." But there are other graces in addition to these which are not mentioned here. For it is not to be supposed, however greatly the Apostle Paul excelled others as a member of Christ's body, that the very Head itself of the entire body did not receive more and ampler graces still, whether in His flesh or His soul as man; for such a created nature did the Word of God assume as His own into the unity of His Person, that He

might be our Head, and we His body. And in very deed, if all gifts could be in each member, it would be evident that the similitude, which is used to illustrate this subject, of the several members of our body is inapplicable; for some things are common to the members in general, such as life and health, whilst other things are peculiar to the separate members, since the ear has no perception of colours, nor the eye of voices. Hence it is written: "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? if the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?" Now this of course is not said as if it were impossible for God to impart to the ear the sense of seeing, or to the eye the function of hearing. However, what He does in Christ's body, which is the Church, and what the apostle meant by diversity of graces? as if through the different members, there might be gifts proper even to every one separately, is clearly known. Why, too, and on what ground they who raised the objection were so unwilling to have taken away all difference in graces, why, moreover, the bishops of the synod were able to approve of the answer given by Pelagius in deference to the Apostle Paul, in whom we admit the combination of all those graces which he mentioned in the one particular passage, is by this time clear also.

#### CHAP. 33. -- DISCUSSION OF THE ELEVENTH ITEM CONTINUED.

What, then, is the reason why, as I said just now, I felt anxious on the subject of this head of his doctrine? It is occasioned by what Pelagius says in these words: "That God gives to the man who has proved himself worthy to receive them, all graces, even as He conferred them on the Apostle Paul." Now, I should not have felt any anxiety about this answer of Pelagius, if it were not closely connected with the cause which we are bound to guard with the utmost care--even that God's grace may never be attacked, while we are silent or

dissembling in respect of so great an evil. As, therefore, he does not say, that God gives to whom He will, but that "God gives to the man who has proved himself worthy to receive them, all these graces," I could not help being suspicious, when I read such words. For the very name of grace, and the thing that is meant by it, is taken away, if it is not bestowed gratuitously, but he only receives it who is worthy of it. Will anybody say that I do the apostle wrong, because I do not admit him to have been worthy of grace? Nay, I should indeed rather do him wrong, and bring on myself a punishment, if I refused to believe what he himself says. Well, now, has he not pointedly so defined grace as to show that it is so called because it is bestowed gratuitously? These are his own very words: "And if by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace." In accordance with this, he says again: "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt." Whosoever, therefore, is worthy, to him it is due; and if it is thus due to him, it ceases to be grace; for grace is given, but a debt is paid. Grace, therefore, is given to those who are unworthy, that a debt may be paid to them when they become worthy. He, however, who has bestowed on the unworthy the gifts which they possessed not before, does Himself take care that they shall have whatever things He means to recompense to them when they become worthy.

CHAP. 34.--THE SAME CONTINUED. ON THE WORKS OF UNBELIEVERS; FAITH IS THE INITIAL PRINCIPLE FROM WHICH GOOD WORKS HAVE THEIR BEGINNING; FAITH IS THE GIFT OF GOD'S GRACE.

He will perhaps say to this: "It was not because of his works, but in consequence of his faith, that I said the apostle was worthy of having all those great graces bestowed upon him. His faith deserved this distinction, but not his works, which were not previously good."

Well, then, are we to suppose that faith does not work? Surely faith does work in a very real way, for it "worketh by love." Preach up, however, as much as you like, the works of unbelieving men, we still know how true and invincible is the statement of this same apostle: "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." The very reason, indeed, why he so often declares that righteousness is imputed to us, not out of our works, but our faith, whereas faith rather works through love, is that no man should think that he arrives at faith itself through the merit of his works; for it is faith which is the beginning whence good works first proceed; since (as has already been stated) whatsoever comes not from faith is sin. Accordingly, it is said to the Church, in the Song of Songs: "Thou shalt come and pass by from the beginning of faith."<sup>1</sup> Although, therefore, faith procures the grace of producing good works, we certainly do not deserve by any faith that we should have faith itself; but, in its bestowal upon us, in order that we may follow the Lord by its help, "His mercy has prevented us." Was it we ourselves that gave it to us ? Did we ourselves make ourselves faithful? I must by all means say here, emphatically: "It is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves." And indeed nothing else than this is pressed upon us in the apostle's teaching, when he says: "For I declare, through the grace that is given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith." Whence, too, arises the well-known challenge: "What hast thou that thou didst not receive ?" inasmuch as we have received even that which is the spring from which everything we have of good in our actions takes its beginning.

#### CHAP. 35.--THE SAME CONTINUED.

"What, then, is the meaning of that which the same apostle says: ' I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the

faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day;' if these are not recompenses paid to the worthy, but gifts, bestowed on the unworthy?" He who says this, does not consider that the crown could not have been given to the man who is worthy of it, unless grace had been first bestowed on him whilst unworthy of it. He says indeed: "I have fought a good fight; "6 but then he also says: "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord." He says too: "I have finished my course;" but he says again: "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." He says, moreover: "I have kept the faith;" but then it is he too who says again: "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep my deposit against that day "--that is, "my commendation;" for some copies have not the word depositum, but commendatum, which yields a plainer sense. Now, what do we commend to God's keeping, except the things which we pray Him to preserve for us, and amongst these our very faith? For what else did the Lord procure for the Apostle Peter by His prayer for him, of which He said, "I have prayed for thee, Peter, that thy faith fail not," than that God would preserve his faith, that it should not fail I by giving way to temptation? Therefore, blessed Paul, thou great preacher of grace, I will say it without fear of any man (for who will be less angry with me for so saying than thyself, who hast told us What to say, and taught us what to teach?)--I will, I repeat, say it, and fear no man for the assertion: Their own crown is recompensed to their merits; but thy merits are the gifts of God!

CHAP. 36.--THE SAME CONTINUED. THE MONK PELAGIUS.  
GRACE IS CONFERRED ON THE UNWORTHY.

His due reward, therefore, is recompensed to the apostle as worthy of it; but still it was grace which bestowed on him the apostleship itself,

which was not his due, and of which he was not worthy. Shall I be sorry for having said this? God forbid! For under his own testimony shall I find a ready protection from such reproach; nor will any man charge me with audacity, unless he be himself audacious enough to charge the apostle with mendacity. He frankly says, nay he protests, that he commends the gifts of God within himself, so that he glories not in himself at all, but in the Lord; he not only declares that he possessed no good deserts in himself why he should be made an apostle, but he even mentions his own demerits, in order to manifest and preach the grace of God. "I am not meet," says he, "to be called an apostle;" and what else does this mean than "I am not worthy"--as indeed several Latin copies read the phrase. Now this, to be sure, is the very gist of our question; for undoubtedly in this grace of apostleship all those graces are contained. For it was neither convenient nor right that an apostle should not possess the gift of prophecy, nor be a teacher, nor be illustrious for miracles and the gifts of healings, nor furnish needful helps, nor provide governments over the churches, nor excel in diversities of tongues. All these functions the one name of apostleship embraces. Let us, therefore, consult the man himself, nay listen wholly to him. Let us say to him: "Holy Apostle Paul, the monk Pelagius declares that thou wast worthy to receive all the graces of thine apostleship. What dost thou say thyself?" He answers: "I am not worthy to be called an apostle." Shall I then, under pretence of honouring Paul, in a matter concerning Paul, dare to believe Pelagius in preference to Paul? I will not do so; for if I did, I should only prove to be more onerous to myself than honouring to him. Let us hear also why he is not worthy to be called an apostle: "Because," says he, "I persecuted the Church of God." Now, were we to follow up the idea here expressed, who would not judge that he rather deserved from Christ condemnation, instead of an apostolic call? Who could so love the preacher as not to loathe the persecutor? Well, therefore, and truly does he say of

himself: "I am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God." As thou wroughtest then such evil, how camest thou to earn such good ? Let all men hear his answer: "But by the grace of God, I am what I am." Is there, then, no other way in which grace is commended, than because it is conferred on an unworthy recipient? "And His grace," he adds, "which was bestowed on me was not in vain." He says this as a lesson to others also, to show the freedom of the will, when he says: "We then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain." Whence however does he derive his proof, that "His grace bestowed on himself was not in vain," except from the fact which he goes on to mention: "But I laboured more abundantly than they all ?" So it seems he did not labour in order to receive grace, but he received grace in order that he might labour. And thus, when unworthy, he gratuitously received grace, whereby he might become worthy to receive the due reward. Not that he ventured to claim even his labour for himself; for, after saying: "I laboured more abundantly than they all," he at once subjoined: "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." O mighty teacher, confessor, and preacher of grace! What meaneth this: "I laboured more, yet not I ?" Where the will exalted itself ever so little, there piety was instantly on the watch, and humility trembled, because weakness recognised itself.

#### CHAP. 37--THE SAME CONTINUED. JOHN, BISHOP OF JERUSALEM, AND HIS EXAMINATION.

With great propriety, as the proceedings show, did John, the holy overseer of the Church of Jerusalem, employ the authority of this same passage of the apostle, as he himself told our brethren the bishops who were his assessors at that trial, on their asking him what proceedings had taken place before him previous to the triad He told them that "on the occasion in question, whilst some were whispering, and remarking on Pelagius' statement, that 'without God's grace man



was able to attain perfection' (that is, as he had previously expressed it, 'man was able. to be without sin'), he censured the statement, and reminded them besides, that even the Apostle Paul, after so many labours--not indeed in his own strength, but by the grace of God--said: ' I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me; ' and again: ' It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy;' and again: 'Except the Lord build the house, they labour but in vain who build it.' And," he added, "we quoted several other like passages out of the Holy Scriptures. When, however, they did not receive the quotations which we made out of the Holy Scriptures, but continued their murmuring noise, Pelagius said: 'This is what I also believe; let him be anathema, who declares that a man is able, without God's help, to arrive at the perfection of all virtues.'"

#### CHAP. 38 [XV.]--THE SAME CONTINUED.

Bishop John narrated all this in the hearing of Pelagius; but he, of course, might respectfully say: "Your holiness is in error; you do not accurately remember the facts. It was not in reference to the passages of Scripture which you have quoted that I uttered the words: 'This is what I also believe.' Because this is not my opinion of them. I do not understand them to say, that God's grace so co-operates with man, that his abstinence from sin is due, not to 'him that willeth, nor to him that runneth, but to God that showeth mercy.'"

#### CHAP. 39 [XVI.] --THE SAME CONTINUED. HEROS AND LAZARUS; OROSIUS.

Now there are some expositions of Paul's Epistle to the Romans which are said to have been written by Pelagius himself, --in which he asserts, that the passage: "Not of him that willeth, nor of him that

runneth, but of God that showeth mercy," was "not said in Paul's own person; but that he therein employed the language of questioning and refutation, as if such a statement ought not to be made." No safe conclusion, therefore, can be drawn, although the bishop John plainly acknowledged the passage in question as conveying the mind of the apostle, and mentioned it for the very purpose of hindering Pelagius from thinking that any man can avoid sin without God's grace, and declared that Pelagius said in answer: "This is what I also believe," and did not, upon hearing all this, repudiate his admission by replying: "This is not my belief." He ought, indeed, either to deny altogether, or unhesitatingly to correct and amend this perverse exposition, in which he would have it, that the apostle must not be regarded as entertaining the sentiment,<sup>1</sup> but rather as refuting it. Now, whatever Bishop John said of our brethren who were absent-- whether our brother bishops Heros and Lazarus, or the presbyter Orosius, or any others whose names are not there registered, --I am sure that he did not mean it to operate to their prejudice. For, had they been present, they might possibly (I am far from saying it absolutely) have convicted him of untruth; at any rate they might perhaps have reminded him of something he had forgotten, or something in which he might have been deceived by the Latin interpreter--not, to be sure, for the purpose of misleading him by untruth, but at least, owing to some difficulty occasioned by a foreign language, only imperfectly understood; especially as the question was not treated in the Proceedings, which were drawn up for the useful purpose of preventing deceit on the part of evil men, and of preserving a record to assist the memory of good men. If, however, any man shall be disposed by this mention of our brethren to introduce any question or doubt on the subject, and summon them before the Episcopal judgment, they will not be wanting to themselves, as occasion shall serve. Why need we here pursue the point, when not even the judges themselves, after the narrative of

our brother bishop, were inclined to pronounce any definite sentence in consequence of it ?

CHAP. 40 [XVII.]--THE SAME CONTINUED.

Since, then, Pelagius was present when these passages of the Scriptures were discussed, and by his silence acknowledged having said that he entertained the same view of their meaning, how happens it, that, after reconsidering the apostle's testimony, as he had just done, and finding that he said: "I am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God; but by the grace of God I am what I am,"<sup>4</sup> he did not perceive that it was improper for him to say, respecting the question of the abundance of the graces which the said apostle received, that he had shown himself "worthy to receive them," when the apostle himself not only confessed, but added a reason to prove, that he was unworthy of them--and by this very fact set forth grace as grace indeed? If he could not for some reason or other consider or recollect the narrative of his holiness the bishop John, which he had heard some time before, he might surely have respected his own very recent answer at the synod, and remembered how he anathematized, but a short while before, the opinions which had been alleged against him out of Coelestius. Now among these it was objected to him that Coelestius had said: "That the grace of God is bestowed according to our merits." If, then, Pelagius truthfully anathematized this, why does he say that all those graces were conferred on the apostle because he deserved them ? Is the phrase "worthy to receive" of different meaning from the expression "to receive according to merit"? Can he by any disputatious subtlety show that a man is worthy who has no merit? But neither Coelestius, nor any other, all of whose opinions he anathematized, has any intention to allow him to throw clouds over the phrase, and to conceal himself behind them. He presses home

the matter, and plainly says: "And this grace has been placed in my will, according as I have been either worthy or unworthy of it." If, then, a statement, wherein it is declared that "God's grace is given in proportion to our deserts, to such as are worthy," was rightly and truly condemned by Pelagius, how could his heart permit him to think, or his mouth to utter, such a sentence as this: "We say that God gives to the person who has proved himself worthy to receive them, all graces ? " Who that carefully considers all this can help feeling some anxiety about his answer or defence?

CHAP. 41.--AUGUSTIN INDULGENTLY SHOWS THAT THE JUDGES ACTED INCAUTIOUSLY IN THEIR OFFICIAL CONDUCT OF THE CASE OF PELAGIUS.

Why, then (some one will say), did the judges approve of this? I confess that I hardly even now understand why they did. It is, however, not to be wondered at, if some brief word or Phrase too easily escaped their attention and ear; or if, because they thought it capable of being somehow interpreted in a correct sense, from seeming to have from the accused himself such clear confessions of truth on the subject, they decided it to be hardly worth while to excite a discussion about a word. The same feeling might have occurred to ourselves also, if we had sat with them at the trial. For if, instead of the term worthy, the word predestinated had been used, or some such word, my mind would certainly not have entertained any doubt, much less have been disquieted by it; and yet if it were asserted, that he who is justified by the election of grace is called worthy, through no antecedent merits of good indeed, but by destination, just as he is called "elect," it would be really difficult to determine whether he might be so designated at all, or at least without some offence to an intelligent view of the subject.

As for myself, indeed, I might readily pass on from the discussion on this word, were it not that the treatise which called forth my reply, and in which he says that there is no God's grace at all except our own nature gratuitously created with free will, made me suspicious and anxious about the actual meaning of Pelagius--whether he had procured the introduction of the term into the argument without any accurate intention as to its sense, or else as a carefully drawn dogmatic expression. The last remaining statements had such an effect on the judges, that they deemed them worthy of condemnation, without waiting for Pelagius' answer.

CHAP. 42 [XVIII.]--THE TWELFTH ITEM IN THE ACCUSATION. OTHER HEADS OF COELESTIUS' DOCTRINE ABJURED BY PELAGIUS.

For it was objected that in the sixth chapter of Coelestius' work there was laid down this position: "Men cannot be called sons of God, unless they have become entirely free from all sin." It follows from this statement, that not even the Apostle Paul is a child of God, since he said: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect."<sup>2</sup> In the seventh chapter he makes this statement: "Forgetfulness and ignorance have no connection with sin, as they do not happen through the will, but through necessity;" although David says: "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my sins of ignorance;" although too, in the law, sacrifices are offered for ignorance, as if for sin. In his tenth Chapter he says: "Our will is free, if it needs the help of God; inasmuch as every one in the possession of his proper will has either something to do or to abstain from doing." In the twelfth he says: "Our victory comes not from God's help, but from our own free will." And this is a conclusion which he was said to draw in the following terms: "The victory is ours, seeing that we took up arms of our Own will; just as, on the other hand,

being conquered is our own, since it was of our own will that we neglected to arm ourselves." And, after quoting the phrase of the Apostle Peter, "partakers of the divine nature," he is said to have made out of it this argument: "Now if our spirit or soul is Unable to be without sin, then even God is subject to sin, since this part of Him, that is to say, the soul, is exposed to sin." In his thirteenth chapter he says: "That pardon is not given to penitents according to the grace and mercy of God, but according to their own merits and effort, since through repentance they have been worthy of mercy."

#### [CHAP. 43 [XIX.]--THE ANSWER OF THE MONK PELAGIUS AND HIS PROFESSION OF FAITH.

After all these sentences were read out, the synod said: "What says the monk Pelagius to all these heads of opinion which have been read in his presence? For this holy synod condemns the whole, as does also God's Holy Catholic Church." Pelagius answered: "I say again, that these opinions, even according to their own testimony, are not mine; nor for them, as I have already said, ought I to be held responsible. The opinions which I have confessed to be my own, I maintain are sound; those, however, which I have said are not my own, I reject according to the judgment of this holy synod, pronouncing anathema on every man who opposes and gainsays the doctrines of the Holy Catholic Church. For I believe in the Trinity of the one substance, and I hold all things in accordance with the teaching of the Holy Catholic Church. If indeed any man entertains opinions different from her, let him be anathema."

#### CHAP. 44 [xx.] --THE ACQUITTAL OF PELAGIUS.

The synod said: "Now since we have received satisfaction on the points which have come before us touching the monk Pelagius, who has been present; since, too, he gives his consent to the pious

doctrines, and even anathematizes everything that is contrary to the Church's faith, we confess him to belong to the communion of the Catholic Church."

CHAP. 45 [XXI.] -- PELAGIUS' ACQUITTAL BECOMES SUSPECTED.

If these are the proceedings by which Pelagius' friends rejoice that he was exculpated, we, on our part,--since he certainly took much pains to prove that we were well affected towards him, by going so far as to produce even our private letters to him, and reading them at the trial,--undoubtedly wish and desire his salvation in Christ; but as regards his exculpation, which is rather believed than clearly shown, we ought not to be in a hurry to exult. When I say this, indeed, I do not charge the judges either with negligence or connivance, or with consciously holding unsound doctrine--which they most certainly would be the very last to entertain. But although by their sentence Pelagius is held by those who are on terms of fullest and closest intimacy with him to have been deservedly acquitted, with the approval and commendation of his judges, he certainly does not appear to me to have been cleared of the charges brought against him. They conducted his trial as of one whom they knew nothing of, especially in the absence of those who had prepared the indictment against him, and were quite unable to examine him with diligence and care; but, in spite of this inability, they completely destroyed the heresy itself, as even the defenders of his perverseness must allow, if they only follow the judgment through its particulars. As for those persons, however, who well know what Pelagius has been in the habit of teaching, or who have had to oppose his contentious efforts, or those who, to their joy, have escaped from his erroneous doctrine, how can they possibly help suspecting him, when they read the affected confession, wherein he acknowledges past errors, but so

expresses himself as if he had never entertained any other opinion than those which he stated in his replies to the satisfaction of the judges ?

CHAP. 46 [XXII.]--HOW PELAGIUS BECAME KNOWN TO AUGUSTIN; COELESTIUS CONDEMNED AT CARTHAGE.

Now, that I may especially refer to my own relation to him, I first became acquainted with Pelagius' name, along with great praise of him, at a distance, and when he was living at Rome. Afterwards reports began to reach us, that he disputed against the grace of God. This caused me much pain, for I could not refuse to believe the statements of my informants; but yet I was desirous of ascertaining information on the matter either from himself or from some treatise of his, that, in case I should have to discuss the question with him, it should be on grounds which he could not disown. On his arrival, however, in Africa, he was in my absence kindly received on our coast of Hippo, where, as I found from our brethren, nothing whatever of this kind was heard from him; because he left earlier than was expected. On a subsequent occasion, indeed, I caught a glimpse of him, once or twice, to the best of my recollection, when I was very much occupied in preparing for the conference which we were to hold with the heretical Donatists; but he hastened away across the sea. Meanwhile the doctrines connected with his name were warmly maintained, and passed from mouth to mouth, among his reputed followers--to such an extent that Coelestius found his way before an ecclesiastical tribunal, and reported opinions well suited to his perverse character. We thought it would be a better way of proceeding against them, if, without mentioning any names of individuals, the errors themselves were met and refuted; and the men might thus be brought to a right mind by the fear of a condemnation from the Church rather than be punished by the



actual condemnation. And so both by books and by popular discussions we ceased not to oppose the evil doctrines in question.

CHAP. 47 [XXIII.]--PELAGIUS' BOOK, WHICH WAS SENT BY TIMASIUS AND JACOBUS TO AUGUSTIN, WAS ANSWERED BY THE LATTER IN HIS WORK "ON NATURE AND GRACE."

But when there was actually placed in my hands, by those faithful servants of God and honourable men, Timasius and Jacobus, the treatise in which Pelagius dealt with the question of God's grace, it became very evident to me--too evident, indeed, to admit of any further doubt--how hostile to salvation by Christ was his poisonous perversion of the truth. He treated the subject in the shape of an objection started, as if by an opponent, in his own terms against himself; for he was already suffering a good deal of obloquy from his opinions on the question, which he now appeared to solve for himself in no other way than by simply describing the grace of God as nature created with a free will, occasionally combining therewith either the help of the law, or even the remission of sins; although these additional admissions were not plainly made, but only sparingly suggested by him. And yet, even under these circumstances, I refrained from inserting Pelagius' name in my work, wherein I refuted this book of his; for I still thought that I should render a prompter assistance to the truth if I continued to preserve a friendly relation to him, and so to spare his personal feelings, while at the same time I showed no mercy, as I was bound not to show it, to the productions of his pen. Hence, I must say, I now feel some annoyance, that in this trial he somewhere said: "I anathematize those who hold these opinions, or have at any time held them." He might have been contented with saying, "Those who hold these opinions," which we should have regarded in the light of a self-censure; but when he went on to say, "Or have at any time held

them," in the first place, how could he dare to condemn so unjustly those harmless persons who no longer hold the errors, which they had learnt either from others, or actually from himself? And, in the second place, who among all those persons that were aware of the fact of his not only having held the opinions in question, but of his having taught them, could help suspecting, and not unreasonably, that he must have acted insincerely in condemning those who now hold those opinions, seeing that he did not hesitate to condemn in the same strain and at the same moment those also who had at any time previously held them, when they would be sure to remember that they had no less a person than himself as their instructor in these errors? There are, for instance, such persons as Timasius and Jacobus, to say nothing of any others. How can he with unblushing face look at them, his dear friends (who have never relinquished their love of him) and his former disciples? These are the persons to whom I addressed the work in which I replied to the statements of his book. I think I ought not to pass over in silence the style and tone which they observed towards me in their correspondence, and I have here added a letter of theirs as a sample.

CHAP. 48 [XXIV.]--A LETTER WRITTEN BY TIMASIUS AND JACOBUS TO AUGUSTIN ON RECEIVING HIS TREATISE "ON NATURE AND GRACE."

"To his lordship, the truly blessed and deservedly venerable father, Bishop Augustin, Timasius and Jacobus send greeting in the Lord. We have been so greatly refreshed and strengthened by the grace of God, which your word has ministered to us, my lord, our truly blessed and justly venerated father, that we may with the utmost sincerity and propriety say, He sent His word and healed them." We have found, indeed, that your holiness has so thoroughly sired the contents of his little book as to astonish us with the answers with

which even the slightest points of his error have been confronted, whether it be on matters which every Christian ought to rebut, loathe, and avoid, or on those in which he is not with sufficient certainty found to have erred,--although even in these he has, with incredible subtlety, suggested his belief that God's grace should be kept out of sight.<sup>2</sup> There is, however, one consideration which affects us under so great a benefit,--that this most illustrious gift of the grace of God has, however slowly, so fully shone out upon us, If, indeed, it has happened that some are removed from the influence of this clearest light of truth, whose blindness required its illumination, yet even to them, we doubt not, the same grace will find its steady way, however late, by the merciful favour of that God 'who will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.' As for ourselves, indeed, thanks to that loving spirit which is in you, we have, in consequence of your instruction, some time since thrown off our subjection to his errors; but we still have even now cause for continued gratitude in the fact that, as we have been informed, the false opinions which we formerly believed are now becoming apparent to others--a way of escape opening out to them in the extremely precious discourse of your holiness," Then, in another hand: "May the mercy of our God keep your blessedness in safety, and mindful of us, for His eternal glory."

#### CHAP. 49 [XXV.]--PELAGIUS' BEHAVIOUR CONTRASTED WITH THAT OF THE WRITERS OF THE LETTER.

If now that man, too, were to confess that he had once been implicated in this error as a person possessed, but that he now anathematized all that hold these opinions, whoever should withhold his congratulation from him, now that he was in possession of the way of truth, would surely surrender all the bowels of love. As the case, however, now stands, he has not only not acknowledged his

liberation from his pestilential error; but, as if that were a small thing, he has gone on to anathematize men who have reached that freedom, who love him so well that they would fain desire his own emancipation. Amongst these are those very men who have expressed their good-will towards him in the letter, which they forwarded to me. For he it was whom they had chiefly in view when they said how much they were affected at the fact of my having at last written that work. "If, indeed, it has happened," they say, "that some are removed from the influence of this clearest light of truth, whose blindness required its illumination, yet even to them," they go on to remark, "we doubt not, the self-same grace will find its way, by the merciful favour of God." Any name, or names, even they, too, thought it desirable as yet to suppress, in order that, if friendship still lived on, the error of the friends might the more surely die.

CHAP. 50.--PELAGIUS HAS NO GOOD REASON TO BE ANNOYED IF HIS NAME BE AT LAST USED IN THE CONTROVERSY, AND HE BE EXPRESSLY REFUTED.

But now if Pelagius thinks of God, if he is not ungrateful for His mercy in having brought him before this tribunal of the bishops, that thus he might be saved from the hardihood of afterwards defending these anathematized opinions, and be at once led to acknowledge them as deserving of abhorrence and rejection, he will be more thankful to us for our book, in which, by mentioning his name, we shall open the wound in order to cure it, than for one in which we were afraid to cause him pain, and, in fact, only produced irritation,-a result which causes us regret. Should he, however, feel angry with us, let him reflect how unfair such anger is; and, in order to subdue it, let him ask God to give him that grace which, in this trial, he has confessed to be necessary for each one of our actions, that so by His assistance he may gain a real victory. For of what use to him are all

those great laudations contained in the letters of the bishops, which he thought fit to be mentioned, and even to be read and quoted in his favour,--as if all those persons who heard his strong and, to some extent, earnest exhortations to goodness of life could not have easily discovered how perverse were the opinions which he was entertaining?

CHAP. 51 [XXVI.]--THE NATURE OF AUGUSTIN'S LETTER TO PELAGIUS.

For my own part, indeed, in my letter which he produced, I not only abstained from all praises of him, but I even exhorted him, with as much earnestness as I could, short of actually mooting the question, to cultivate right views about the grace of God. In my salutation I called him "lord" --a title which, in our epistolary style, we usually apply even to some persons who are not Christians,--and this without untruth, inasmuch as we do, in a certain sense, owe to all such persons a service, which is yet freedom, to help them in obtaining the salvation which is in Christ. I added the epithet "most beloved;" and as I now call him by this term, so shall I continue to do so, even if he be angry with me; because, if I ceased to retain my love towards him, because of his feeling the anger, I should only injure myself rather than him. I, moreover, styled him "most longed for," because I greatly longed to have a conversation with him in person; for I had already heard that he was endeavouring publicly to oppose grace, whereby we are justified, whenever any mention was made of it. The brief contents of the letter itself indeed show all this; for, after thanking him for the pleasure he gave me by the information of his own health and that of his friends (whose bodily health we are bound of course to wish for, however much we may desire their amendment in other respects), I at once expressed the hope that the Lord would recompense him with such blessings as do not appertain to physical

welfare, but which he used to think, and probably still thinks, consist solely in the freedom of the will and his own power,--at the same time, and for this reason, wishing him "eternal life" Then again, remembering the many good and kind wishes he had expressed for me in his letter, which I was answering, I went on to beg of him, too, that he would pray for me, that the Lord would indeed make me such a man as he believed me to be already; that so I might gently remind him, against the opinion he was himself entertaining, that the very righteousness which he had thought worthy to be praised in me was "not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of, God that showeth mercy."<sup>2</sup> This is the substance of that short letter of mine, and such was my purpose when I dictated it. This is a copy of it:

CHAP. 52 [XXVII. AND XXVIII.]--THE TEXT OF THE LETTER.

"To my most beloved lord, and most longed-for brother Pelagius, Augustin sends greeting in the Lord. I thank you very much for the pleasure you have kindly afforded me by your letter, and for informing me of your good health. May the Lord requite you with blessings, and may you ever enjoy them, and live With Him for evermore in all eternity, my most beloved lord, and most longed-for brother. For my own part, indeed, although I do not admit your high encomiums of me, which the letter of your Benignity conveys, I yet cannot be insensible of the benevolent view you entertain towards my poor deserts; at the same time requesting you to pray for me, that the Lord would make me such a man as you suppose me to be already." Then, in another hand, it follows: "Be mindful of us; may you be safe, and find favour with the Lord, my most beloved lord, and most longed-for brother."

CHAP. 53 [XXIX.]--PELAGIUS' USE OF RECOMMENDATIONS.

As to that which I placed in the postscript,--that he might "find favour with the Lord," --I intimated that this lay rather in His grace than in man's sole will; for I did not make it the subject either of exhortation, or of precept, or of instruction, but simply of my wish. But just in the same way as I should, if I had exhorted or enjoined, or even instructed him, simply have shown that all this appertained to free will, without, however, derogating from the grace of God; so in like manner, when I expressed the matter in the way of a wish, I asserted no doubt the grace of God, but at the same time I did not quench the liberty of the will. Wherefore, then, did he produce this letter at the trial? If he had only from the beginning entertained views in accordance with it, very likely he would not have been at all summoned before the bishops by the brethren, who, with all their kindness of disposition, could yet not help being offended with his perverse contentiousness. Now, however, as I have given on my part an account of this letter of mine, so would they, whose epistles he quoted, explain theirs also, if it were necessary;--they would tell us either what they thought, or what they were ignorant of, or with what purpose they wrote to him. Pelagius, therefore, may boast to his heart's content of the friendship of holy men, he may read their letters recounting his praises, he may produce whatever synodal acts he pleases to attest his own acquittal,--there still stands against him the fact, proved by the testimony of competent witnesses, that he has inserted in his books statements which are opposed to that grace of God whereby we are called and justified; and unless he shall, after true confession, anathematize these statements, and then go on to contradict them both in his writings and discussions, he will certainly seem to all those who have a fuller knowledge of him to have laboured in vain in his attempt to set himself right.

CHAP. 54 [XXX.]--ON THE LETTER OF PELAGIUS, IN WHICH HE BOASTS THAT HIS ERRORS HAD BEEN APPROVED BY

## FOURTEEN BISHOPS.

For I will not be silent as to the transactions which took place after this trial, and which rather augment the suspicion against him. A certain epistle found its way into our hands, which was ascribed to Pelagius himself, writing to a friend of his, a presbyter, who had kindly admonished him (as appears from the same epistle) not to allow any one to separate himself from the body of the Church on his account. Among the other contents of this document, which it would be both tedious and unnecessary to quote here, Pelagius says: "By the sentence of fourteen bishops our statement was received with approbation, in which we affirmed that 'a man is able to be without sin, and easily to keep the commandments of God, if he wishes? This sentence," says he, "has filled the mouths of the gainsayers with confusion, and has separated asunder the entire set which was conspiring together for evil." Whether, indeed, this epistle was really written by Pelagius, or was composed by somebody in his name, who can fail to see, after what manner this error claims to have achieved a victory, even in the judicial proceedings where it was refuted and condemned? Now, he has adduced the words we have just quoted according to the form in which they occur in his book of "Chapters," as it is called, not in the shape in which they were objected to him at his trial, and even repeated by him in his answer. For even his accusers, through some unaccountable inaccuracy, left out a word in their indictment, concerning which there is no small controversy. They made him say, that "a man is able to be without sin, if he wishes; and, if he wishes, to keep the commandments of God." There is nothing said here about this being "easily" done. Afterwards, when he gave his answer, he spake thus: "We said, that a man is able to be without sin, and to keep the commandments of God, if he wishes;" he did not then say, "easily keep," but only "keep." So in another place, amongst the statements about which Hilary consulted me, and I gave



him my views, it was objected to Pelagius that he had said, "A man is able, if he wishes, to live without sin." To this he himself responded, "That a man is able to be without sin has been said above." Now, on this occasion, we do not find on the part either of those who brought the objection or of him who rebutted it, that the word "easily" was used at all. Then, again, in the narrative of the holy Bishop John, which we have partly quoted above,<sup>1</sup> he says, "When they were importunate and exclaimed, 'He is a heretic, because he says, It is true that a man is able, if he only will, to live without sin;' and then, when we questioned him on this point, he answered, 'I did not say that man's nature has received the power of being impeccable,--but I said, whosoever is willing, in the pursuit of his own salvation, to labour and I struggle to abstain froth sinning and to walk in the commandments of God, receives the ability to do so from God.' Then, whilst some were whispering, and remarking on the statement of Pelagius, that 'without God's grace man was able to attain perfection,' I censured the statement, and reminded them, besides, that even the Apostle Paul, after so many labours,--not, indeed, in his own strength, but by the grace of God,--said, 'I laboured more abundantly than they all; yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.'" And so on, as I have already mentioned.

#### CHAP. 55.--PELAGIUS' LETTER DISCUSSED.

What, then, is the meaning of those vaunting words of theirs in this epistle, wherein they boast of having induced the fourteen bishops who sat in that trial to believe not merely that a man has ability but that he has "facility" to abstain from sinning, according to the position laid down in the "Chapters" of this same Pelagius,--when, in the draft of the proceedings, notwithstanding the frequent repetition of the general charge and full consideration bestowed on it, this is nowhere found? How, indeed, can this word fail to contradict the very defence and answer which Pela-gius made; since the Bishop

John asserted that Pelagius put in this answer in his presence, that "he wished it to be understood that the man who was willing to labour and agonize for his salvation was able to avoid sin," while Pelagius himself, at this time engaged in a formal inquiry anti conducting his defence, said, that "it was by his own labour and the grace of God that a man is able to be without sin?" Now, is a thing easy when labour is required to effect it? For I suppose that every man would agree with us in the opinion, that wherever there is labour there cannot be facility. And yet a carnal epistle of windiness and inflation flies forth, and, outrunning in speed the tardy record of the proceedings, gets first into men's hands; so as to assert that fourteen bishops in the East have determined, not only "that a man is able to be without sin, and to keep God's commandments," but "easily to keep." Nor is God's assistance once named: it is merely said, "If he wishes;" so that, of course, as nothing is affirmed of the divine grace, for which the earnest fight was made, it remains that the only thing one reads of in this epistle is the unhappy and self-deceiving--because represented as victorious--human pride. As if the Bishop John, indeed, had not expressly declared that he censured this statement, and that, by the help of three inspired texts of Scripture, he had, as if by thunderbolts, struck to the ground the gigantic mountains of such presumption which they had piled up against the still over-towering heights of heavenly grace; or as if again those other bishops who were John's assessors could have borne with Pelagius, either in mind or even in ear, when he pronounced these words: "We said that a man is able to be without sin and to keep the commandments of God, if he wishes," unless he had gone on at once to say: "For the ability to do this God has given to him" (for they were unaware that he was speaking of nature, and not of that grace which they had learnt from the teaching of the apostle); and had afterwards added this qualification: "We never said, however, that any man could be found, who at no time whatever

from his infancy to his old age had committed sin, but that if any person were converted from his sins, he could by his own exertion and the grace of God be without sin." Now, by the very fact that in their sentence they used these words, "he has answered correctly, 'that a man can, when he has the assistance and grace of God, be without sin;'" what else did they fear than that, if he denied this, he would be doing a manifest wrong not to man's ability, but to God's grace? It has indeed not been defined when a man may become without sin; it has only been judicially settled, that this result can only be reached by the assisting grace of God; it has not, I say, been defined whether a man, whilst he is in this flesh which lusts against the Spirit, ever has been, or now is, or ever can be, by his present use of reason and free will, either in the full society of man or in monastic solitude, in such a state as to be beyond the necessity of offering up the prayer, not in behalf of others, but for himself personally: "Forgive us our debts;" or whether this gift shall be consummated at the time when "we shall be like Him, when we shall see Him as He is," --when it shall be said, not by those that are fighting: "I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind," but by those that are triumphing: "O death, where is thy victory ? O death, where is thy sting?" Now, this is perhaps hardly a question which ought to be discussed between catholics and heretics, but only among catholics with a view to a peaceful settlement.

#### CHAP. 56 [XXXI.]--IS PELAGIUS SINCERE?

How, then, can it be believed that Pelagius (if indeed this epistle is his) could have been sincere, when he acknowledged the grace of God, which is not nature with its free will, nor the knowledge of the law, nor simply the forgiveness of sins, but a something which is necessary to each of our actions; or could have sincerely

anathematized everybody who entertained the contrary opinion:--seeing that in his epistle he set forth even the ease wherewith a man can avoid sinning (concerning which no question had arisen at this trial) just as if the judges had come to an agreement to receive even this word, and said nothing about the grace of God, by the confession and subsequent addition of which he escaped the penalty of condemnation by the Church?

CHAP. 57 [XXXII.]--FRAUDULENT PRACTICES PURSUED BY PELAGIUS IN HIS REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS IN PALESTINE, IN THE PAPER WHEREIN HE DEFENDED HIMSELF TO AUGUSTIN.

There is yet another point which I must not pass over in silence. In the paper containing his defence which he sent to me by a friend of ours, one Charus, a citizen of Hippos, but a deacon in the Eastern Church, he has made a statement which is different from what is contained in the Proceedings of the Bishops. Now, these Proceedings, as regards their contents, are of a higher and firmer tone, and more straightforward in defending the catholic verity in opposition to this heretical pestilence. For, when I read this paper of his, previous to receiving a copy of the Proceedings, I was not aware that he had made use of those words which he had used at the trial, when he was present for himself; they are few, and there is not much discrepancy, and they do not occasion me much anxiety. [XXXIII.] But I could not help feeling annoyance that he can appear to have defended sundry sentences of Coelestius, which, from the Proceedings, it is clear enough that he anathematized. Now, some of these he disavowed for himself, simply remarking, that "he was not in any way responsible for them." In his paper, however, he refused to anathematize these same opinions, which are to this effect: "That Adam was created mortal, and that he would have died whether he

had sinned or not sinned. That Adam's sin injured only himself, and not the human race. That the law, no less than the gospel, leads us to the kingdom. That new-born infants are in the same condition that Adam was before he fell. That, on the one hand, the entire human race does not die owing to Adam's death and transgression; nor, on the other hand, does the whole human race rise again through the resurrection of Christ. That infants, even if they die unbaptized, have eternal life. That rich men, even if they are baptized, unless they renounce and give up all, have, whatever good they may seem to have done, nothing of it reckoned to them; neither shall they possess the kingdom of heaven." Now, in his paper, the answer which he gives to all this is: "All these statements have not been made by me, even on their own testimony, nor do I hold myself responsible for them." In the Proceedings, however, he expressed himself as follows on these points: "They have not been made by me, as even their testimony shows, and for them I do not feel that I am at all responsible. But yet, for the satisfaction of the holy synod, I anathematize those who either now hold, or have ever held, them." Now, why did he not express himself thus in his paper also? It would not, I suppose, have cost much ink, or writing, or delay; nor have occupied much of the paper itself, if he had done this. Who, however, can help believing that there is a purpose in all this, to pass off this paper in all directions as an abridgment of the Episcopal Proceedings. In consequence of which, men might think that his right still to maintain any of these opinions which he pleased had not been taken away,--on the ground that they had been simply laid to his charge but had not received his approbation, nor yet had been anathematized and condemned by him.

CHAP. 58.--THE SAME CONTINUED.

He has, moreover, in this same paper, huddled together afterwards many of the points which were objected against him out of the "Chapters," of Coelestius' book; nor has he kept distinct, at the intervals which separate them in the Proceedings, the two answers in which he anathematized these very heads; but has substituted one general reply for them all. This, I should have supposed, had been done for the sake of brevity, had I not perceived that he had a very special object in the arrangement which disturbs us. For thus has he closed this answer: "I say again, that these opinions, even according to their own testimony, are not mine; nor, as I have already said, am I to be held responsible for them. The opinions which I have confessed to be my own, I maintain are sound and correct; those, however, which I have said are not my own, I reject according to the judgment of the holy Church, pronouncing anathema on every man that opposes and gainsays the doctrines of the holy and catholic Church; and likewise on those who by inventing false opinions have excited odium against us." This last paragraph the Proceedings do not contain; it has, however, no bearing on the matter which causes us anxiety. By all means let them have his anathema who have excited odium against him by their invention of false opinions. But, when first I read, "Those opinions, however, which I have said are not my own, I reject in accordance with the judgment of the holy Church," being ignorant that any judgment had been arrived at on the point by the Church, since there is here nothing said about it, and I had not then read the Proceedings, I really thought that nothing else was meant than that he promised that he would entertain the same view about the "Chapters" as the Church, which had not yet determined the question, might some day decide respecting them; and that he was ready to reject the opinions which the Church had not yet indeed rejected, but might one day have occasion to reject; and that this, too, was the purport of what he further said: "Pronouncing anathema on every man that opposes and gainsays the

doctrines of the holy catholic Church." But in fact, as the Proceedings testify, a judgment of the Church had already been pronounced on these subjects by the fourteen bishops; and it was in accordance with this judgment that he professed to reject all these opinions, and to pronounce his anathema against those persons who, by reason of the said opinions, were contravening the judgment which had already, as the Proceedings show, been actually settled. For already had the judges asked: "What says the monk Pelagius to all these heads of opinion which have been read in his presence? For this holy synod condemns them, as does also God's holy catholic Church." Now, they who know nothing of all this, and only read this paper of his, are led to suppose that some one or other of these opinions may lawfully be maintained, as if they had not been determined to be contrary to catholic doctrine, and as if Pelagius had declared himself to be ready to hold the same sentiments concerning them which the Church had not as yet determined, but might have to determine. He has not, therefore, expressed himself in this paper, to which we have so often referred, straightforwardly enough for us to discover the fact, of which we find a voucher in the Proceedings, that all those dogmas by means of which this heresy has been stealing along and growing strong with contentious audacity, have been condemned by fourteen bishops presiding in an ecclesiastical synod! Now, if he was afraid that this fact would become known, as is the case, he has more reason for self-correction than for resentment at the vigilance with which we are watching the controversy to the best of our ability, however late. If, however, it is untrue that he had any such fears, and we are only indulging in a suspicion which is natural to man, let him forgive us; but, at the same time, let him continue to oppose and resist the opinions which were rejected by him with anathemas in the proceedings before the bishops, when he was on his defence; for if he now shows any leniency to them, he would seem not only to have believed these opinions formerly, but to be cherishing them still.

CHAP. 59 [XXXIV.]--ALTHOUGH PELAGIUS WAS ACQUITTED,  
HIS HERESY WAS CONDEMNED.

Now, with respect to this treatise of mine, which perhaps is not unreasonably lengthy, considering the importance and extent of its subject, I have wished to inscribe it to your Reverence, in order that, if it be not displeasing to your mind, it may become known to such persons as I have thought may stand in need of it under the recommendation of your authority, which carries so much more weight than our own poor industry. Thus it may avail to crush the vain and contentious thoughts of those persons who suppose that, because Pelagius was acquitted, those Eastern bishops who pronounced the judgment approved of those dogmas which are beginning to shed very pernicious influences against the Christian faith, and that grace of God whereby we are called and justified. These the Christian verity never ceases to condemn, as indeed it condemned them even by the authoritative sentence of the fourteen bishops; nor would it, on the occasion in question, have hesitated to condemn Pelagius too, unless he had anathematized the heretical opinions with which he was charged. But now, while we render to this man the respect of brotherly affection (and we have all along expressed with all sincerity our anxiety for him and interest in him), let us observe, with as much brevity as is consistent with accuracy of observation, that, notwithstanding the undoubted fact of his having been acquitted by a human verdict, the heresy itself has ever been held worthy of condemnation by divine judgment, and has actually been condemned by the sentence of these fourteen bishops of the Eastern Church.

CHAP. 60 [XXXV.]--THE SYNOD'S CONDEMNATION OF HIS  
DOCTRINES.



This is the concluding clause of their judgment. The synod said: "Now forasmuch as we have received satisfaction in these inquiries from the monk Pelagius, who has been present, who yields assent to godly doctrines, and rejects and anathematizes those which are contrary to the Church, we confess him still to belong to the communion of the catholic Church." Now, there are two facts concerning the monk Pelagius here contained with entire perspicuity in this brief statement of the holy bishops who judged him: one, that "he yields assent to godly doctrines;" the other, that "he rejects and anathematizes those which are contrary to the Church." On account of these two concessions, Pelagius was pronounced to be "in the communion of the catholic Church." Let us, in pursuit of our inquiry, briefly recapitulate the entire facts, in order to discover what were the words he used which made those two points so clear, as far as men were able at the moment to form a judgment as to what were manifest points. For among the allegations which were made against him, he is said to have rejected and anathematized, as "contrary," all the statements which in his answer he denied were his. Let us, then, summarize the whole case as far as we can.

CHAP. 61.--HISTORY OF THE PELAGIAN HERESY, THE PELAGIAN HERESY WAS RAISED BY SUNDRY PERSONS WHO AFFECTED THE MONASTIC STATE.

Since it was necessary that the Apostle Paul's prediction should be accomplished,--" There must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you," --after the older heresies, there has been just now introduced, not by bishops or presbyters or any rank of the clergy, but by certain would--be monks, a heresy which disputes, under colour of defending free will, against the grace of God which we have through our Lord Jesus Christ; and endeavours to overthrow the foundation of the Christian faith of

which it is written, "By one man, death, and by one man the resurrection of the dead; for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive;" and denies God's help in our actions, by affirming that, "in order to avoid sin and to fulfil righteousness, human nature can be sufficient, seeing that it has been created with free will; and that God's grace lies in the fact that we have been so created as to be able to do this by the will, and in the further fact that God has given to us the assistance of His law and commandments, and also in that He forgives their past sins when men turn to Him;" that "in these things alone is God's grace to be regarded as consisting, not in the help He gives to us for each of our actions,"-- "seeing that a man can be without sin, and keep God's commandments easily if he wishes."

CHAP. 62.--THE HISTORY CONTINUED. COELESTIUS CONDEMNED AT CARTHAGE BY EPISCOPAL JUDGMENT. PELAGIUS ACQUITTED BY BISHOPS IN PALESTINE, IN CONSEQUENCE OF HIS DECEPTIVE ANSWERS; BUT YET HIS HERESY WAS CONDEMNED BY THEM.

After this heresy had deceived a great many persons, and was disturbing the brethren whom it had failed to deceive, one Coelestius, who entertained these sentiments, was brought up for trial before the Church of Carthage, and was condemned by a sentence of the bishops. Then, a few years afterwards, Pelagius, who was said to have been this man's instructor, having been accused of holding his heresy, found also his way before an episcopal tribunal. The indictment was prepared against him by the Gallican bishops, Heros and Lazarus, who were, however, not present at the proceedings, and were excused from attendance owing to the illness of one of them. After all the charges were duly recited, and Pelagius had met them by his answers, the fourteen bishops of the province of

Palestine pronounced him, in accordance with his answers, free from the perversity of this heresy; while yet without hesitation condemning the heresy itself. They approved indeed of his answer to the objections, that "a man is assisted by a knowledge of the law, towards not sinning; even as it is written, 'He hath given them a law for a help;'" but yet they disapproved of this knowledge of the law being that grace of God concerning which the Scripture says: "Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Nor did Pelagius say absolutely: "All men are ruled by their own will," as if God did not rule them; for he said, when questioned on this point: "This I stated in the interest of the freedom of our will; God is its helper, whenever it makes choice of good. Man, however, when sinning, is himself in fault, as being under the direction of his free will." They approved, moreover, of his statement, that "in the day of judgment no forbearance will be shown to the ungodly and sinners, but they will be punished in everlasting fires;" because in his defence he said, "that he had made such an assertion in accordance with the gospel, in which it is written concerning sinners, 'These shall go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.'" But he did not say, all sinners are reserved for eternal punishment, for then he would evidently have run counter to the apostle, who distinctly states that some of them will be saved, "yet so as by fire." When also Pelagius said that "the kingdom of heaven was promised even in the Old Testament," they approved of the statement, on the ground that he supported himself by the testimony of the prophet Daniel, who thus wrote: "The saints shall take the kingdom of the Most High." They understood him, in this statement of his, to mean by the term "Old Testament," not simply the Testament which was made on Mount Sinai, but the entire body of the canonical Scriptures which had been given previous to the coming of the Lord. His allegation, however, that "a man is able to be without sin, if he wishes," was not approved by the

bishops in the sense which he had evidently meant it to bear in his book --as if this was solely in a man's power by free will (for it was contended that he must have meant no less than this by his saying: "if he wishes"),--but only in the sense which he actually gave to the passage on the present occasion in his answer; in the very sense, indeed, in which the episcopal judges mentioned the subject in their own interlocution with especial brevity and clearness, that a man is able to be without sin with the help and grace of God. But still it was left undetermined when the saints were to attain to this state of perfection,--whether in the body of this death, or when death shall be swallowed up in victory.

CHAP. 63.--THE SAME CONTINUED. THE DOGMAS OF COELESTIUS LAID TO THE CHARGE OF PELAGIUS, AS HIS MASTER, AND CONDEMNED.

Of the opinions which Coelestius has said or written, and which were objected against Pelagius, on the ground that they were the dogmas of his disciple, he acknowledged some as entertained also by himself; but, in his vindication, he said that he held them in a different sense from that which was alleged in the indictment. One of these opinions was thus stated: "Before the advent of Christ some men lived holy and righteous lives." Coelestius, however, was stated to have said that "they lived sinless lives. Again, it was objected that Coelestius declared "the Church to be without spot and wrinkle." Pelagius, however, said in his reply, "that he had made such an assertion, but as meaning that the Church is by the laver cleansed from every spot and wrinkle, and that in this purity the Lord would have her continue." Respecting that statement of Coelestius: "That we do more than is commanded us in the law and the gospel," Pelagius urged in his own vindication, that "he spoke concerning virginity," of which Paul says: "I have no commandment of the Lord." Another

objection alleged that Coelestius had maintained that "every individual has the ability to possess all powers and graces," thus annulling that "diversity of gifts" which, the apostle sets forth. Pelagius, however, answered, that "he did not annul the diversity of gifts, but declared that God gives to the man who has proved himself worthy to receive them, all graces, even as He gave the Apostle Paul."

#### CHAP. 64. -- HOW THE BISHOPS CLEARED PELAGIUS OF THOSE CHARGES.

These four dogmas, thus connected with the name of Coelestius, were therefore not approved by the bishops in their judgment, in the sense in which Coelestius was said to have set them forth but in the sense which Pelagius gave to them in his reply. For they saw clearly enough, that it is one thing to be without sin, and another thing to live holily and righteously, as Scripture testifies that some lived even before the coming of Christ. And that although the Church here on earth is not without spot or wrinkle, she is yet both cleansed from every spot and wrinkle by the layer of regeneration, and in this state the Lord would have her continue. And continue she certainly will, for without doubt she shall reign without spot or wrinkle in an everlasting felicity. And that the perpetual virginity, which is not commanded, is unquestionably more than the purity of wedded life, which is commanded--although virginity is persevered in by many persons, who, notwithstanding, are not without sin. And that all those graces which he enumerates in a certain passage were possessed by the Apostle Paul; and yet, for all that, either they could quite understand, in regard to his having been worthy to receive them, that the merit was not according to his works, but rather, in some way, according to predestination (for the apostle says himself: "I am not meet to be called an apostle;") or else their attention was not arrested by the sense which Pelagius gave to the word, as he

himself viewed it. Such are the points on which the bishops pronounced the agreement of Pelagius with the doctrines of godly truth.

CHAP. 65. -- RECAPITULATION OF WHAT PELAGIUS CONDEMNED.

Let us now, by a like recapitulation, bestow a little more attention on those subjects which the bishops said he rejected and condemned as "contrary;" for herein especially lies the whole of that heresy. We will entirely pass over the strange terms of adulation which he is reported to have put into writing in praise of a certain widow; these he denied having ever inserted in any of his writings, or ever given utterance to, and he anathematized all who held the opinions in question not indeed as heretics, but as fools. The following are the wild thickets of this heresy, which we are sorry to see shooting out buds, nay growing into trees, day by day:--"That Adam was made mortal, and would have died whether he had sinned or not; that Adam's sin injured only himself, and not the human race; that the law no less than the gospel leads to the kingdom; that new-born infants are in the same condition that Adam was before the transgression; that the whole human race does not, on the one hand, die in consequence of Adam's death and transgression, nor, on the other hand, does the whole human race rise again through the resurrection of Christ; that infants, even if they die unbaptized, have eternal life; that rich men, even if baptized, unless they renounce and surrender everything, have, whatever good they may seem to have done, nothing of it reckoned to them, neither can they possess the kingdom of God; that God's grace and assistance are not given for single actions, but reside in free will, and in the law and teaching; that the grace of God is bestowed according to our merits, so that grace really lies in the will of man, as he makes himself worthy or unworthy of it; that men

cannot be called children of God, unless they have become entirely free from sin; that forgetfulness and ignorance do not come under sin, as they do not happen through the will, but of necessity; that there is no free will, if it needs the help of God, inasmuch as every one has his proper will either to do something, or to abstain from doing it; that our victory comes not from God's help, but from free will; that from what Peter says, that 'we are partakers of the divine nature,' it must follow that the soul has the power of being without sin, just in the way that God Himself has." For this have I read in the eleventh chapter of the book, which bears no title of its author, but is commonly reported to be the work of Coelestius,--expressed in these words: "Now how can anybody," asks the author, "become a partaker of the thing from the condition and power of which he is distinctly declared to be a stranger?" Accordingly, the brethren who prepared these objections understood him to have said that man's soul and God are of the same nature, and to have asserted that the soul is part of God; for thus they understood that he meant that the soul partakes of the same condition and power as God. Moreover in the last of the objections laid to his charge there occurs this position: "That pardon is not given to penitents according to the grace and mercy of God, but according to their own merits and effort, since through repentance they have been worthy of mercy." Now all these dogmas, and the arguments which were advanced in support of them, were repudiated and anathematized by Pelagius, and his conduct herein was approved of by the judges, who accordingly pronounced that he had, by his rejection and anathema, condemned the opinions in question as contrary to, the faith. Let us therefore rejoice--whatever may be the circumstances of the case, whether Coelestius laid down these theses or not, or whether Pelagius believed them or not--that the injurious principles of this new heresy were condemned before that ecclesiastical tribunal; and let us thank God for such a result, and proclaim His praises.

CHAP. 66.--THE HARSH MEASURES OF THE PELAGIANS AGAINST THE HOLY MONKS AND NUNS WHO BELONGED TO JEROME'S CHARGE.

Certain followers of Pelagius are said to have carried their support of his cause after these judicial proceedings to an incredible extent of perverseness and audacity. They are said to have most cruelly beaten and maltreated the servants and handmaidens of the Lord who lived under the care of the holy presbyter Jerome, slain his deacon, and burnt his monastic houses; whilst he himself, by God's mercy, narrowly escaped the violent attacks of these impious assailants in the shelter of a well-defended fortress. However, I think it better becomes me to say nothing of these matters, but to wait and see what measures our brethren the bishops may deem it their duty to adopt concerning such scandalous enormities; for nobody can suppose that it is possible for them to pass them over without notice. Impious doctrines put forth by persons of this character it is no doubt the duty of all catholics, however remote their residence, to oppose and refute, and so to hinder all injury from such opinions wheresoever they may happen to find their way; but impious actions it belongs to the discipline of the episcopal authority on the spot to control, and they must be left for punishment to the bishops of the very place or immediate neighbourhood, to be dealt with as pastoral diligence and godly severity may suggest. We, therefore, who live at so great a distance, are bound to hope that such a stop may there be put to proceedings of this kind, that there may be no necessity elsewhere of further invoking judicial remedies. But what rather befits our personal activity is so to set forth the truth, that the minds of all those who have been severely wounded by the report, so widely spread everywhere, may be healed by the mercy of God following our efforts. With this desire, I must now at last terminate this work, which, should it succeed, as I hope, in commending itself to your



mind, will, I trust, with the Lord's blessing, become serviceable to its readers--recommended to them rather by your name than by my own, and through your care and diligence receiving a wider circulation.

## **AGAINST THE PELAGIANS**

# **DIALOGUE BETWEEN ATTICUS, A CATHOLIC, AND CRITOBULUS, A HERETIC.**

## **Jerome**

The anti-Pelagian Dialogue is the last of Jerome's controversial works, having been written in the year 417, within three years of his death. It shows no lack of his old vigour, though perhaps something of the prolixity induced by old age. He looks at the subject more calmly than those of the previous treatises, mainly because it lay somewhat outside the track of his own thoughts. He was induced to interest himself in it by his increasing regard for Augustin, and by the coming of the young Spaniard, Orosius, in 414, from Augustin to sit at his feet. Pelagius also had come to Palestine, and, after an investigation of his tenets, at a small council at Jerusalem, in 415, presided over by Bishop John, and a second, at Diospolis in 416, had been admitted to communion. Jerome appears to have taken no part in these proceedings, and having been at peace with Bishop John for nearly twenty years, was no doubt unwilling to act against him. But he had come to look upon Pelagius as infected with the heretical "impiety," which he looked upon (i. 28) as far worse than moral evil; and connected him, as we see from his letter to Ctesiphon (CXXXIII.), with Origenism and Rufinus; and he brings his great knowledge of Scripture to bear upon the controversy. He quotes a work of Pelagius, though giving only the headings, and the numbers of the chapters, up to 100 (i. 26-32); and, though at times his conviction appears weak, and there are passages (i. 5, ii. 6-30, iii. 1) which give occasion to the observation that he really, if

unconsciously, inclined to the views of Pelagius, and that he is a "Synergist," not, like Augustin, a thorough predestinarian, the Dialogue, as a whole, is clear and forms a substantial contribution to our knowledge. Although its tone is less violent than that of his ascetic treatises, it appears to have stirred up the strongest animosity against him. The adherents of Pelagius attacked and burned the monasteries of Bethlehem, and Jerome himself only escaped by taking refuge in a tower. His sufferings, and the interference of Pope Innocentius in his behalf, may be seen by referring to Letters CXXXV.- CXXXVII., with the introductory notes prefixed to them.

The following is a summary of the argument: Atticus, the Augustinian, at once (c. 1) introduces the question: Do you affirm that, as Pelagius affirms, men can live without sin? Yes, says the Pelagian Critobulus, but I do not add, as is imputed to us, "without the grace of God." Indeed, the fact that we have a free will is from grace. Yes, replies Atticus, but what is this grace? Is it only our original nature, or is it needed in every act. In every act. is the reply (2); yet one would hardly say that we cannot mend a pen without grace (3), for, if so, where is our free will? But, says Atticus (5), the Scriptures speak of our need of God's aid in everything. In that case, says Critobulus, the promised reward must be given not to us but to God, Who works in us. Reverting then to the first point stated, Atticus asks, does the possibility of sinlessness extend to single acts, or to the whole life? Certainly to the whole as well as the part, is the answer. But we wish, or will to be sinless; why then are we not actually sinless? Because (8) we do not exert our will to the full. But (9) no one has ever lived without sin. Still, says the Pelagian, God commands us to be perfect, and he does not command impossibilities. Job, Zacharias, and Elizabeth are represented as perfectly righteous. No, it is answered (12), faults are attributed to each of them. John says, "He that is born of God sinneth not" (13);

yet, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves." The Apostles, though told to be perfect (14) were not perfect: and St. Paul says (14a)," I count not myself to have apprehended." Men are called just and perfect only in comparison of others (16), or because of general subjection to the will of God (18), or according to their special characteristics (19), as we may speak of a bishop as excellent in his office, though he may not fulfil the ideal of the pastoral epistles (22).

The discussion now turns to the words of Pelagius' book, "All are ruled by their own will" (27). No; for Christ says, "I came not to do My own will." "The wicked shall not be spared in the judgment." But we must distinguish between the impious or heretics who will be destroyed (28) and Christian sinners who will be forgiven. Some of his sayings contradict each other or are trifling (29, 30). "The kingdom of heaven is promised in the Old Testament." Yes, but more fully in the New. Returning to the first thesis, "That a man can be without sin if he wills it, "the Pelagian says, If things, like desires which arise spontaneously and have no issue, are reckoned blamable, we charge the sin on our Maker; to which it is only answered that, though we cannot understand God's ways, we must not arraign His justice. In the rest of the book, Atticus alone speaks, going through the Old Testament, and showing that each of the saints falls into some sin, which, though done in ignorance or half-consciousness, yet brings condemnation with it.

## PROLOGUE.

I. After writing the [1]letter to Ctesiphon, in which I replied to the questions propounded, I received frequent exhortations from the brethren, who wanted to know why I any longer delayed the promised work in which I undertook to answer all the subtleties of the preachers of Impassibility.[2] For every one knows what was the

contention of the Stoics and Peripatetics, that is, the old Academy, some of them asserted that the passions, which we may call emotions, such as sorrow, joy, hope, fear, can be thoroughly eradicated from the minds of men; others that their power can be broken, that they can be governed and restrained, as unmanageable horses are held in check by peculiar kinds of bits. Their views have been explained by Tully in the "Tusculan Disputations," and Origen in his "Stromata" endeavours to blend them with ecclesiastical truth. I pass over Manichaeus,[1] Priscillianus,[2] Evagrius of Ichora, Jovinianus, and the heretics found throughout almost the whole of Syria, who, by a perversion of the import of their name, are commonly called [3]Massalians, in Greek, Euchites, all of whom hold that it is possible for human virtue and human knowledge to attain perfection, and arrive, I will not say merely at a likeness to, but an equality with God; and who go the length of asserting that, when once they have reached the height of perfection, even sins of thought and ignorance are impossible for them. And although in my former letter addressed to Ctesiphon and aimed at their errors, so far as time permitted, I touched upon a few points in the book which I am now endeavouring to hammer out, I shall adhere to the method of Socrates. What can be said on both sides shall be stated; and the truth will thus be clear when both sides express their opinions. Origen is peculiar in maintaining on the one hand that it is impossible for human nature to pass through life without sin, and on the other, that it is possible for a man, when he turns to better things, to become so strong that he sins no more.

2. I shall add a few words in answer to those who say that I am writing this work because I am inflamed with envy. I have never spared heretics, and I have done my best to make the enemies of the Church my own. [1]Helvidius wrote against the perpetual virginity of Saint Mary. Was it envy that led me to answer him, whom I had

never seen in the flesh? [2]Jovinianus, whose heresy is now being fanned into flame, and who disturbed the faith of Rome in my absence, was so devoid of gifts of utterance, and had such a pestilent style that he was a fitter object for pity than for envy. So far as I could, I answered him also. [3]Rufinus did all in his power to circulate the blasphemies of Origen and the treatise "On First Principles (peri Arkwn), not in one city, but throughout the whole world. He even published the first book of [4]Eusebius' "Apology for Origen "under the name of [5]Pamphilus the martyr, and, as though Origen had not said enough,[6] vomited forth a fresh volume on his behalf. Am I to be accused of envy because I answered him? and was his eloquence such a rushing torrent as to deter me through fear from writing or dictating anything in reply? [7]Palladius, no better than a villainous slave, tried to impart energy to the same heresy, and to excite against me fresh prejudice on account of my translation of the Hebrew. Was I [1]envious of such distinguished ability and nobility? Even now the [2]mystery of iniquity worketh, and every one chatters about his views: yet I, it seems, am the only one who is filled with envy at the glory of all the rest; I am so poor a creature that I envy even those who do not deserve envy. And so, to prove to all that I do not hate the men but their errors, and that I do not wish to vilify any one, but rather lament the misfortune of men who are deceived by knowledge falsely so-called, I have made use of the names of Atticus and Critobulus in order to express our own views and those of our opponents. The truth is that all we who hold the Catholic faith, wish and long that, while the heresy is condemned, the men may be reformed. At all events, if they will continue in error, the blame does not attach to us who have written, but to them, since they have preferred a lie to the truth. And one short answer to our calumniators, whose curses fall upon their own heads, is this, that the Manichaeian doctrine condemns the nature of man, destroys free will, and does away with I the help of God. And again, that it is

manifest madness for man to speak of himself as being what God alone is. Let us so walk along the royal road that we turn neither to the right hand nor to the left; and let us always believe that the eagerness of our wills is governed by the help of God. Should any one cry out that he is slandered and boast that he thinks with us; he will then show that he assents to the true faith, when he openly and sincerely condemns the opposite views. Otherwise his case will be that described by the prophet: [3]"And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not returned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly." It is a smaller sin to follow evil which you think is good, than not to venture to defend what you know for certain is good. If we cannot endure threats, injustice, poverty, how shall we overcome the flames of Babylon? Let us not lose by hollow peace what we have preserved by war. I should be sorry to allow my fears to teach me faithlessness, when Christ has put the true faith in the power of my choice.

## BOOK I.

1. Atticus. I hear, Critobulus, that you have written that man can be without sin, if he chooses; and that the commandments of God are easy. Tell me, is it true?

Critobulus. It is true, Atticus; but our rivals do not take the words in the sense I attached to them.

A. Are they then so ambiguous as to give rise to a difference as to their meaning? I do not ask for an answer to two questions at once. You laid down two propositions; the one, that[1] man can be without sin, if he chooses: the other, that God's commandments are easy. Although, therefore, they were uttered together, let them be discussed separately, so that, while our faith appears to be one, no strife may arise through our misunderstanding each other.

C. I said, Atticus, that man can be without sin, if he chooses; not, as some maliciously make us say, without the grace of God (the very thought is impiety), but simply that he can, if he chooses; the aid of the grace of God being presupposed.

A. Is God, then, the author of your evil works?

C. By no means. But if there is any good in me, it is brought to perfection through His impulse and assistance.

A. My question does not refer to natural constitution, but to action. For who doubts that God is the Creator of all things? I wish you would tell me this: the good you do, is it your's or God's?

C. It is mine and God's: I work and He assists.

A. How is it then that everybody thinks you do away with the grace of God, and maintain that all our actions proceed from our own will?

C. I am surprised, Atticus, at your asking me for the why and wherefore of other people's mistakes, and wanting to know what I did not write, when what I did write is perfectly clear. I said that man can be without sin, if he chooses. Did I add, without the grace of God?

A. No; but the fact that you added nothing implies your denial of the need of grace.

C. Nay, rather, the fact that I have not denied grace should be regarded as tantamount to an assertion of it. It is unjust to suppose we deny whatever we do not assert.

A. You admit then that man can be sinless, if he chooses, but with the grace of God.



C. I not only admit it, but freely proclaim it.

A. So then he who does away with the grace of God is in error.

C. Just so. Or rather, he ought to be thought impious, seeing that all things are governed by the pleasure of God, and that we owe our existence and the faculty of individual choice and desire to the goodness of God, the Creator. For that we have free will, and according to our own choice incline to good or evil, is part of His grace who made us what we are, in His own image and likeness.

2. A. No one doubts, Critobulus, that all things depend on the judgment of Him Who is Creator of all, and that whatever we have ought to be attributed to His goodness. But I should like to know respecting this faculty, which you attribute to the grace of God, whether you reckon it as part of the gift bestowed in our creation, or suppose it energetic in our separate actions, so that we avail ourselves of its assistance continually; or is it the case that, having been once for all created and endowed with free will, we do what we choose by our own choice or strength? For I know that very many of your party refer all things to the grace of God in such a sense that they understand the power of the will to be a gift not of a particular, but of a general character, that is to say, one which is bestowed not at each separate moment, but once for all at creation.

C. It is not as you affirm; but I maintain both positions, that it is by the grace of God we were created such as we are, and also that in our several actions we are supported by His aid.

A. We are agreed, then, that in good works, besides our own power of choice, we lean on the help of God; in evil works we are prompted by the devil.

C. Quite so; there is no difference of opinion on that point.

A. They are wrong, then, who strip us of the help of God in our separate actions. The Psalmist sings: [1]"Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain who build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain;" and there are similar passages. But these men endeavour by perverse, or rather ridiculous interpretations, to twist his words to a different meaning.

3. C. Am I bound to contradict others when you have my own answer?

A. Your answer to what effect? That they are right, or wrong?

C. What necessity compels me to set my opinion against other men's?

A. You are bound by the rules of discussion, and by respect for truth. Do you not know that every assertion either affirms, or denies, and that what is affirmed or denied ought to be reckoned among good or bad things? You must, therefore, admit, and no thanks to you, that the statement to which my question relates is either a good thing or a bad.

C. If in particular actions we must have the help of God, does it follow that we are unable to make a pen,[1] or mend it when it is made? Can we not fashion the letters, be silent or speak, sit, stand, walk or run, eat or fast, weep or laugh, and so on, without God's assistance?

A. From my point of view it is clearly impossible.

C. How then have we free will, and how can we guard the grace of God towards us, if we cannot do even these things without God?

4. A. The bestowal of the grace of free will is not such as to do away with the support of God in particular actions.

C. The help of God is not made of no account; inasmuch as creatures are preserved through the grace of free will once for all given to them. For if without God, and except He assist me in every action, I can do nothing. He can neither with justice crown me for my good deeds, nor punish me for my evil ones, but in each case He will either receive His own or will condemn the assistants He gave.

A. Tell me, then, plainly, why you do away with the grace of God. For whatever you destroy in the parts you must of necessity deny in the whole.

C. I do not deny grace when I assert that I was so created by God, that by the grace of God it was put within the power of my choice either to do a thing or not to do it.

A. So God falls asleep over our good actions, when once the faculty of free will has been given; and we need not pray to Him to assist us in our separate actions, since it depends upon our own choice and will either to do a thing if we choose, or not to do it if we do not choose.

5. C. As in the case of other creatures, the conditions of elicited creation are observed; so, when once the power of free will was granted, everything was left to our own choice.

A. It follows, as I said, that I ought not to beg the assistance of God in the details of conduct, because I consider it was given once for all.

C. If He co-operates with me in everything the result is no longer mine, but His Who assists, or rather works in and with me; and all the more because I can do nothing without Him.

A. Have you not read, pray,[1] "that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy!" From this we understand that to will and to run is ours, but the carrying into effect our willing and running pertains to the mercy of God, and is so effected that on the one hand in willing and running free will is preserved; and on the other, in consummating our willing and running, everything is left to the power of God. Of course, I ought now to adduce the frequent testimony of Scripture to show that in the details of conduct the saints intreat the help of God, and in their several actions desire to have Him for their helper and protector. Read through the Psalter, and all the utterances of the saints, and you will find their actions never unaccompanied by prayer to God. And this is a clear proof that you either deny the grace which you banish from the parts of life; or if you concede its presence in the parts, a concession plainly much against your will, you must have come over to the views of us who preserve free will for man, but so limit it that we do not deny the assistance of God in each action.

6. C. That is a sophistical conclusion and a mere display of logical skill. No one can strip me of the power of free will; otherwise, if God were really my helper in what I do, the reward would not be due to me, but to Him who wrought in me,

A. Make the most of your free will; arm your tongue against God, and therein prove yourself free, if you will, to blaspheme. But to go a step farther, there is no doubt as to your sentiments, and the delusions of your profession have become as clear as day. Now, let us turn back to the starting-point of our discussion. You said just now that, granted God's assistance, man may be sinless if he chooses. Tell me, please, for how long? For ever, or only for a short time?

C. Your question is unnecessary. If I say for a short time, for ever will none the less be implied. For whatever you allow for a short time, you will admit may last for ever.

A. I do not quite understand your meaning.

C. Are you so senseless that you do not recognize plain facts?

7. A. I am not ashamed of my ignorance. And both sides ought to be well agreed on a definition of the subject of dispute.

C. I maintain this: he who can keep himself from sin one day, may do so another day: if he can on two, he may on three; if on three, on thirty: and so on for three hundred or three thousand, or as long as ever he chooses to do so.

A. Say then at once that a man may be without sin for ever, if he chooses. Can we do anything we like?

C. Certainly not, for I cannot do all I should like; but all I say is this, that a man can be without sin, if he chooses.

A. Be so good as to tell me this: do you think I am a man or a beast?

C. If I had any doubt as to whether you were a man, or a beast, I should confess myself to be the latter.

A. If then, as you say, I am a man, how is it that when I wish and earnestly desire not to sin, I do transgress?

C. Because your choice is imperfect. If you really wished not to sin, you really would not.

A. Well then, you who accuse me of not having a real desire, are you free from sin because you have a real desire?

C. As though I were talking of myself whom I admit to be a sinner, and not of the few exceptional ones, if any, who have resolved not to sin.

8. A. Still, I who question, and you who answer, both consider ourselves sinners.

C. But we are capable of not being so, if we please.

A. I said I did not wish to sin, and no doubt your feeling is the same. How is it then that what we both wish we can neither do?

C. Because we do not wish perfectly.

A. Show me any of our ancestors who had a perfect will and the power in perfection.

C. That is not easy. And when I say that a man may be without sin if he chooses, I do not contend that there ever have been such; I only maintain the abstract possibility--if he chooses. For possibility of being is one thing, and is expressed in Greek by *th dunamei* (possibility); being is another, the equivalent for which is *th energeia* (actuality). I can be a physician; but meanwhile I am not. I can be an artisan; but I have not yet learnt a trade. So, whatever I am able to be, though I am not that yet, I shall be if I choose.

9. A. Art is one thing, that which is<sup>[1]</sup> above art is another. Medical skill, craftsmanship, and so on, are found in many persons; but to be always without sin is a characteristic of the Divine power only. Therefore, either give me an instance of those who were for ever without sin; or, if you cannot find one, confess your impotence, lay

aside bombast. and do not mock the ears of fools with this being and possibility of being of yours. For who will grant that a man can do what no man was ever able to do? You have not learnt even the rudiments of logic. For if a man is able, he is no longer unable. Either grant that some one was able to do what you maintain was possible to be done; or if no one has had this power, you must, though against your will, be held to this position, that no one is able to effect what yet you profess to be possible. That was the point at issue between the powerful logicians,[1] Diodorus and[2] Chrysippus, in their discussion of possibility. Diodorus says that alone can possibly happen which is either true or will be true. And whatever will be, that, he says, must of necessity happen. But whatever will not be, that cannot possibly happen. Chrysippus, however, says that things which will not be might happen; for instance, this pearl might be broken, even though it never will. They, therefore, who say that a man can be without sin if he chooses, will not be able to prove the truth of the assertion, unless they show that it will come to pass. But whereas the whole future is uncertain, and especially such things as have never occurred, it is clear that they say something will be which will not be. And Ecclesiastes supports this decision: "All that shall be, has already been in former ages."

10. C. Pray answer this question: has God given possible or impossible commands?

A. I see your drift. But I must discuss it later on, that we may not, by confusing different questions, leave our audience in a fog. I admit that God has given possible commands, for otherwise He would Himself be the author of injustice, were He to demand the doing of what cannot possibly be done. Reserving this until later, finish your argument that a man can be without sin, if he chooses. You will

either give instances of such ability, or, if no one has had the power, you will clearly confess that a man cannot avoid sin always.

C. Since you press me to give what I am not bound to give, consider what our Lord says,[3] "That it is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven." And yet he said a thing might possibly happen, which never has happened. For no camel has ever gone through a needle's eye.

A. I am surprised at a prudent man submitting evidence which goes against himself. For the passage in question does not speak of a possibility, but one impossibility is compared with another. As a camel cannot go through a needle's eye, so neither will a rich man enter the kingdom of heaven. Or, if you should be able to show that a rich man does enter the kingdom of heaven, it follows, also, that a camel goes through a needle's eye. You must not instance Abraham and other rich men, about whom we read in the Old Testament, who, although they were rich, entered the kingdom of heaven; for, by spending their riches on good works, they ceased to be rich; nay, rather, inasmuch as they were rich, not for themselves, but for others, they ought to be called God's stewards rather than rich men. But we must seek evangelical perfection, according to which there is the command,[1]" If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come, follow Me."

11. C. You are caught unawares in your own snare.

A. How so?

C. You quote our Lord's utterance to the effect that. a man can be perfect. For when He says, "If thou wilt be perfect, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come, follow Me," He shows that a



man, if he chooses, and if he does what is commanded, can be perfect?

A. You have given me such a terrible blow that I am almost dazed. But yet the very words you quote, "If thou wilt be perfect," were spoken to one who could not, or rather would not, and, therefore, could not; show me now, as you promised, some one who would and could.

C. Why am I compelled to produce instances of perfection, when it is clear from what the Saviour said to one, and through one to all, "If thou wilt be perfect" that it is possible for men to be perfect?

A. That is a mere shuffle. You still stick fast in the mire. For, either, if a thing is possible, it has occurred at some time or other; or, if it never has happened, grant that it is impossible.

12. C. Why do I any longer delay? You must be vanquished by the authority or Scripture. To pass over other passages, you must be silenced by the two in which we read the praises of Job, and of Zacharias and Elizabeth. For, unless I am deceived, it is thus written in the book of Job:[1] "There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, a true worshipper of God, and one who kept himself from every evil thing." And again:[2] "Who is he that reproveth one that is righteous and free from sin, and speaketh words without knowledge?" Also, in the Gospel according to Luke, we read:[3] "There was in the days of Herod, king of Judaea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abijah: and he had a wife of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." If a true worshipper of God is also without spot and without offence, and if those who walked in all the ordinances of the

Lord are righteous before God, I suppose they are free from sin, and lack nothing that pertains to righteousness.

A. You have cited passages which have been detached not only from the rest of Scripture, but from the books in which they occur. For even Job, after he was stricken with the plague, is convicted of having spoken many things against the ruling of God, and to have summoned Him to the bar:[4] "Would that a man stood with God in the judgment as a son of man stands with his fellow." And again:[5] "Oh that I had one to hear me! that the Almighty might hear my desire, and that the judge would himself write a book!" And again:[6] "Though I be righteous, mine own mouth shall condemn me: though I be perfect, it shall prove me perverse. If I wash myself with snow-water, and make my bands never so clean, Thou hast dyed me again and again with filth. Mine own clothes have abhorred me." And of Zacharias it is written, that when the angel promised the birth of a son, he said:[7] "Whereby shall I know this? for I am an old man, and my wife well stricken in years." For which answer he was at once condemned to silence:[8] "Thou shalt be silent, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall come to pass, because thou believest not my words, which shall be fulfilled in their season." From this it is clear that men are called righteous, and said to be without fault; but that, if negligence comes over them, they may fall; and that a man always occupies a middle place, so that he may slip from the height of virtue into vice, or may rise from vice to virtue; and that he is never safe, but must dread shipwreck even in fair weather; and, therefore, that a man cannot be without sin. Solomon says,[1] "There is not a righteous man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth not"; and likewise in the book of Kings:[2] "There is no man that sinneth not." So, also, the blessed David says:[3] "Who can understand his errors? Cleanse Thou me from hidden faults, and keep back Thy servant from presumptuous sins." And again:[4]

"Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified." Holy Scripture is full of passages to the same effect.

13. C. But what answer will you give to the famous declaration of John the Evangelist[5]" We know that whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not; but the begetting of God keepeth him, and the evil one toucheth him not. We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in the evil one?"

A. I will requite like with like, and will show that, according to you, the little epistle of the Evangelist contradicts itself. For, if whosoever is begotten of God sinneth not because His seed abideth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God, how is it that the writer says in the same place:[6] "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us?" You cannot explain. You hesitate and are confused. listen to the same Evangelist telling us that[7] "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." We are then righteous when we confess that we are sinners, and our righteousness depends not upon our own merits, but on the mercy of God, as the Holy Scripture says, [8]" The righteous man accuseth himself when he beginneth to speak," and elsewhere,[9] "Tell thy sins that thou mayest be justified." [10] "God hath shut up all under sin, that He may have mercy upon all." And the highest righteousness of man is this--whatever virtue he may be able to acquire, not to think it his own, but the gift of God. He then who is born of God does not sin, so long as the seed of God remains in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. But seeing that, while the householder slept, an enemy sowed tares, and that when we know not, a sower by night scatters in the Lord's field darnel and wild oats among the good corn, this parable of the householder in the

Gospel should excite our fears. He cleanses his floor, and gathers the wheat into his garner, but leaves the chaff to be scattered by the winds, or burned by the fire. And so we read in Jeremiah,[1] "What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." The chaff, moreover, is separated from the wheat at the end of the world, a proof that, while we are in the mortal body, chaff is mixed with the wheat. But if you object, and ask why did the Apostle say "and he cannot sin, because he is born of God," I reply by asking you what becomes of the reward of his choice? For if a man does not sin because he cannot sin, free will is destroyed, and goodness cannot possibly be due to his efforts, but must be part of a nature unreceptive of evil.

14. C. The task I set you just now was an easy one by way of practice for something more difficult. What have you to say to my next argument? Clever as you are, all your skill will not avail to overthrow it. I shall first quote from the Old Testament, then from the New. Moses is the chief figure in the Old Testament, our Lord and Saviour in the New. Moses says to the people,[2] "Be perfect in the sight of the Lord your God." And the Saviour bids the Apostles[3] "Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." Now it was either possible for the hearers to do what Moses and the Lord commanded, or, if it be impossible, the fault does not lie with them who cannot obey, but with Him who gave impossible commands.

A. This passage to the ignorant, and to those who are unaccustomed to meditate on Holy Scripture, and who neither know nor use it, does appear at first sight to favour your opinion. But when you look into it, the difficulty soon disappears. And when you compare passages of Scripture with others, that the Holy Spirit may not seem to contradict Himself with changing place and time, according to what is written,[4] "Deep calleth unto deep at the noise of thy water spouts," the truth will show itself, that is, that Christ did give a

possible command when He said: "Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect," and yet that the Apostles were not perfect.

C. I am not talking of what the Apostles did, but of what Christ commanded. And the fault does not lie with the giver of the command, but with the hearers of it, because we cannot admit the justice of him who commands without conceding the possibility of doing what is commanded.

A. Good! Don't tell me then that a man can be without sin if he chooses, but that a man can be what the Apostles were not.

C. Do you think me fool enough to dare say such a thing?

A. Although you do not say it in so many words, however reluctant you may be to admit the fact, it follows by natural sequence from your proposition. For if a man can be without sin, and it is clear the Apostles were not without sin, a man can be higher than the Apostles: to say nothing of patriarchs and prophets whose righteousness under the law was not perfect, as the Apostle says,[1] "For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God: being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth to be a propitiator."

14a. C. This way of arguing is intricate and brings the simplicity which becomes the Church into the tangled thickets of philosophy. What has Paul to do with Aristotle? or Peter with Plato? For as the latter was the prince of philosophers, so was the former chief of the Apostles: on him the Lord's Church was firmly rounded, and neither rushing flood nor storm can shake it.

A. Now you are rhetorical, and while you taunt me with philosophy, you yourself cross over to the camp of the orators. But listen to what

your same favourite orator says:[2] "Let us have no more commonplaces: we get them at home."

C. There is no eloquence in this, no bombast like that of the orators, who might be defined as persons whose object is to persuade, and who frame their language accordingly. We are seeking unadulterated truth, and use unsophisticated language. Either the Lord did not give impossible commands, so that they are to blame who did not do what was possible; or, if what is commanded cannot be done, then not they who do not things impossible are convicted of unrighteousness, but He Who commanded things impossible, and that is an impious statement.

A. I see you are much more disturbed than is your wont; so I will not ply you with arguments. But let me briefly ask what you think of the well-known passage of the Apostle when he wrote to the Philippians : [3] " Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may apprehend that for which also I was apprehended by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have yet apprehended: but one thing I do; forgetting the things which are behind, and stretching forward to the things which are before, I press on towards the goal unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us, therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded: and if in anything ye are otherwise minded, even this shall God reveal unto you," and so on; no doubt you know the rest, which, in my desire to be brief, I omit. He says that he had not yet apprehended, and was by no means perfect; but, like an archer, aimed his arrows at the mark set up (more expressively called[1] skopos in Greek), lest the shaft, turning to one side or the other, might show the unskilfulness of the archer. He further declares that he always forgot the past, and ever stretched forward to the things in front, thus teaching that no heed should be paid to the past, but the future

earnestly desired; so that what to-day he thought perfect, while he was stretching forward to better things and things in front, tomorrow proves to have been imperfect. And thus at every step, never standing still, but always running, he shows that to be imperfect which we men thought perfect, and teaches that our only perfection and true righteousness is that which is measured by the excellence of God. "I press on towards the goal," he says, "unto the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Oh, blessed Apostle Paul, pardon me, a poor creature who confess my faults, if I venture to ask a question. You say that you had not yet obtained, nor yet apprehended, nor were yet perfect, and that you always forgot the things behind, and stretched forward to the things in front, if by any means you might have part in the resurrection of the dead, and win the prize of your high calling. How, then, is it that you immediately add, "As many therefore as are perfect are thus minded"? (or, let us be thus minded, for the copies vary). And what mind is it that we have, or are to have? that we are perfect? that we have apprehended that which we have not apprehended, received what we have not received, are perfect who are not yet perfect? What mind then have we, or rather what mind ought we to have who are not perfect? To confess that we are imperfect, and have not yet apprehended, nor yet obtained, this is true wisdom in man: know thyself to be imperfect; and, if I may so speak, the perfection of all who are righteous, so long as they are in the flesh, is imperfect. Hence we read in Proverbs:[2] "To understand true righteousness." For if there were not also a false righteousness, the righteousness of God would never be called true. The Apostle continues: "and if ye are otherwise minded, God will also reveal that to you." This sounds strange to my ears. He who but just now said, "Not that I have already obtained, or am already perfect "; the chosen vessel, who was so confident of Christ's dwelling in him that he dared to say "Do ye seek a proof of Christ that speaketh in me?" and yet plainly confessed that he was not perfect; he now gives

to the multitude what he denied to himself in particular, he unites himself with the rest and says, "As many of us as are perfect, let us be thus minded." But why he said this, he explains presently. Let us, he means, who wish to be perfect according to the poor measure of human frailty, think this, that we have not yet obtained, nor yet apprehended, nor are yet perfect, and inasmuch as we are not yet perfect, and, perhaps, think otherwise than true and perfect perfection requires, if we are minded otherwise than is dictated by the full knowledge of God, God will also reveal this to us, so that we may pray with David and say,[1] "Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy law."

15. All this makes it clear that in Holy Scripture there are two sorts of perfection, two of righteousness, and two of fear. The first is that perfection, and incomparable truth, and perfect righteousness and fear, which is the beginning of wisdom, and which we must measure by the excellence of God; the second, which is within the range not only of men, but of every creature, and is not inconsistent with our frailty, as we read in the Psalms:[3] "In Thy sight shall no man living be justified," is that righteousness which is said to be perfect, not in comparison with God, but as recognized by God. Job, and Zacharias, and Elizabeth, were called righteous, in respect of that righteousness which might some day turn to unrighteousness, and not in respect of that which is incapable of change, concerning which it is said,[4] "I am God, and change not." And this is that which the Apostle elsewhere writes:[5] "That which hath been made glorious hath not been made glorious in this respect, by reason of the glory that surpasseth"; because, that is, the righteousness of the law, in comparison of the grace of the Gospel, does not seem to be righteousness at all.[6] "For if," he says, that which passeth away was with glory, much more that which remaineth is in glory." [7] And again, "We know in part, and we prophesy in part; but when that



which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." And,[8] "For now we see in a mirror, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I have been known." And in the Psalms,[1] "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." And again,[2] "When I thought how I might know this, it was too painful for me; until I went into the sanctuary of God, and considered their latter end." And in the same place,[3] "I was as a beast before thee: nevertheless I am continually with thee." And Jeremiah says,[4] "Every man is become brutish and without knowledge." And to return to the Apostle Paul,[6] "The foolishness of God is wiser than men." And much besides, which I omit for brevity's sake.

16. C. My dear Atticus, your speech is really a clever feat of memory. But the labour you have spent in mustering this host of authorities is to my advantage. For I do not any more than you compare man with God. but with other men, in comparison with whom he who takes the trouble can be perfect. And so, when we say that man, if he chooses, can be without sin, the standard is the measure of man, not the majesty of God, in comparison with Whom no creature can be perfect.

A. Critobulus, I am obliged to you for reminding me of the fact. For it is just my own view that no creature can be perfect in respect of true and finished righteousness. But that one differs from another, and that one man's righteousness is not the same as another's, no one doubts; nor again that one may be greater or less than another, and yet that, relatively to their own status and capacity, men may be called righteous who are not righteous when compared with others. For instance, the Apostle Paul, the chosen vessel who laboured more than all the Apostles, was, I suppose, righteous when he wrote to Timothy,[6] "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course,

I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give to me at that day: and not only to me, but also to all them that love His appearing." Timothy, his disciple and imitator, whom he taught the rules of action and the limits of virtue, was also righteous. Are we to think there was one and the same righteousness in them both, and that he had not more merit who laboured more than all? "In my Father's house are many mansions." I suppose there are also different degrees of merit. "One star differeth from another star in glory," and in the one body of the Church there are different members. The sun has its own splendour, the moon tempers the darkness of the night; and the five heavenly bodies which are called planets traverse the sky in different tracks and with different degrees of luminousness. There are countless other stars whose movements we trace in the firmament. Each has its own brightness, and though each in respect of its own is perfect, yet, in comparison with one of greater magnitude, it lacks perfection. In the body also with its different members, the eye has one function, the hand another, the foot another. Whence the Apostle says,(1) "The eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee: or again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Are all Apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? have all gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But desire earnestly the greater gifts. But all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as He will." And here mark carefully that he does not say, as each member desires, but as the Spirit Himself will. For the vessel cannot say to him that makes it,(2) "Why dost thou make me thus or thus? Hath not the potter a right over the clay, from the same lump to make one part a vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" And so in close sequence he added, "Desire earnestly the greater gifts," so that, by the exercise of faith and diligence, we may win something in addition to other gifts, and may be superior to

those who, compared with us, are in the second or third class. In a great house there are different vessels, some of gold, some of silver brass, iron, wood. And yet while in its kind a vessel of brass is perfect, in comparison with one of silver it is called imperfect, and again one of silver, compared with one of gold, is inferior. And thus, when compared with one another, all things are imperfect and perfect. In a field of good soil, and from one sowing, there springs a crop thirty-fold, sixty-fold, or a hundred- fold. The very numbers show that there is disparity in the parts of the produce, and yet in its own kind each is perfect. Elizabeth and Zacharias, whom you adduce and with whom you cover yourself as with an impenetrable shield, may teach us how far they are beneath the holiness of blessed Mary, the Lord's Mother, who, conscious that God was dwelling in her, proclaims without reserve,(3) "Behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For He that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is His name. And His mercy is unto generations and generations of them that fear Him: He hath showed strength with His arm." Where, observe, she says she is blessed not by her own merit and virtue, but by the mercy of God dwelling in her. And John himself, a greater than whom has not arisen among the sons of men, is better than his parents. For not only does our Lord compare him with men, but with angels also. And yet he, who was greater on earth than all other men, is said to be less than the least in the kingdom of heaven.

17. Need we be surprised that, when saints are compared, some are better, some worse, since the same holds good in the comparison of sins? To Jerusalem, piecred and wounded with many sins, it is said, (1) "Sodom is justified by thee." It is not because Sodom, which has sunk for ever into ashes, is just in herself, that it is said by Ezekiel,(2) "Sodom shall be restored to her former estate"; but that, in comparison with the more accursed Jerusalem, she appears just. For

Jerusalem killed the Son of God; Sodom through fulness of bread and excessive luxury carried her lust beyond all bounds. The publican in the Gospel who smote upon his breast as though it were a magazine of the worst thoughts, and, conscious of his offences, dared not lift up his eyes, is justified rather than the proud Pharisee. And Thamar in the guise of a harlot deceived Judah, and in the estimation of this man himself who was deceived, was worthy of the words,(3) "Thamar is more righteous than I." All this goes to prove that not only in comparison with Divine majesty are men far from perfection, but also when compared with angels, and other men who have climbed the heights of virtue. You may be superior to some one whom you have shown to be imperfect, and yet be outstripped by another; and consequently may not have true perfection, which, if it be perfect, is absolute.

18. C. How is it then, Atticus, that the Divine Word urges us to perfection?

A. I have already explained that in proportion to our strength each one, with all his power, must stretch forward, if by any means he may attain to, and apprehend the reward of his high calling. In short Almighty God, to whom, as the Apostle teaches, the Son must in accordance with the dispensation of the Incarnation be subjected, that(4) "God may be all in all," clearly shows that all things are by no means subject to Himself. Hence the prophet anticipates his own final subjection, saying,(5) "Shall not my soul be subject to God alone? for of Him cometh my salvation." And because in the body of the Church Christ is the head, and some of the members still resist, the body does not appear to be subject even to the head. For if one member suffer, all the members suffer with it, and the whole body is tortured by the pain in one member. My meaning may be more clearly expressed thus. So long as we have the treasure in earthen

vessels, and are clothed with frail flesh, or rather with mortal and corruptible flesh, we think ourselves fortunate if, in single virtues and separate portions of virtue, we are subject to God. But when this mortal shall have put on immortality, and this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and death shall be swallowed up in the victory of Christ, then will God be all in all: and so there will not be merely wisdom in Solomon, sweetness in David, zeal in Elias and Phinees, faith in Abraham, perfect love in Peter, to whom it was said,(1) "Simon, son of John, lovest thou me?" zeal for preaching in the chosen vessel, and two or three virtues each in others, but God will be wholly in all, and the company of the saints will rejoice in the whole band of virtues, and God will be all in all.

19. C. Do I understand you to say that no saint, so long as he is in this poor body, can have all virtues?

A. Just so, because now we prophesy in part, and know in part. It is impossible for all things to be in all men, for no son of man is immortal.

C. How is it, then, that we read that he who has one virtue appears to have all?

A. By partaking of them, not possessing them, for individuals must excel in particular virtues. But I confess I don't know where to find what you say you have read.

C. Are you not aware that the philosophers take that view?

A. The philosophers may, but the Apostles do not. I heed not what Aristotle, but what Paul, teaches.

C. Pray does not James the Apostle(2) write that he who stumbles in one point is guilty of all?

A. The passage is its own interpreter. James did not say, as a starting-point for the discussion, he who prefers a rich man to a poor man in honour is guilty of adultery or murder. That is a delusion of the Stoics who maintain the equality of sins. But he proceeds thus: "He who said, Thou shalt not commit adultery, said also, Thou shalt not kill: but although thou dost not kill, yet, if thou commit adultery, thou art become a transgressor of the law." Light offences are compared with light ones, and heavy offences with heavy ones. A fault that deserves the rod must not be avenged with the sword; nor must a crime worthy of the sword, be checked with the rod.

C. Suppose it true that no saint has all the virtues: you will surely grant that within the range of his ability, if a man do what he can, he is perfect.

A. Do you not remember what I said before?

C. What was it?

A. That a man is perfect in respect of what he has done, imperfect in respect of what he could not do.

C. But as he is perfect in respect of what he has done, because he willed to do it, so in respect of that which constitutes him imperfect, because he has not done it, he might have been perfect, had he willed to do it.

A. Who does not wish to do what is perfect? Or who does not long to grow vigorously. in all virtue? If you look for all virtues in each individual, you do away with the distinctions of things, and the

difference of graces, and the variety of the work of the Creator, whose prophet cries aloud in the sacred song:(1) "In wisdom hast thou made them all." Lucifer may be indignant because he has not the brightness of the moon. The moon may dispute over her eclipses and ceaseless toil, and ask why she must traverse every month the yearly orbit of the sun. The sun may complain and want to know what he has done that he travels more slowly than the moon. And we poor creatures may demand to know why it is that we were made men and not angels; although your teacher,(2)the Ancient, the fountain from which these streams flow, asserts that all rational creatures were created equal and started fairly, like charioteers, either to succumb halfway, or to pass on rapidly and reach the wished-for goal. Elephants, with their huge bulk, and griffins, might discuss their ponderous frames and ask why they must go on four feet, while flies, midges, and other creatures like them have six feet under their tiny wings, and there are some creeping things which have such an abundance of feet that the keenest vision cannot follow their countless and simultaneous movements. Marcion and all the heretics who denied the Creator's works might speak thus. Your principle goes so far that while its adherents attack particular points, they are laying hands on God; they are asking why He only is God, why He envies the creatures, and why they are not all endowed with the same power and importance. You would not say so much (for you are not mad enough to openly fight against God), yet this is your meaning in other words, when you give man an attribute of God, and make him to be without sin like God Himself. Hence the Apostle, with his voice of thunder, says, concerning different graces:(1) "There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit; and differences of ministrations, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of workings, but the same God, Who worketh all things in all."

20. C. You push this one particular point too far in seeking to convince me that a man cannot have all excellences at the same time. As though God were guilty of envy, or unable to bestow upon His image and likeness a correspondence in all things to his Creator.

A. Is it I or you who go too far? You revive, questions already settled, and do not understand that likeness is one thing, equality another; that the former is a painting, the latter, reality. A real horse courses over the plains; the painted one with his chariot does not leave the wall. The Arians do not allow to the Son of God what you give to every man. Some do not dare to confess the perfect humanity of Christ, lest they should be compelled to accept the belief that He had the sins of a man as though the Creator were unequal to the act of creating, and the title Son of Man were co-extensive with the title Son of God. So either set me something else to answer, or lay aside pride and give glory to God.

C. You forget a former answer of yours, and have been so busy forging your chain of argument, and careering through the wide fields of Scripture, like a horse that has slipped its bridle, that you have not said a single word about the main point. Your forgetfulness is a pretext for escaping the necessity of a reply. It was foolish in me to concede to you for the nonce what you asked, and to suppose that you would voluntarily give up what you had received, and would not need a reminder to make you pay what you owed.

A. If I mistake not, it was the question of possible commands of which I deferred the answer. Pray proceed as you think best.

21. C. The commands which God has given are either possible or impossible. If possible, it is in our power to do them, if we choose. If impossible, we cannot be held guilty for omitting duties which it is not given us to fulfil. Hence it results that, whether God has given



possible or impossible commands, a man can be without sin if he chooses.

A. I beg your patient attention, for what we seek is not victory over an opponent, but the triumph of truth over falsehood. God has put within the power of mankind all arts, for we see that a vast number of men have mastered them. To pass over those which the Greeks call<sup>(1)</sup> *bananusoa*, as we may say, the manual arts, I will instance grammar, rhetoric, the three sorts of philosophy--physics, ethics, logic--geometry also, and astronomy, astrology, arithmetic, music, which are also parts of philosophy; medicine, too, in its threefold division--theory, investigation, practice; a knowledge of law in general and of particular enactments. Which of us, however clever he may be, will be able to understand them all, when the most eloquent of orators, discussing rhetoric and jurisprudence, said: "A few may excel in one, in both no one can." You see, then, that God has commanded what is possible, and yet, that no one can by nature attain to what is possible. Similarly he has given different rules and various virtues, all of which we cannot possess at the same time. Hence it happens that a virtue which in one person takes the chief place, or is found in perfection, in another is but partial; and yet, he is not to blame who has not all excellence, nor is he condemned for lacking that which he has not; but he is justified through what he does possess. The Apostle described the character of a bishop when he wrote to Timothy,<sup>(2)</sup> "The bishop, therefore, must be without reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, modest, orderly, given to hospitality, apt to teach; no brawler, no striker; but gentle, not contentious, no lover of money; one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all modesty." And again, "Not a novice, lest, being puffed up, he fall into the condemnation of the devil. Moreover, he must have good testimony from them that are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil." Writing

also to his disciple Titus, he briefly points out what sort of bishops he ought to ordain:(3)"For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that were wanting, and appoint elders in every city, as I gave thee charge; if any man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having children that believe, who are not accused of riot or unruly. For the bishop must be blameless (or free from accusation, for so much is conveyed by the original) as God's steward; not self-willed, not soon angry, no brawler, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but given to hospitality, kind, modest, just, holy, temperate; holding to the faithful word which is according to the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in the sound doctrine, and to convict the gainsayers." I will not now say anything of the various rules relating to different persons, but will confine myself to the commands connected with the bishop.

22. God certainly wishes bishops or priests to be such as the chosen vessel teaches they should be. As to the first qualification it is seldom or never that one is found without reproach; for who is it that has not some fault, like a mole or a wart on a lovely body? If the Apostle himself says of Peter that he did not tread a straight path in the truth of the Gospel, and was so far to blame that even Barnabas was led away into the same dissimulation, who will be indignant if that is denied to him which the chief of the Apostles had not? Then, supposing you find one, "the husband of one wife, sober-minded, orderly, given to hospitality," the next attribute--didaktikon, apt to teach, not merely as the Latin renders the word, apt to be taught--you will hardly find in company with the other virtues. A bishop or priest that is a brawler, or a striker, or a lover of money, the Apostle rejects, and in his stead would have one gentle, not contentious, free from avarice, one that rules well his own house, and what is very hard, one who has his children in subjection with all modesty, whether they be children of the flesh or children of the faith. "With

all modesty," he says. It is not enough for him to have his own modesty unless it be enhanced by the modesty of his children, companions, and servants, as David says,(1) "He that walketh in a perfect way, he shall minister unto me." Let us consider, also, the emphasis laid on modesty by the addition of the words "having his children in subjection with all modesty." Not only in deed but in word and gesture must he hold aloof from immodesty, lest perchance the experience of Eli be his. Eli certainly rebuked his sons, saying,(2) "Nay, my sons, nay; it is not a good report which I hear of you." He chided them, and yet was punished, because he should not have chided, but cast them off. What will he do who rejoices at vice or lacks the courage to correct it? Who fears his own conscience, and therefore pretends to be ignorant of what is in everybody's mouth? The next point is that the bishop must be free from accusation, that he have a good report from them who are without, that no reproaches of opponents be levelled at him, and that they who dislike his doctrine may be pleased with his life. I suppose it would not be easy to find all this, and particularly one "able to resist the gain-sayers," to check and overcome erroneous opinions. He wishes no novice to be ordained bishop, and yet in our time we see the youthful novice sought after as though he represented the highest righteousness. If baptism immediately made a man righteous, and full of all righteousness, it was of course idle for the Apostle to repel a novice; but baptism annuls old sins, does not bestow new virtues; it looses from prison, and promises rewards to the released if he will work. Seldom or never, I say, is there a man who has all the virtues which a bishop should have. And yet if a bishop lacked one or two of the virtues in the list, it does not follow that he can no longer be called righteous, nor will he be condemned for his deficiencies, but will be crowned for what he has. For to have all and lack nothing is the virtue of Him(1) "Who did no sin; neither was guile found in His mouth; Who, when He was reviled, reviled not again;" Who,

confident in the consciousness of virtue, said,(2) "Behold the prince of this world cometh, and findeth nothing in me;"(3)"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be on an equality with God, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God gave Him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth." If, then, in the person of a single bishop you will either not find at all, or with difficulty, even a few of the things commanded, how will you deal with the mass of men in general who are bound to fulfil all the commandments?

23. Let us reason from things bodily to things spiritual. One man is swift-fooled, but not strong-handed. That man's movements are slow, but he stands firm in battle. This man has a fine face, but a harsh voice: another is repulsive to look at, but sings sweetly and melodiously. There we see a man of great ability, but equally poor memory; here is another whose memory serves him, but whose wits are slow. In the very discussions with which when we were boys we amused ourselves, all the disputants are not on a level, either in introducing a subject, or in narrative, or in digressions, or wealth of illustration, and charm of peroration, but their various oratorical efforts exhibit different degrees of merit. Of churchmen I will say more. Many discourse well upon the Gospels, but in explaining an Apostle's meaning are unequal to themselves. Others, although most acute in the New Testament are dumb in the Psalms and the Old Testament. I quite agree with Virgil--Non omnia possumus omnes; and seldom or never is the rich man found who in the abundance of his wealth has everything in equal proportions. That God has given possible commands, I admit no less than you. But it is not for each one of us to make all these possible virtues our own, not because our nature is weak, for that is a slander upon God, but because our hearts

and minds grow weary and cannot keep all virtues simultaneously and perpetually. And if you blame the Creator for having made you subject to weariness and failure, I shall reply, your censure would be still more severe if you thought proper to accuse Him of not having made you God. But you will say, if I have not the power, no sin attaches to me. You have sinned because you have not done what another could do. And again, he in comparison with whom you are inferior will be a sinner in respect of some other virtue, relatively to you or to another person; and thus it happens that whoever is thought to be first, is inferior to him who is his superior in some other particular.

24. C. If it is impossible for man to be without sin, what does the Apostle Jude mean by writing,(1) "Now unto Him that is able to keep you without sin, and to set you before the presence of His glory without blemish"? This is clear proof that it is possible to keep a man without sin and without blemish.

A. You do not understand the passage. We are not told that a man can be without sin, which is your view, but that God, if He chooses, can keep a man free from sin, and of His mercy guard him so that he may be without blemish. And I say that all things are possible with God; but that everything which a man desires is not possible to him, and especially, an attribute which belongs to no created thing you ever read of.

C. I do not say that a man is without sin, which, perhaps, appears to you to be possible; but that he may be, if he chooses. For actuality is one thing, possibility another. In the actual we look for an instance; possibility implies that our power to act is real.

A. You are trifling, and forget the proverb, "Don't do what is done." You keep turning in the same mire,(2) and only make more dirt. I

shall, therefore, tell you, what is clear to all, that you are trying to establish a thing that is not, never was, and, perhaps, never will be. To employ your own words, and show the folly and inconsistency of your argument, I say that you are maintaining an impossible possibility. For your proposition, that a man can be without sin if he chooses, is either true or false. If it be true, show me who the man is; if it be false, whatever is false can never happen. But let us have no more of these notions. Hissed off the stage, and no longer daring to appear in public, they should stay on the book shelves, and not let themselves be heard.

25. Let us proceed to other matters. And here I must speak uninterruptedly, so far, at least, as is consistent with giving you an opportunity of refuting me, or asking any question you think fit.

C. I will listen patiently, though I cannot say gladly. The ability of your reasoning will strike me all the more, while I am amazed at its falsity.

A. Whether what I am going to say is true or false, you will be able to judge when you have heard it.

C. Follow your own method. I am resolved, if I am unable to answer, to hold my tongue rather than assent to a lie.

A. What difference does it make whether I defeat you speaking or silent, and, as it is in the(1) story of Proteus, catch you asleep or awake?

C. When you have said what you like, you shall hear what you will certainly not like. For though truth may be put to hard shifts it cannot be subdued.

A. I want to sift your opinions a little, that your followers may know what an inspired genius you are. You say, "It is impossible for any but those who have the knowledge of the law to be without sin"; and you, consequently, shut out from righteousness a large number of Christians, and, preacher of sinlessness though you are, declare nearly all to be sinners. For how many Christians have that knowledge of the law which you can find but seldom, or hardly at all, in many doctors of the Church? But your liberality is so great that, in order to stand well with your Amazons, you have elsewhere written, "Even women ought to have a knowledge of the law," although the Apostle preaches that women ought to keep silence in the churches, and if they want to know anything consult their husbands at home. And you are not content with having given your cohort a knowledge of Scripture, but you must delight yourself with their songs and canticles, for you have a heading to the effect that "Women also should sing unto God." Who does not know that women should sing in the privacy of their own rooms, away from the company of men and the crowded congregation? But you allow what is not lawful, and the consequence is, that, with the support of their master, they make an open show of that which should be done with modesty, and with no eye to witness.

26. You go on to say, "The servant of God should utter from his lips no bitterness, but ever that which is sweet and pleasant"; and as though a servant of God were one thing, a doctor and priest of the Church another, forgetting what was previously laid down, you say in another heading, "A priest or doctor ought to watch the actions of all, and confidently rebuke sinners, lest he be responsible for them and their blood be required at his hands." And, not satisfied with saying it once, you repeat it, and inculcate that, "A priest or doctor should flatter no one, but boldly rebuke all, lest he destroy both himself and those who hear him." Is there so little harmony in one and the same

work that you do not know what you have previously said? For if the servant of God ought to utter no bitterness from his mouth, but always that which is sweet and pleasant, it follows either that a priest and doctor will not be servants of God who ought to confidently rebuke sinners, and flatter no one, but boldly reprove all: or, if a priest and a doctor are not only servants of God, but have the chief place among His servants, it is idle to reserve smooth and pleasant speeches for the servants of God, for these are characteristic of heretics and of them who wish to deceive; as the Apostle says,(1) "They that are such serve not our Lord Christ but their own belly, and by their smooth and fair speech they beguile the hearts of the innocent." Flattery is always insidious, crafty, and smooth. And the flatterer is well described by the philosophers as "a pleasant enemy." Truth is bitter, of gloomy visage and wrinkled brow, and distasteful to those who are rebuked. Hence the Apostle says,(2) "Am I become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?" And the comic poet tells us that "Obsequiousness is the mother of friendship, truth of enmity." Wherefore we also eat the Passover with bitter herbs, and the chosen vessel teaches that the Passover should be kept with truth and sincerity. Let truth in our case be plain speaking, and bitterness will instantly follow.

27. In another place you maintain that "All are governed by their own free choice." What Christian can bear to hear this? For if not one, nor a few, nor many, but all of us are governed by our own free choice, what becomes of the help of God? And how do you explain the text, (1) "A man's goings are ordered by the Lord"? And(2) "A man's way is not in himself"; and(3)"No one can receive anything, unless it be given him from above"; and elsewhere,(4) "What hast thou which thou didst not receive? But if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?" Our Lord and Saviour says: (5)"I am come down from heaven not to do Mine own will, but the



will of the Father who sent Me." And in another place,(6) "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Thine be done." And in the Lord's prayer,(7) "Thy will be done as in heaven, so on earth." How is it that you are so rash as to do away with all God's help? Elsewhere, you make a vain attempt to append the words "not without the grace of God"; but in what sense you would have them understood is clear from this passage, for you do not admit His grace in separate actions, but connect it with our creation, the gift of the law, and the power of free will.

28. The argument of the next section is, "In the day of judgment, no mercy will be shown to the unjust and to sinners, but they must be consumed in eternal fire." Who can bear this, and suffer you to prohibit the mercy of God, and to sit in judgment on the sentence of the Judge before the day of judgment, so that, if He wished to show mercy to the unjust and the sinners, He must not, because you have given your veto? For you say it is written in the one hundred and fourth Psalm,(8) "Let sinners cease to be in the earth, and the wicked be no more." And in Isaiah,(9)"The wicked and sinners shall be burned up together, and they who forsake God shall be consumed." Do you not know that mercy is sometimes blended with the threatenings of God? He does not say that they must be burnt with eternal fires, but let them cease to be in the earth, and the wicked be no more. For it is one thing for them to desist from sin and wickedness, another for them to perish for ever and be burnt in eternal fire. And as for the passage which you quote from Isaiah, "Sinners and the wicked shall be burned up together," he does not add for ever. "And they who forsake God shall be consumed." This properly refers to heretics, who leave the straight path of the faith, and shall be consumed if they will not return to the Lord whom they have forsaken. And the same sentence is ready for you if you neglect to turn to better things. Again, is it not marvellous temerity to couple

the wicked and sinners with the impious, for the distinction between them is great? Every impious person is wicked and a sinner; but we cannot conversely say every sinner and wicked person is also impious, for impiety properly belongs to those who have not the knowledge of God, or, if they have once had it, lose it by transgression. But the wounds of sin and wickedness, like faults in general, admit of healing. Hence, it is written,[1] "Many are the scourges of the sinner"; it is not said that he is eternally destroyed. And through all the scourging and torture the faults of Israel are corrected,[2] "For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." It is one thing to smite with the affection of a teacher and a parent; another to be madly cruel towards adversaries. Wherefore, we sing in the first Psalm,[3] "The impious do not rise in the judgment," for they are already sentenced to destruction; "nor sinners in the counsel of the just." To lose the glory of the resurrection is a different thing from perishing for ever. "The hour cometh," he says,[4] "In which all that are in the tombs shall hear His voice, and shall come forth they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done ill unto the resurrection of judgment." And so the Apostle, in the same sense, because in the same Spirit, says to the Romans,[5] "As many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned under law, shall be judged by law." The man without law is the unbeliever who will perish for ever. Under the law is the sinner who believes in God, and who will be judged by the law, and will not perish. If the wicked and sinners are to be burned with everlasting fire, are you not afraid of the sentence you pass on yourself, seeing that you admit you are wicked and a sinner, while still you argue that a man is not without sin, but that he may be. It follows that the only person who can be saved is an individual who never existed, does not exist, and perhaps never will, and that all our predecessors of whom we read must perish. Take your own case. You are puffed up with all

the pride of Cato, and have[6] Milo's giant shoulders; but is it not amazing temerity for you, who are a sinner, to take the name of a teacher? If you are righteous, and, with a false humility, say you are a sinner, we may be surprised, but we shall rejoice at having so unique a treasure, and at reckoning amongst our friends a personage unknown to patriarch, prophet, and Apostle. And if Origen does maintain that no rational creatures ought to be lost, and allows repentance to the devil, what is that to us, who say that the devil and his attendants, and all impious persons and transgressors, perish eternally, and that[1] Christians, if they be overtaken by sin, must be saved after they have been punished?

29.[2] Besides all this you add two chapters which contradict one another, and which, if true, would effectually close your mouth. "Except a man have learned, he cannot be acquainted with wisdom and understand the Scriptures." And again, "He that has not been taught, ought not to assume that he knows the law." You must, then, either produce the master from whom you learned, if you are lawfully to claim the knowledge of the law; or, if your master is a person who never learned from any one else, and taught you what he did nor know himself, it follows that you are not acting rightly in claiming a knowledge of Scripture, when you have not been taught, and in starting as a master before you have been a disciple. And yet, perhaps, with your customary humility, you make your boast that the Lord Himself, Who teaches all knowledge, was your master, and that, like Moses in the cloud and darkness, face to face, you hear the words of God, and so, with the[3] halo round your head, take the lead of us. And even this is not enough, but all at once you turn Stoic, and thunder in our ears Zeno's proud maxims. "A Christian ought to be so patient that if any one wished to take his property he would let it go with joy." Is it not enough for us patiently to lose what we have, without returning thanks to him who ill-treats and plunders us, and

sending after him all blessings? The Gospel teaches that to him who would go to law with us, and by strife and litigation take away our coat, we must give our cloak also. It does not enjoin the giving of thanks and joy at the loss of our property. What I say is this, not that there is any enormity in your view, but that everywhere you are prone to exaggeration, and indulge in ambitious flights. This is why you add that "The bravery of dress and ornament is an enemy of God." What enmity, I should like to know, is there towards God if my tunic is cleaner than usual, or if the bishop, priest, or deacon, or any other ecclesiastics, at the offering of the sacrifices walk in white? Beware, ye clergy; beware, ye monks; widows and virgins, you are in peril unless the people see you begrimed with dirt, and clad in rags. I say nothing of lay-men, who proclaim open war and enmity against God if they wear costly and elegant apparel.

30. Let us hear the rest. "We must love our enemies as we do our neighbours"; and immediately, falling into a deep slumber, you lay down this proposition: "We must never believe an enemy." Not a word is heeded from me to show the contradiction here. You will say that both propositions are found in Scripture, but you do not observe the particular connection in which the passages occur. I am told to love my enemies and pray for my persecutors. Am I bidden to love them as though they were my neighbours, kindred, and friends, and to make no difference between a rival and a relative? If I love my enemies as my neighbours, what more affection can I show to my friends? If you had maintained this position, you ought to have taken care not to contradict yourself by saying that we must never believe an enemy. But even the law teaches us how an enemy should be loved.[1] If an enemy's beast be fallen, we must raise it up. And the Apostle tells us,[2] "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink. For by so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head," not by way of curse and condemnation, as most people think,

but to chasten and bring him to repentance, so that, overcome by kindness, and melted by the warmth of love, he may no longer be an enemy.

31. Your next point is that "the kingdom of heaven is promised even in the Old Testament," and you adduce evidence from the Apocrypha, although it is clear that the kingdom of heaven was first preached under the Gospel by John the Baptist, and our Lord and Saviour, and the Apostles. Read the Gospels. John the Baptist cries in the desert,[3] "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand"; and concerning the Saviour it is written,[4] "From that time He began to preach and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." And again,[5] "Jesus went round about the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the kingdom of God." And He commanded His Apostles to[6] "go and preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand." But you call us Manichaeans because we prefer the Gospel to the law, and say that in the latter we have the shadow, in the former, the substance, and you do not see that your foolishness goes hand in hand with impudence. It is one thing to condemn the law, as Manichaeus did; it is another to prefer the Gospel to the law, for this is in accordance with apostolic teaching. In the law the servants of the Lord speak, in the Gospel the Lord Himself; in the former are the promises, in the latter their fulfilment; there are the beginnings, here is perfection; in the law the foundations of works are laid; in the Gospel the edifice is crowned with the top-stone of faith and grace. I have mentioned this to show the character of the teaching given by our distinguished professor.

32. The hundredth heading runs thus: "A man can be without sin, and easily keep the commandments of God if he chooses," as to which enough has already been said. And although he professes to imitate, or rather complete the work of the blessed martyr Cyprian in

the treatise which the latter wrote to<sup>[1]</sup> Quirinus, he does not perceive that he has said just the opposite in the work under discussion. Cyprian, in the fifty-fourth heading of the third book, lays it down that no one is free from stain and without sin, and he immediately gives proofs, among them the passage in Job,<sup>[2]</sup> "Who is cleansed from uncleanness? Not he who has lived but one day upon the earth."<sup>[3]</sup> And in the fifty-first Psalm, "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." And in the Epistle of John,<sup>[4]</sup> "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." You, on the other hand, maintain that "A man can be without sin," and that you may give your words the semblance of truth, you immediately add, "And easily keep the commandments of God, if he chooses," and yet they have been seldom or never kept by any one. Now, if they were easy, they ought to have been kept by all. But if, to concede you a point, at rare intervals some one may be found able to keep them, it is clear that what is rare is difficult. And by way of supplementing this and displaying the greatness of your own virtues (we are to believe, forsooth, that you bring forth the sentiment out of the treasure of a good conscience), you have a heading to the effect that: "We ought not to commit even light offences." And for fear some one might think you had not explained in the work the meaning of light, you add that, "We must not even think an evil thought," forgetting the words,<sup>[5]</sup> "Who understands his offences? Clear thou me from hidden faults, and keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins, O Lord." You should have known that the Church admits even failures through ignorance and sins of mere thought to be offences; so much so that she bids sacrifices be offered for errors, and the high priest who makes intercession for the whole people previously offers victims for himself. Now, if he were not himself righteous, he would never be commanded to offer for others. Nor, again, would he offer for himself if he were free from sins of ignorance. If I were to attempt

to show that error and ignorance is sin, I must roam at large over the wide fields of Scripture.

33. C. Pray have you not read that<sup>[1]</sup> "He who looks upon a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart?" It seems that not only are the look and the allurements to vice reckoned as sin, but whatever it be to which we give assent. For either we can avoid an evil thought, and consequently may be free from sin; or, if we cannot avoid it, that is not reckoned as sin which cannot be avoided.

A. Your argument is ingenious, but you do not see that it goes against Holy Scripture, which declares that even ignorance is not without sin. Hence it was that Job offered sacrifices for his sons, lest, perchance, they had unwittingly sinned in thought. And if, when one is cutting wood, the axe-head flies from the handle and kills a man, the owner is<sup>[2]</sup> commanded to go to one of the cities of refuge and stay there until the high priest dies; that is to say, until he is redeemed by the Saviour's blood, either in the baptistery, or in penitence which is a copy of the grace of baptism, through the ineffable mercy of the Saviour, who<sup>[3]</sup> would not have any one perish, nor delights in the death of sinners, but would rather that they should be converted and live.

C. It is surely strange justice to hold me guilty of a sin of error of which my conscience does not accuse itself. I am not aware that I have sinned, and am I to pay the penalty for an offence of which I am ignorant? What more can I do, if I sin voluntarily?

A. Do you expect me to explain the purposes and plans of God? The Book of Wisdom gives an answer to your foolish question:<sup>[4]</sup> "Look not into things above thee, and search not things too mighty for thee." And elsewhere,<sup>[5]</sup> "Make not thyself overwise, and argue not

more than is fitting." And in the same place, "In wisdom and simplicity of heart seek God." You will perhaps deny the authority of this book; listen then to the Apostle blowing the Gospel trumpet:[6] "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past tracing out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been His counsellor?" Your questions are such as he elsewhere describes:[7] "But foolish and ignorant questioning avoid, knowing that they gender strifes." And in Ecclesiastes (a book concerning which there can be no doubt) we read,[8] "I said, I will be wise, but it was far from me. That which is exceeding deep, who can find it out?" You ask me to tell you why the potter makes one vessel to honour, another to dishonour, and will not be satisfied with Paul, who replies on behalf of his Lord,[9] "O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"

The remainder of this book is occupied by a series of quotations from the Old Testament, designed to show that it is not only the outer and conscious act which is reckoned sinful, but the opposition to the Divine will, which is often implicit and half-conscious. Occasionally, also, the speaker shows how the texts quoted enforce the argument which he has before used, that men may be spoken of as righteous in a general sense, yet by no means free from sins of thought or desire, if not of act.

## **AGAINST THE PELAGIANS**

### **BOOK II.**



This book can hardly be said to form part of a dialogue. It is rather an argument from Scripture to prove the point of the Augustinian arguer, Atticus. From the fourth chapter onwards it consists, like the last five chapters of Book I., of a chain of Scripture texts, taken from the New Testament and the Prophets, to show the universality of sin, and thus to refute the Pelagian assertion that a man can be without sin if he wills. We shall, therefore, give, as in the previous case, a list of the texts and the first words of them, only giving Jerome's words where he introduces some original remark of his own, or some noteworthy comment.

The Pelagian begins by reiterating the dilemma: If the commandments are given to be obeyed, then man can be without sin; if he is, by his creation, such that he must be a sinner, then God, not he, is the author of sin. To the argument that sacrifices are enjoined for sins of ignorance, he replies by appealing from the Old Testament to the New, which leads to a discussion (2, 3) on St. Paul's description of the conflict with sin, in Romans 7. Paul, it is argued, speaks not as a sinner, but as a man, and thus confesses the sinfulness of humanity. That men may be without ingrained vice is possible; that they can be without sin is not. This leads the Augustinian, Atticus, resuming his list of testimonies, to the fact that, though men are found who are righteous as avoiding wickedness (*lamia*), yet none is without sin (*anamarthtos*).

6. There are four emotions which agitate mankind, two relating to the present, two to the future; two to good, and two to evil. There is sorrow, called Greek *luph*, and joy, in Greek *kara* or *hdonh*, although many translate the latter word by *voluptas*, pleasure; the one of which is referred to evil, the other to good. And we go too far if we rejoice over such things as we ought not, as, for example, riches, power, distinctions, the bad fortune of enemies, or their death; or, on

the other hand, if we are tortured with grief on account of present evils, adversity, exile, poverty, weakness, and the death of kindred, all of which is forbidden by the Apostle. And again, if we covet those things which we consider good, inheritance, distinctions, unvaried prosperity, bodily health, and the like, in the possession of which we rejoice and find enjoyment; or if we fear those things which we deem adverse. Now, according to the Stoics, Zeno that is to say and Chrysippus, it is possible for a perfect man to be free from these emotions; according to the Peripatetics, it is difficult and even impossible, an opinion which has the constant support of all Scripture. Hence Josephus, the historian of the Maccabees, said that the emotions can be subdued and governed, not extirpated, and Cicero's five books of "Tusculan Disputations" are full of these discussions.[1] Accord-to the Apostle, the weakness of the body and spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places fight against us. And the same writer[2] tells us that the works of the flesh and the works of the spirit are manifest, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that we do not the things that we would. If we do not what we would, but what we would not, how can you say that a man can be without sin if he chooses? You see that neither an Apostle, nor any believer can perform what he wishes.[3] "Love covereth a multitude of sins," not so much sins of the past as sins of the present, that we may not sin any more while the love of God abideth in us. Wherefore it is said concerning the woman that was a sinner,[4] "Her sins which are many are forgiven her, for she loved much." And this shows us that the doing what we wish does not depend merely upon our own power, but upon the assistance which God in His mercy gives to our will.

7. The quotations from Scripture are now continued:

\* Luke 27:43. Even Christ in his agony needs an angel to strengthen Him.

\* Luke 27:46. Pray that ye enter not into temptation.

17. \* John 5:30. Even Christ says, "I cannot do anything by myself"; and

\* John 7:10. Was irresolute about going up to the Feast of Tabernacles,

\* John 7:19. None of you doeth the law.

\* John 8:3. None of the accusers of the woman taken in adultery were without sin. Christ wrote their names in the earth (Jerem. 27:13).

\* John 10:8. All who came (not who were sent; Jerem. xiv. 15) before Christ were robbers.

\* John 27:12. I kept them--they did not keep themselves.

\* Acts 15:39. Paul and Barnabas quarrelled.

\* Acts 16:6, 7. They were forbidden to preach where they chose.

18. Even the Apostles, with their full light, show their dependence on grace.

\* Acts 17:30. The times before Christ were times of ignorance.

\* 1 Cor. 4:19. I will come if the Lord will.

\* James 2:10. To stumble in one point is to be guilty of all.

\* James 3:2. In many things we all stumble,

\* James 3:8. The tongue is a deadly poison.

19. James 4:1. Wars arise from our lust. David indeed said,

\* Ps. 26:2. "Examine me and prove me," etc. This self-confidence led to his fall.

\* Ps. 51:1. Have mercy on me, O God.

\* Ps. 80:5. "Thou feedest us with the bread of tears."

Similarly,

\* Ps. 30:6, 7. I said I shall never be moved ... Thou didst hide Thy face.

\* Ps. 32:5. I said I will confess my sin,

\* Ps. 37:5, 6. He shall make thy righteousness as the light.

\* Ps. 37:39. The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord.

\* Ps. 38:7. There is no soundness in my flesh.

\* Rom. 7:18. In my flesh dwelleth no good thing.

\* Ps. 38:8. Vulgate. My loins are filled with deceits.

\* Ps. 39:5. He hath made our days as handbreadths.

\* Ps. 69:5. My sins are not hid from thee.

\* Ps. 77:2. My soul refused to be comforted,

\* Ps. 77:10. This is the changing of the right hand of the Most High.

(1)

20. \* Ps. 89:2. Mercy shall be built up forever.

\* Ps. 91:6. From "the thing (2) that walketh in darkness" who can be free? For

\* Ps. 9:2. "The wicked bend their bow"--an image of the heretics.

\* Ps. 92:14. Those that are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish.

\* Ps. 103:8, 10. The Lord is full of compassion.

\* 2 Sam. 8:13, 14. David receives the promises with the humble confession of his weakness. "Is this the law of man, O God?"

\* 2 Sam. 16:10. He humbles himself under Abishai's violence and Shimei's curse.

\* 2 Sam. 17:14. And is delivered only by God's confounding the counsel of Ahithophel.

\* 1 Kings 14:8. It was God who gave Jeroboam the kingdom.

\* 1 Kings 15:11. Asa, though a good man, was faulty.

\* 1 Kings 19:4. Elijah fled from Jezebel.

- \* Ps. 118:6. The Lord is my keeper.
- \* 2 Chron. 17:3. Jehoshaphat prospers because the Lord is with him.  
Yet
- \* 2 Chron. 19:2. He is rebuked for joining with Ahab.
- \* 2 Chron. 22:9. Ahaziah received burial among kings because descended from righteous Jehoshaphat.
- \* 2 Kings 18:3, 4, 7. Hezekiah did great things, but only through the Lord's help. 14. He gave the consecrated gold to the king of Assyria, 22. Even the best kings of Judah were imperfect.
- \* 2 Kings 20:1, 5. Hezekiah wept when death was at hand, and recovered through special mercy. 13, 17, But he sinned in receiving the Babylonian envoys.
- \* 2 Chron. 32: 26. He fell by the lifting up of his heart.
- \* 2 Chron. 34:2. Josiah was a righteous man; yet
- \* 2 Chron. 34:22, 23. He needed the aid of Huldah; and
- \* 2 Chron. 35:22. He was slain through not heeding God's warning; and
- \* 2 Chron. 35:23. The prophets also are weak and sinful.
- \* Lam. 4:20. Jeremiah (3) lamented his fall.
- \* Numb. 20:10, 12. Moses is punished for his sin at Meribah. This is the meaning of Ps. 141:6. Vulgate. Their judges were swallowed up, joined to the Rock, etc.
- \* Hosea 2:19. God in mercy forgives Israel's unfaithfulness.
- \* Hosea 11:9. "I will not enter into the city." Only the Holy One is not joined to the mass of ungodliness.
- \* Amos 6:13. We turn righteousness into wormwood.
- \* Jonah 1:14. The sailors confess that God is just in raising the storm.
- \* Micah 7:2. The godly man is perished from the earth, etc.
- \* Micah 6:8. The command of justice, mercy, and a humble walk with God is only possible to humble faith, for Ps. 140:6. "The wicked walk on every side," and James 4:6. God giveth grace to the humble.

24. \* Habakkuk 3:16. Let rottenness enter into my bones, if only I may rest, etc.

\* Zech. 3:1. Joshua is represented as clothed in filthy garments, and is freed through God's mercy.

But Jovinian's heir says "I am quite free from sin, I have no filthy garments, I am governed by my own will, I am greater than an Apostle. The Apostle does what he would not, and what he would he does not; but I do what I will, and what I would not I do not: the kingdom of heaven has been prepared for me, or rather I have by my virtuous life prepared it for myself. Adam was subject to punishment, and so are others who think themselves guilty after the similitude of Adam's transgressions; I and my crew alone have nothing to fear. Other men shut up in their cells and who never see women, because, poor creatures! they do not listen to my words, are tormented with desire: crowds of women may surround me, I feel no stirring of concupiscence. For to me may be applied the (1) words, 'Holy stones are rolled upon the ground,' and the reason why I am insensible to the attraction of sin is that in the power of free will I carry Christ's trophy about with me." But let us listen to God (2) proclaiming by the mouth of Isaiah: "O my people, they which call thee happy cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths." Who is the greatest subverter of the people of God--he who, relying on the power of free choice, despises the help of the Creator, and is satisfied with following his own will, or he who dreads to be judged by the details of the Lord's commandments? To men of this sort, God (3) says, "Woe unto you that are wise in your own eyes, and prudent in your own sight." Isaiah, if we follow the Hebrew, laments (4) and says, "Woe is me because I have been silent, because I am a man of unclean lips: and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the Lord of Hosts." He for his meritorious; and virtuous life enjoyed the sight of God, and conscious of his sins

confessed that he had unclean lips. Not that he had said anything repugnant to the will of God, but because, either from fear, or from a deep sense of shame, he had been (5) silent, and had not reproved the errors of the people so freely as a prophet should. When do we sinners rebuke offenders, we who flatter wealth and accept the persons of sinners for the sake of filthy lucre? for we shall hardly say that we speak with perfect frankness to men of whose assistance we stand in need. Suppose that we do not such things as they, suppose we keep ourselves from every form of sin; to refrain from speaking the truth is certainly sin. In the Septuagint, however, we do not find the words "because I have been silent," but "because I was pricked," that is with the consciousness of sin; and thus the words of the (6)prophet are fulfilled. "My life was turned into misery while I was pierced by the thorn." He was pricked by the thorn of sin: you are decked with the flowers of virtue. (7) "The moon shall be ashamed, and the sun confounded, when the Lord shall punish the host of heaven on high." This is explained by another passage Even the stars are unclean in His sight," and again, (9) "He chargeth His angels with folly." The moon is ashamed, the sun is confounded, and the sky covered with sackcloth, and shall we fearlessly and joyously, as though we were free from all sin, face the majesty of the Judge, when the mountains shall melt away, that is, all who are lifted up by pride, and all the host of the heavens, whether they be stars, or angelic powers, when the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll, and all their host shall fade away like leaves?

The argument is now carried on mostly by the quotation of passages from the prophets:

25. \* Is 34:5. "My sword hath drunk its fill in the heavens. It will come down in Edom." How much more is there wrath against sin on earth! Edom means blood, which cannot inherit the kingdom (1 Cor.

15: 50).

\* Is. 45:9. Woe unto him who striveth with his Maker.

\* Is. 53:6. We have all gone astray like sheep.

\* Ezek. 16:14. Jerusalem is perfect in beauty; yet

\* Ezek. 16:60, 61. Her salvation is not of merit but of mercy.

\* Nahum 1:3. Though he cleanse, (1) yet will he not make thee innocent.

\* 1 Cor. 15:9. I am not worthy--because I persecuted.

\* Ezek. 20:43, 44. When pardoned, Jerusalem will still remember her sin.

Let us confess with shame that these are the utterances of men who have already won their reward; sinners upon earth, and still in our frail and mortal bodies let us adopt the language of the saints in heaven who have even been endowed with incorruption and immortality. (2)"And ye say the way of the Lord is not equal, when your ways are not equal." It is Pharisaic pride to attribute to the injustice of the Creator sins which are due to our own will, and to slander His righteousness. The sons of Zadok, the priests of the spiritual temple, that is the Church, (3)go not out to the people in their ministerial robes, lest by human intercourse they may lose their holiness and be defiled. And do you suppose that you, in the thick of the throng, and an ordinary individual, are pure?

26. Let us hastily run through the prophet Jeremiah:

\* Jerem. 5:1, 2. Is there any that doeth justly, etc.

\* Jerem. 7:21, 22. God rejects the sacrifices, because of the worshippers' evil lives. xiii. 23. Can the Ethiopian change his skin?

27. \* Jerem. 17:14. "Heal me, O Lord," Otherwise Jeremiah could only say, as in the text next quoted, o 20:14, 17, 18. Cursed be the day wherein I was born, etc. 23:23, Am I a God at hand, etc. So conscious



is he of God's power. 24: 6, 7. God, not they themselves, will plant them, etc. 26:21-24. Jeremiah needed the help of Ahikam. How much more do we need that of God.

28. \* Jerem. 31:34. The promise of the new covenant. 32:30. The children of Israel have perpetually done evil. 37:18, 19. Yet Jeremiah himself trembled before Zedekiah. 30:10, 11. Fear not, O Jacob, for I am with thee.

29 \* Amos 6:14. "We have taken us horns by our own strength." These are the boasts of heretics. But

\* Is. 16:6. His strength (Moab's) is by no means according to his arrogance. (4)

\* Jerem. 1:7, 20. Men's sin will only be abolished because God is gracious to them. If you will abandon your assertions of natural ability, I will concede that your whole contention stands good, but only by the gift of God.

\* Lam. 3:26-42. It is good that a man should quietly wait for the salvation of the Lord.

30 \* Dan. 4:17. The Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men.

\* Ps. 113:7. 8. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust.

\* Is. 40:17. He deeth what He will in heaven and in earth.

\* The words of (2) Maccabees 5:17, which say that Antiochus Epiphanes had power to overthrow the Temple, "because of the multitude of sins," are quoted in connection with the confessions of Daniel.

\* Dan. 9:5. "We have sinned and dealt perversely," which is shown by 20. "While I was yet praying," etc., to be a personal, not only a national confession. 24. The prophecy of the seventy weeks shows that the prophet looked to God alone for the establishment of righteousness.

So then, until that end shall come, and this corruptible and mortal shall put on incorruption and immortality, we must be liable to sin; not, as you falsely say, owing to the fault of our nature and creation, but through the frailty and fickleness of human will, which varies from moment to moment; because God alone changeth not. You ask in what respects Abel, Enoch, Joshua the son of Nun, or Elisha, and the rest of the saints have sinned. There is no need to look for a knot in a bulrush; I freely confess I do not know; and I only wish that, when sins are manifest, I might still be silent. (5)"I know nothing against myself," says St. Paul, "yet am I not hereby justified." (6)"Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart." Before Him no man is justified. And so Paul says confidently, (7)"All bare sinned, and come short of the glory of God"; and 8)"God hath shut up all under sin that He may have mercy upon all"; and similarly in other passages which we have repeated again and again.

## **AGAINST THE PELAGIANS**

### **BOOK III.**

1. Critob. I am charmed with the exuberance of your eloquence, but at the same time I would remind you that, (1) "In the multitude of words there wanteth not transgression." And how does it bear upon the question before us? You will surely admit that those who have received Christian baptism are without sin. And that being free from sin they are righteous. And that once they are righteous, they can, if

they take care, preserve their righteousness, and so through life avoid all sin.

Attic. Do you not blush to follow the opinion of Jovinian, which has been exploded and condemned? For he relies upon just the same proofs and arguments as you do; nay, rather, you are all eagerness for his inventions, and desire to preach in the East what was formerly (2) condemned at Rome, and not long ago in (3) Africa. Read then the reply which was given to him, and you will there find the answer to yourself. For in the discussion of doctrines and disputed points, we must have regard not to persons but to things. And yet let me tell you that baptism condones past offences, and does not preserve righteousness in the time to come; the keeping of that is dependent on toil and industry, as well as earnestness, and above all on the mercy of God. It is ours to ask, to Him it belongs to bestow what we ask; ours to begin, His it is to finish; ours to offer what we can. His to fulfil what we cannot perform. (4) "For except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Wherefore the Apostle (5) bids us so run that we may attain. All indeed run, but one receiveth the crown. And in the (6) Psalm it is written, "O Lord, thou hast crowned us with thy favour as with a shield." For our victory is won and the crown of our victory is gained by His protection and through His shield; and here we run that hereafter we may attain; there he shall receive the crown who in this world has proved the conqueror. And when we have been baptized we are told, (7) "Behold thou art made whole; sin no more lest a worse thing happen unto thee." And again, (8) "Know ye not that ye are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man profane the temple of God, him shall God destroy." And in another place, (7) "The Lord is with you so long as ye are with Him: if ye forsake Him, He will also forsake you." Where is the man, do you suppose, in whom as in a shrine and

sanctuary the purity of Christ is permanent, and in whose case the serenity of the temple is saddened by no cloud of sin? We cannot always have the same countenance, though the philosophers falsely boast that this was the experience of Socrates; how much less can our minds be always the same! As men have many expressions of countenance, so also do the feelings of their hearts vary. If it were possible for us to be always immersed in the waters of baptism, sins would fly over our heads and leave us untouched. The Holy Spirit would protect us. But the enemy assails us, and when conquered does not depart, but is ever lying in ambush, that he may secretly shoot the upright in heart.

2. In the Gospel according to the Hebrews, which is written in the Chaldee and Syrian language, but in Hebrew characters, and is used by the Nazarenes to this day (I mean the Gospel according to the Apostles, or, as is generally maintained, the Gospel according to Matthew, a copy of which is in the library at Caesarea), we find, "Behold, the mother of our Lord and His brethren said to Him, John Baptist baptizes for the remission of sins; let us go and be baptized by him. But He said to them, what sin have I committed that I should go and be baptized by him? Unless, haply, the very words which I have said are only ignorance." And in the same volume, "If thy brother sin against thee in word, and make amends to thee, receive him seven times in a day." Simon, His disciple, said to Him, "Seven times in a day?" The Lord answered and said to him, "I say unto thee until seventy times seven." Even the prophets, after they were anointed with the Holy Spirit, were guilty of sinful words. Ignatius, an apostolic man and a martyr, boldly writes? "The Lord chose Apostles who were sinners above all men." It is of their speedy conversion that the Psalmist sings, (3) "Their infirmities were multiplied; afterwards they made haste." If you do not allow the authority of this evidence, at least admit its antiquity, and see what

has been the opinion of all good churchmen. Suppose a person who has been baptized to have been carried off by death either immediately, or on the very day of his baptism, and I will generously concede that he neither thought nor said anything whereby, through error and ignorance, he fell into sin. Does it follow that he will, therefore, be without sin, because he appears not to have overcome, but to have avoided sin? Is not the true reason rather that by the mercy of God he was released from the prison of sins and departed to the Lord? We also say this, that God can do what He wills; and that man of himself and by his own will cannot, as you maintain, be without sin. If he can, it is idle for you now to add the word grace, for, with such a power, he has no need of it. If, however, he cannot avoid sin without the grace of God, it is folly for you to attribute to him an ability which he does not possess. For whatever depends upon another's will, is not in the power of him whose ability you assert, but of him whose aid is clearly indispensable.

3. C. What do you mean by this perversity, or, rather, senseless contention? Will you not grant me even so much--that when a man leaves the waters of baptism he is free from sin?

A. Either I fail to express my meaning clearly, or you are slow of apprehension.

C. How so?

A. Remember both what you maintained and also what I say. You argued that a man can be free from sin if he chooses. I reply that it is an impossibility; not that we are to think that a man is not free from sin immediately after baptism, but that that time of sinlessness is by no means to be referred to human ability, but to the grace of God. Do not, therefore, claim the power for man, and I will admit the fact. For how can a man be able who is not able of himself? Or what is that

sinlessness which is conditioned by the immediate death of the body? Should the man's life be prolonged, he will certainly be liable to sins and to ignorance.

C. Your logic stops my mouth. You do not speak with Christian simplicity, but entangle me in some fine distinctions between being and ability to be.

A. Is it I who play these tricks with words? The article came from your own workshop. For you say, not that a man is free from sin, but that he is able to be; I, on the other hand, will grant what you deny, that a man is free from sin by the grace of God, and yet will maintain that he is not able of himself.

C. It is useless to give commandments if we cannot keep them.

A. No one doubts that God commanded things possible. But because men do not what they might, therefore the whole world is subject to the judgment of God, and needs His mercy. On the other hand, if you can produce a man who has fulfilled the whole law, you will certainly be able to show that there is a man who does not need the mercy of God. For everything which can happen must either take place in the past, the present, or the future. As to your assertion that a man can be without sin if he chooses, show that it has happened in the past, or at all events that it does happen at the present day; the future will reveal itself. If, however, you can point to no one who either is, or has been, altogether free from sin, it remains for us to confine our discussion to the future. Meanwhile, you are vanquished and a captive as regards two out of three periods of time, the past and the present. If anyone hereafter shall be greater than patriarchs, prophets, apostles, inasmuch as he is without sin, then you may perhaps be able to convince future generations as to their time.

4. C. Talk as you like, argue as you please, you will never wrest from me free will, which God bestowed once for all, nor will you be able to deprive me of what God has given, the ability if I have the will.

A. By way of example let us take one proof: (1)"I have found David, the Son of Jesse, a man after Mine own heart, who shall do all My will." There is no doubt that David was a holy man, and yet he who was chosen that he might do all God's will is blamed for certain actions. Of course it was possible for him who was chosen for the purpose to do all God's will. Nor is God to blame Who beforehand spoke of his doing all His will as commanded, but blame does attach to him who did not what was foretold. For God did not say that He had found a man who would unfailingly do His bidding and fulfil His will, but only one who would do all His will. And we, too, say that a man can avoid sinning, if he chooses, according to his local and temporal circumstances and physical weakness, so long as his mind is set upon righteousness and the string is well stretched upon the lyre. But if a man grow a little remiss it is with him as with the boatman pulling against the stream, who finds that, if he slackens but for a moment, the craft glides back and he is carried by the flowing waters whither he would not. Such is the state of man; if we are a little careless we learn our weakness, and find that our power is limited. Do you suppose that the Apostle Paul, when he wrote (3) "the coat (or cloak) that I left at Troas with Carpus, bring when thou comest, and the books, especially the parchments," was thinking of heavenly mysteries, and not of those things which are required for daily life and to satisfy our bodily necessities? Find me a man who is never hungry, thirsty, or cold, who knows nothing of pain, or fever, or the torture of strangury, and I will grant you that a man can think of nothing but virtue. When the Apostle was (1) struck by the servant, he delivered himself thus against the High Priest who commanded the blow to be given: "God shall strike thee, thou whited wall." We

miss the patience of the Saviour Who was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and opened not His mouth, but mercifully said to the smiter, (2) "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou Me?" We do not disparage the Apostle, but declare the glory of God Who suffered in the flesh and overcame the evil inflicted on the flesh and the weakness of the flesh--to say nothing of what the Apostle says elsewhere: (8) "Alexander, the coppersmith, did me much evil; the Lord, the righteous Judge, will recompense him in that day."

5. C. I have been longing to say something, but have checked the words as they were bursting from my lips. You compelmme to say it.

A. Who hinders you from saying what you think? Either what you are going to say is good--and you ought not to deprive us of what is good--or it is bad, and, therefore, it is not regard for us, but shame that keeps you silent.

C. I will say, I will say after all, what I think. Your whole argument tends to this: You accuse nature, and blame God for creating man such as he is.

A. Is this what you wished, and yet did not wish, to say? Pray speak out, so that all may have the benefit of your wisdom. Are you censuring God because he made man to be man? Let the angels also complain because they are angels: Let every creature discuss the question, Why it is as it was created? and not what the Creator could have made it. I must now amuse myself with the rhetorical exercises of childhood, and passing from the gnat and the ant to cherubim and seraphim, inquire why each was not created with a happier lot. And when I reach the exalted powers, I will argue the point: Why God alone is only God, and did not make all things gods? For, according to you, He will either be unable to do so, or will be guilty of envy.



Censure Him, and demand why He allows the devil to be in this world, and carry off the crown when you have won the victory.

C. I am not so senseless as to complain of the existence of the devil, through whose malice death entered into the world; but what grieves me is this: that dignitaries of the Church, and those who usurp the title of master, destroy free will; and once that is destroyed, the way is open for the Manichaeans.

A. Am I the destroyer of free will because, throughout the discussion, my single aim has been to maintain the omnipotence of God as well as free will?

C. How can you have free will, and yet say that man can do nothing without God's assistance?

A. If he is to be blamed who couples free will and God's help, it follows that we ought to praise him who does away with God's help.

C. I am not making God's help unnecessary, for to His grace we owe all our ability; but I and those who think with me keep both within their own bounds. To God's grace we assign the gift of the power of free choice; to our own will, the doing, or the not doing, of a thing; and thus rewards and punishments for doing or not doing can be maintained.

6. A. You seem to me to be lost in forgetfulness, and to be going over the lines of argument already traversed as though not a word had been previously said. For, by this long discussion, it has been established that the Lord, by the same grace wherewith He bestowed upon us free choice, assists and supports us in our individual actions.

C. Why, then, does He crown and praise what He has Himself wrought in us?

A. That is to say, our will which offered all it could, the toil which strove in action, and the humility which ever looked to the help of God.

C. So, then, if we have not done what He commanded, either God was willing to assist us, or He was not. If He was willing and did assist us, and yet we have not done what we wished, then He, and not we, has been overcome. But if He would not help, the man is not to be blamed who wished to do His will, but God, who was able to help, but would not.

A. Do you not see that your dilemma has landed you in a deep abyss of blasphemy? Whichever way you take it, God is either weak or malevolent, and He is not so much praised because He is the author of good and gives His help, as abused for not restraining evil. Blame Him, then, because He allows the existence of the devil, and has suffered, and still suffers, evil to be done in the world. This is what Marcion asks, and the whole pack of heretics who mutilate the Old Testament, and have mostly spun an argument something like this: Either God knew that man, placed in Paradise, would transgress His command, or He did not know. If He knew, man is not to blame, who could not avoid God's foreknowledge, but He Who created him such that he could not escape the knowledge of God. If He did not know, in stripping Him of foreknowledge you also take away His divinity. Upon the same showing God will be deserving of blame for choosing Saul, who was to prove one of the worst of kings. And the Saviour must be convicted either of ignorance, or of unrighteousness, inasmuch as He said in the Gospel, [1]"Did I not choose you the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" Ask Him why He chose Judas, a

traitor? Why He entrusted to him the bag when He knew that he was a thief? Shall I tell you the reason? God judges the present, not the future. He does not make use of His foreknowledge to condemn a man though He knows that he will hereafter displease Him; but such is His goodness and unspeakable mercy that He chooses a man who, He perceives, will meanwhile be good, and who, He knows, will turn out badly, thus giving him the opportunity of being converted and of repenting. This is the Apostle's meaning when he says, [2]"Dost thou not know that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? but after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up for thyself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God Who will render to every man according to his works." For Adam did not sin because God knew that he would do so; but God inasmuch as He is God, foreknew what Adam would do of his own free choice. You may as well accuse God of falsehood because He said by the mouth of Jonah: [3]"Yet three days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." But God will reply by the mouth of Jeremiah, [4]"At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to break down, and to destroy it; if that nation, concerning which I have spoken, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them." Jonah, on a certain occasion, was indignant because, at God's command, he had spoken falsely; but his sorrow was proved to be ill rounded, since he would rather speak truth and have a countless multitude perish, than speak falsely and have them saved. His position was thus illustrated: [1]"Thou grieveest over the ivy (or gourd), for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow, which came up in a night, and perished in a night; and should not I have pity on Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than six score

thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand?" If there was so vast a number of children and simple folk, whom you will never be able to prove sinners, what shall we say of those inhabitants of both sexes who were at different periods of life? According to Philo, and the wisest of philosophers, Plato (so the "Timaeus" tells us), in passing from infancy to decrepit old age, we go through seven stages, which so gradually and so gently follow one another that we are quite insensible of the change.

C. The drift of your whole argument is this--what the Greeks call autexousion, and we free will, you admit in terms, but in effect destroy. For you make God the author of sin, in asserting that man can of himself do nothing, but that he must have the help of God to Whom is imputed all we do. But we say that, whether a man does good or evil, it is imputed to him on account of the faculty of free choice, inasmuch as he did what he chose, and not to Him Who once for all gave him free choice.

A. Your shuffling is to no purpose; you are caught in the snares of truth. For upon this showing, even if He does not Himself assist, according to you He will be the author of evil, because He might have prevented it and did not. It is an old maxim that if a man can deliver another from death and does not, he is a homicide.

C. I withdraw and yield the point; you have won; provided, however, that victory is the subverting of the truth by specious words, that is to say, not by truth, but by falsehood. For I might make answer to you in the Apostle's words, [2]"Though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge." When you speak, your rhetorical tricks are too much for me, and I seem to agree with you; but when you stop speaking, it all goes out of my head, and I see quite clearly that your argument does

not flow from the fountains of truth and Christian simplicity, but rests on the laboured subtleties of the philosophers.

A. Do you wish me, then, once more to resort to the evidence of Scripture? If so, what becomes of the boast of your disciples that no one can answer your arguments or solve the questions you raise?

C. I not only wish, but am eager that you should do so. Show me any place in Holy Scripture where we find that, the power of free choice being lost, a man does what of himself he either would not, or could not do.

8. A. We must use the words of Scripture not as you propose, but as truth and reason demand. Jacob says in his prayer, [1]"If the Lord God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God, and this stone, which I have set up for a token, shall be God's house; and of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee." He did not say, If thou preserve my free choice, and I gain by my toil food and raiment, and return to my father's house. He refers everything to the will of God, that he may be found worthy to receive that for which he prays. On Jacob's return from Mesopotamia [2]an army of angels met him, who are called God's camp. He afterwards contended with an angel in the form of a man, and was strengthened by God; whereupon, instead of Jacob, the supplanter, he received the name, the upright of God. For he would not have dared to return to his cruel brother unless he had been strengthened and secured by the Lord's, help. In the sequel we read, [3]"The sun rose upon him after he passed over Phaulon," which is, being interpreted, He face of God. Hence [4]Moses also says, "I have seen the Lord face to face, and my life is preserved," not by any natural quality--but by

the condescension of God, Who had mercy. So then the Sun of Righteousness rises upon us when God makes His face to shine upon us and gives us strength. Joseph in Egypt was shut up in prison, and we next hear that the keeper of the prison, believing in his fidelity, committed everything to his hand. And the reason is given: [5]"Because the Lord was with him: and whatsoever he did, the Lord made it to prosper." Wherefore, also, dreams were suggested to Pharaoh's attendants, and Pharaoh had one which none could interpret, that so Joseph might be released, and his father and brethren fed, and Egypt saved in the time of famine. Moreover, God [6]said to Israel, in a vision of the night," I am the God of thy fathers; fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will make of thee there a great nation, and I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again, and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes." Where in this passage do we find the power of free choice? Is not the whole circumstance that he ventured to go to his son, and entrust himself to a nation that knew not the Lord, due to the help of the God of his fathers? The people was released from Egypt with a strong hand and an outstretched arm; not the hand of Moses and Aaron, but of Him who set the people free by signs and wonders, and at last smote the first-born of Egypt, so that they who at [1]first were persistent in keeping the people, eagerly urged them to depart. Solomon [2]says, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not upon thine own understanding: in all thy ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy paths." Understand what He says--that we must not trust in our wisdom, but in the Lord alone, by Whom the steps of a man are directed. Lastly, we are bidden to show Him our ways, and make them known, for they are not made straight by our own labour, but by His assistance and mercy. And so it is written, [3]"Make my way right before Thy face," so that what is right to Thee may seem also right to me. Solomon says the same[4]"Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established. Our

thoughts are then established when we commit all we do to the Lord our helper, resting it, as it were, upon the firm and solid rock, and attribute everything to Him.

9. The Apostle Paul, rapidly recounting the benefits of God, ended with the words, [5]"And who is sufficient for these things?" Wherefore, also, in another place he [6]says, "Such confidence have we through Christ to Godward; not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is from God; Who also made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant; not of the letter but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life." Do we still dare to pride ourselves on free will, and to abuse the benefits of God to the dishonour of the giver? Whereas the same chosen vessel openly [7]writes, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves." Therefore, also, in another place, checking the impudence of the heretics, he [8]says, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." And again, [9]"In nothing was I behind the very chiefest Apostles, though I be nothing." Peter, disturbed by the greatness of the miracles he witnessed, said to the Lord, [1]"Depart from me, for I am a sinful man." And the Lord said to His disciples, [2]"I am the vine and ye are the branches: He that abideth in Me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit, for apart from Me ye can do nothing." Just as the vine branches and shoots immediately decay when they are severed from the parent stem, so all the strength of men fades and perishes, if it be bereft of the help of God. "No one," [3]He says, "can come unto Me except the Father Who sent Me draw him. When He says, "No one can come unto Me," He shatters the pride of free will; because, even if a man will to go to Christ, except that be realized which follows--"unless My heavenly Father draw him"--desire is to no purpose, and effort is in vain. At

the same time it is to be noted that he who is drawn does not run freely, but is led along either because he holds back and is sluggish, or because he is reluctant to go.

10. Now, how can a man who cannot by his own strength and labour come to Jesus, at the same time avoid all sins? and avoid them perpetually, and claim for himself a name which belongs to the might of God? For if He and I are both without sin, what difference is there between me and God? One more proof only I will adduce, that I may not weary you and my hearers. [4]Sleep was removed from the eyes of Ahasuerus, whom the Seventy call Artaxerxes, that he might turn over the memoirs of his faithful ministers and come upon Mordecai, by whose evidence he was delivered from a conspiracy; and that thus Esther might be more acceptable, and the whole people of the Jews escape imminent death. There is no doubt that the mighty sovereign to whom belonged the whole East, from India to the North and to Ethiopia, after feasting sumptuously on delicacies gathered from every part of the world would have desired to sleep, and to take his rest. and to gratify his free choice of sleep, had not the Lord, the provider of all good things, hindered the course of nature, so that in defiance of nature the tyrant's cruelty might be overcome. If I were to attempt to produce all the instances in Holy Writ, I should be tedious. All that the saints say is a prayer to God; their whole prayer and supplication a strong wrestling for the pity of God, so that we, who by our own strength and zeal cannot be saved, may be preserved by His mercy. But when we are concerned with grace and mercy, free will is in part void; in part, I say, for so much as this depends upon it, that we wish and desire, and give assent to the course we choose. But it depends on God whether we have the power in His strength and with His help to perform what we desire, and to bring to effect our toil and effort.



11. C. I simply said that we find the help of God not in our several actions, but in the grace of creation and of the law, that free will might not be destroyed. But there are many of us who maintain that all we do is done with the help of God.

A. Whoever says that must leave your party. Either, then, say the same yourself and join our side, or, if you refuse, you will be just as much our enemy as those who do not hold our views.

C. I shall be on your side if you speak my sentiments, or rather you will be on mine if you do not contradict them. You admit health of body, and deny health of the soul, which is stronger than the body. For sin is to the soul what disease or a wound is to the body. If then you admit that a man may be healthy so far as he is flesh, why do you not say he may be healthy so far as he is spirit?

A. I will follow in the line you point out,

"and you to-day Shall ne'er escape; where'er you call, I come."

A. And I to speak to deaf ears. I will therefore reply to your argument. Made up of soul and body, we have the nature of both substances. As the body is said to be healthy if it is troubled with no weakness, so the soul is free from fault if it is unshaken and undisturbed. And yet, although the body may be healthy, sound, and active, with all the faculties in their full vigour, yet it suffers much from infirmities at more or less frequent intervals, and, however strong it may be, is sometimes distressed by various humours; so the soul, bearing the onset of thoughts and agitations, even though it escape shipwreck, does not sail without danger, and remembering its weakness, is always anxious about death, according as it is written, [1]"What man is he that shall live and not see death?"--death, which threatens all mortal men, not through the decay of nature, but

through the death of sin, according to the prophet's words, [2]"The soul that sinneth, it shall die." Besides, we know that Enoch and Elias have not yet seen this death which is common to man and the brutes. Show me a body which is never sick, or which after sickness is ever safe and sound, and I will show you a soul which never sinned, and after acquiring virtues will never again sin. The thing is impossible, and all the more when we remember that vice borders on virtue, and that, if you deviate ever so little, you will either go astray or fall over a precipice. How small is the interval between obstinacy and perseverance, miserliness and frugality, liberality and extravagance, wisdom and craft, intrepidity and rashness, caution and timidity! some of which are classed as good, others as bad. And the same applies to bodies. If you take precautions against biliousness, the phlegm increases. If you dry up the humours too quickly, the blood becomes heated and vitiated with bile, and a sallow hue spreads over the countenance. Without question, however much we may exercise all the care of the physician, and regulate our diet, and be free from indigestion and whatever fosters disease, the causes of which are in some cases hidden from us and known to God alone, we shiver with cold, or burn with fever, or howl with colic, and implore the help of the true physician, our Saviour, and [1]say with the Apostles, "Master, save us, we perish"

12. C. Granted that no one could avoid all sin in boyhood, youth, and early manhood; can you deny that very many righteous and holy men, after falling into vice, have heartily devoted themselves to the acquisition of virtue and through these have escaped sin?

A. This is what I told you at the beginning--that it rests with ourselves either to sin or not to sin, and to put the hand either to good or evil; and thus free will is preserved, but according to circumstances, time, and the state of human frailty; we maintain,

however, that perpetual freedom from sin is reserved for God only, and for Him Who being the Word was made flesh without incurring the defects and the sins of the flesh. And, because I am able to avoid sin for a short time, you cannot logically infer that I am able to do so continually. Can I fast, watch, walk, sing, sit, sleep perpetually?

C. Why then in Holy Scripture are we stimulated to aim at perfect righteousness? For example: [2]"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," and [3]"Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord." And God says to Abraham, [4]"I am thy God, be thou pleasing in My sight, and be thou without spot, or blame, and I will make My covenant between Me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly." If that is impossible which Scripture testifies, it was useless to command it to be done.

A. You play upon Scripture until you wear a question threadbare, and remind me of the platform tricks of a conjurer who assumes a variety of characters, and is now Mars, next moment Venus; so that he who was at first all sternness and ferocity is dissolved into feminine softness. For the objection you now raise with an air of novelty--"Blessed are the pure in heart," "Blessed are the undefiled in the way," and "Be without spot," and so forth--is refuted when the Apostle replies,. [1]"We know in part, and we prophesy in part," and, "Now we see through a mirror darkly, but when that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." And therefore we have but the shadow and likeness of the pure heart, which hereafter is destined to see God, and, free from spot or stain, to live with Abraham. However great the patriarch, prophet, or Apostle may be, it is [2]said to them, in the words of our Lord and Saviour, "If ye being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father Which is in heaven give good things to them which ask Him?" Then again even Abraham, to whom it was said,

[3]"Be thou without spot and blame," in the consciousness of his frailty fell upon his face to the earth. And when God had spoken to Him, saying, "Thy wife Sarai shall no longer be called Sarai, but Sara shall her name be, and I will give thee a son by her, and I will bless him and he shall become a great nation, and kings of nations shall spring from him," the narrative at once proceeds to say, "Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear?" And Abraham said unto God, "Oh, that Ishmael might live before thee!" And God said, "Nay, but Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son, and thou shall call his name Isaac," and so on. He certainly had heard the words of God, "I am thy God, be thou pleasing in My sight, and without spot"; why then did he not believe what God promised, and why did he laugh in his heart, thinking that he escaped the notice of God, and not daring to laugh openly? Moreover he gives the reasons for his unbelief, and says, "How is it possible for a man that is an hundred years old to beget a son of a wife that is ninety years old?" "Oh, that Ishmael might live before thee," he says. "Ishmael whom thou once gavest me. I do not ask a hard thing, I am content with the blessing I have received." God convinced him by a mysterious reply. He said, "Yea." The meaning is, that shall come to pass which you think shall not be. Your wife Sara shall bear you a son, and before she conceives, before he is born, I will give the boy a name. For, from your error in secretly laughing, your son shall be called Isaac, that is laughter. But if you think that God is seen by those who are pure in heart in this world, why did Moses, who had previously said, "I have seen the Lord face to face, and my life is preserved," afterwards entreat that he might see him distinctly? And because he said that he had seen God, the Lord told him, [1]"Thou canst not see My face. For man shall not see My face, and live." Wherefore also the Apostle [2]calls Him the only invisible God, Who dwells in light unapproachable, and Whom no man hath

seen, nor can see. And the Evangelist John in holy accents testifies, saying, [3]"No man hath at any time seen God. The only begotten Son Who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." He Who sees, also declares, not how great He is Who is seen, nor how much He knows Who declares; but as much as the capacity of mortals can receive.

13. And whereas you think he is blessed who is undefiled in the way, and walks in His law, you must interpret the former clause by the latter. From the many proofs I have adduced you have learnt that no one has been able to fulfil the law. And if the Apostle, in comparison with the grace of Christ, reckoned those things as filth which formerly, under the law, he counted gain, so that he might win Christ, how much more certain ought we to be that the reason why the grace of Christ and of the Gospel has been added is that, under the law, no one could be justified? Now if, under the law, no one is justified, how is he perfectly undefiled in the way who is still walking and hastening to reach the goal? Surely, he who is in the course, and who is advancing on the road, is inferior to him who has reached his journey's end. If, then, he is undefiled and perfect who is still walking in the way and advancing in the law, what more shall he have who has arrived at the end of life and of the law? Hence the Apostle, speaking of our Lord, says that, at the end of the world, when all virtues shall receive their consummation, He will present His holy Church to Himself without spot or wrinkle, and yet you think that Church perfect, while yet in the flesh, which is subject to death and decay. You deserve to be told, with the Corinthians, [4]"Ye are already perfect, ye are already made rich: ye reign without us, and I would that ye did reign, that we might also reign with you "--since true and stainless perfection belongs to the inhabitants of heaven, and is reserved for that day when the bridegroom shall say to the bride, [1]"Thou art all fair, my love; and there is no spot in thee." And

in this sense we must understand the words: [2]"That ye may be blameless and harmless, as children of God, without blemish"; for He did not say ye are, but may be. He is contemplating the future, not stating a case pertaining to the present; so that here is toil and effort, in that other world the rewards of labour and of virtue. Lastly, John writes: [3]"Beloved, we are sons of God, and it is not yet made manifest what we shall be. We know that when He shall be manifested, we shall be like Him: for we shall see Him even as He is." Although, then, we are sons of God, yet likeness to God, and the true contemplation of God, is promised us then, when He shall appear in His majesty.

14. From this swelling pride springs the audacity in prayer which marks the directions in your letter to a [4]certain widow as to how the saints ought to pray. "He," you say, [5]"rightly lifts up his hands to God; he pours out supplications with a good conscience who can say, 'Thou knowest, Lord, how holy, how innocent, how pure from all deceit, wrong, and robbery are the hands which I spread out unto Thee; how righteous, how spotless, and free from all falsehood are the lips with which I pour forth my prayers unto Thee, that Thou mayest pity me.'" Is this the prayer of a Christian, or of a proud Pharisee like him who [6]says in the Gospel, "God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are, robbers, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican: I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." Yet he merely thanks God because, by His mercy, he is not as other men: he execrates sin, and does not claim his righteousness as his own. But you say, "Now Thou knowest how holy, how innocent, how pure from all deceit, wrong, and robbery are the hands which I spread out before Thee." He says that he fasts twice in the week, that he may afflict his vicious and wanton flesh, and he gives tithes of all his substance. For [1]"the ransom of a man's life is his riches." You join the devil in boasting, [2]"I will ascend above the stars, I will

place my throne in heaven, and I will be like the Most High." David says, [3]"My loins are filled with illusions"; and [4]"My wounds stink and are corrupt because of my foolishness"; and [5]"Enter not into judgment with Thy servant"; and [6]"In Thy sight no man living shall be justified." You boast that you are holy, innocent, and pure, and spread out clean hands unto God. And you are not satisfied with glorying in all your works, unless you say that you are pure from all sins of speech; and you tell us how righteous, how spotless, how free from all falsehood your lips are. The Psalmist sings, [7]"Every man is a liar"; and this is supported by apostolical authority: "That God may be true," says St. Paul, [8]"and every man a liar"; and yet you have lips righteous, spotless, and free from all falsehood. Isaiah laments, saying, [9]"Woe is me ! for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips"; and afterwards one of the seraphim brings a hot coal, taken with the tongs, to purify the prophet's lips, for he was not, according to the tenor of your words, arrogant, but he confessed his own faults. Just as we read in the Psalms, [10]"What shalt be due unto thee, and what shall be done more unto thee in respect of a deceitful tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals that make desolate." And after all this swelling with pride, and boastfulness in prayer, and confidence in your holiness, like one fool trying to persuade another, you finish with the words "These lips with which I pour out my supplication that Thou mayest have pity on me." If you are holy, if you are innocent, if you are cleansed from all defilement, if you have sinned neither in word nor deed--although James says, [11]"He who offends not in word is a perfect man," and "No one can curb his tongue"--how is it that you sue for mercy? so that, forsooth, you bewail yourself, and pour out prayers because you are holy, pure, and innocent, a man of stainless lips, free from all falsehood, and endowed with a power like that of God. Christ prayed thus on the cross: [12]"My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me? Why art

Thou so far from helping Me?" And, again, [13]"Father, into Thy hands I commend My spirit," and [14]"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." And this is He, who, returning thanks for us, had said, [1]"I confess to Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth."

15. Our Lord so instructed His Apostles that, daily at the sacrifice of His body, believers make bold to say, "Our Father, Which art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy name"; they earnestly desire the name of God, which in itself is holy, to be hallowed in themselves; you say, "Thou knowest, Lord, how holy, how innocent, and how pure are my hands." Then they say: "Thy Kingdom come," anticipating the hope of the future kingdom, so that, when Christ reigns, sin may by no means reign in their mortal body, and to this they couple the words, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in Heaven"; so that human weakness may imitate the angels, and the will of our Lord may be fulfilled on earth; you say, "A man can, if he chooses, be free from all sin." The Apostles prayed for the daily bread, or the bread better than all food, which was to come, so that they might be worthy to receive the body of Christ; and you are led by your excess of holiness and well established righteousness to boldly claim the heavenly gifts. Next comes, "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors." No sooner do they rise from the baptismal font, and by being born again and incorporated into our Lord and Saviour thus fulfil what is written of them, [2]"Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven and whose sins are covered," than at the first communion of the body of Christ they say, "Forgive us our debts," though these debts had been forgiven them at their confession of Christ; but you in your arrogant pride boast of the cleanness of your holy hands and of the purity of your speech. However thorough the conversion of a man may be, and however perfect his possession of virtue after a time of sins and failings, can such persons be as free from fault as they who



are just leaving the font of Christ? And yet these latter are commanded to say, "Forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors"; not in the spirit of a false humility, but because they are afraid of human frailty and dread their own conscience. They say, "Lead us not into temptation"; you and Jovinian unite in saying that those who with a full faith have been baptized cannot be further tempted or sin. Lastly, they add. "But deliver us from the evil one." Why do they beg from the Lord what they have already by the power of free will? Oh, man, now thou hast been made clean in the laver, and of thee it is said, "Who is this that cometh up all white, leaning upon her beloved?" The bride, therefore, is washed, yet she cannot keep her purity, unless she be supported by the Lord. How is it that you long to be set free by the mercy of God, you who but a little while ago were released from your sins? The only explanation is the principle by which we maintain that, when we have done all, we must confess we are unprofitable.

16. So then your prayer outdoes the pride of the Pharisee, and you are condemned when compared with the Publican. He, standing afar off, did not dare to lift up his eyes unto Heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying,[1] "God be merciful unto me a sinner." And on this is based our Lord's declaration, "I say unto you this man went down to his house justified rather than the other. For everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." The Apostles are humbled that they may be exalted. Your disciples are lifted up that they may fall. In your flattery of the widow previously mentioned you are not ashamed to say that piety such as is found on earth, and truth which is everywhere a stranger, had made their home with her in preference to all others. You do not recollect the familiar words,[2] "O my people, they which call thee blessed cause thee to err, and destroy the paths of thy feet"; and you expressly praise her and say, "Happy beyond all thought are you!

how blessed! if righteousness, which is believed to be now nowhere but in Heaven, is found with you alone on earth." Is this teaching or slaying? Is it raising from earth, or casting down from heaven, to attribute that to a poor creature of a woman, which angels would not dare arrogate to themselves? If piety, truth, and righteousness are found on earth nowhere but in one woman, where shall we find your righteous followers, who, you boast, are sinless on earth? These two chapters on prayer and praise you and your disciples are wont to swear are none of yours, and yet your brilliant style is so clearly seen in them, and the elegance of your Ciceronian diction is so marked that, although you strut about with the slow pace of a tortoise, you have not the courage to acknowledge what you teach in private and expose for sale. Happy man! whose books no one writes out but your own disciples, so that whatever appears to be unacceptable, you may contend is not your own but some one else's work. And where is the man with ability enough to imitate the charm of your language?

17. C. I can put it off no longer; my patience is completely overcome by your iniquitous words. Tell me, pray, what sin have little infants committed. Neither the consciousness of wrong nor ignorance can be imputed to those who, according to the prophet Jonah, know not their right hand from their left. They cannot sin, and they can perish; their knees are too weak to walk, they utter inarticulate cries; we laugh at their attempts to speak; and, all the while, poor unfortunates! the torments of eternal misery are prepared for them.

A. Ah! now that your disciples have turned masters you begin to be fluent, not to say eloquent. Antony,' an excellent orator, whose praises Tully loudly proclaims, says that he had seen many fluent men, but so far never an eloquent speaker; so don't amuse me with flowers of oratory which have not grown in your own garden, and

with which the ears of inexperience and of boyhood are wont to be tickled, but plainly tell me what you think.

C. What I say is this--you must at least allow that they have no sin who cannot sin.

A. I will allow it, if they have been baptized into Christ; and if you will not then immediately bind me to agree with your opinion that a man can be without sin if he chooses; for they neither have the power nor the will; but they are free from all sin through the grace of God, which they received in their baptism.

C. You force me to make an invidious remark and ask, Why, what sin have they committed? that you may immediately have me stoned in some popular tumult. You have not the power to kill me, but you certainly have the will.

A. He slays a heretic who allows him to be a heretic. But when we rebuke him we give him life; you may die to your heresy, and live to the Catholic faith.

C. If you know us to be heretics, why do you not accuse us?

A. Because the[2] Apostle teaches me to avoid a heretic after the first and second admonition, not to accuse him. The Apostle knew that such an one is perverse and self-condemned. Besides, it would be the height of folly to make my faith depend on another man's judgment. For supposing some one were to call you a Catholic, am I to immediately give assent? Whoever defends you, and says that you rightly hold your perverse opinions, does not succeed in rescuing you from infamy, but charges himself with perfidy. Your numerous supporters will never prove you to be a Catholic, but will show that you are a heretic. But I would have such opinions as these

suppressed by ecclesiastical authority; otherwise we shall be in the case of those who show some dreadful picture to a crying child. May the fear of God grant us this--to despise all other fears. Therefore, either defend your opinions, or abandon what you are unable to defend. Whoever may be called in to defend you must be enrolled as a partisan, not as a patron.

18. C. Tell me, pray, and rid me of all doubts, why little children are baptized.

A. That their sins may be forgiven them in baptism.

C. What sin are they guilty of? How can any one be set free who is not bound?

A. You ask me! The Gospel trumpet will reply, the teacher of the Gentiles, the golden vessel shining throughout the world:[1] "Death reigned from Adam even unto Moses: even over those who did not sin after the likeness of the transgression of Adam, who is a figure of Him that was to come." And if you object that some are spoken of who did not sin, you must understand that they did not sin in the same way as Adam did by transgressing God's command in Paradise. But all men are held liable either on account of their ancient forefather Adam, or on their own account. He that is an infant is released in baptism from the chain which bound his father. He who is old enough to have discernment is set free from the chain of his own or another's sin by the blood of Christ. You must not think me a heretic because I take this view, for the blessed martyr Cyprian, whose rival you boast of being in the classification of Scripture proofs, in the[2] epistle addressed to Bishop Fidus on the Baptism of Infants speaks thus: "Moreover, if even the worst offenders, and those who previous to baptism sin much against God, once they believe have the gift of remission of sins, and no one is kept from

baptism and from grace. how much more ought not an infant to be kept from baptism seeing that, being only just born, he has committed no sin? He has only, being born according to the flesh among Adam's sons, incurred the taint of ancient death by his first birth. And he is the more easily admitted to remission of sins because of the very fact that not his own sins but those of another are remitted to him. And so, dearest brother, it was our decision in council that no one ought to be kept by us from baptism and from the grace of God, Who is merciful to all, and kind, and good And whereas this rule ought to be observed and kept with reference to all, bear in mind that it ought so much the more to be observed with regard to infants themselves and those just born, for they have the greater claims on our assistance in order to obtain Divine mercy, because their cries and tears from the very birth are one perpetual prayer."

19. That holy man and eloquent bishop Augustin not long ago wrote to[1] Marcellinus (the same that was afterwards, though innocent, put to death by heretics on the pretext of his taking part in the tyranny of Heraclian[2]) two treatises on infant baptism, in opposition to your heresy which maintains that infants are baptized not for remission of sins, but for admission to the kingdom of heaven, according as it is written in the Gospel,[3] "Except a man be born again of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." He addressed a[4] third, moreover, to the same Marcellinus, against those who say as do you, that a man can be free from sin, if he chooses, without the help of God. And, recently, a[5]fourth to Hilary against this doctrine of yours, which is full of perversity. And he is said to have others on the anvil with special regard to you, which have not yet come to hand. Wherefore, I think I must abandon my task, for fear Horace's words may be thrown at me,[6]"Don't carry firewood into a forest." For we must either say

the same as he does, and that would be superfluous; or, if we wished to say something fresh, we should[7] find our best points anticipated by that splendid genius. One thing I will say and so end my discourse, that you ought either to give us a new creed, so that, after baptizing children into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you may baptize them into the kingdom of heaven; or, if you have one baptism both for infants and for persons of mature age, it follows that infants also should be baptized for the remission of sins after the likeness of the transgression of Adam. But if you think the remission of another's sins implies injustice, and that he has no need of it who could not sin, cross over to Origen, your special favourite, who says that ancient offences[1] committed long before in the heavens are loosed in baptism. You will then be not only led by his authority in other matters, but will be following his error in this also.

The Council of Orange is one of the most important councils of the early Church and was often pointed to by the Reformers as evidence that Rome had abandoned the theology of its own Council Fathers and Church Doctors. All persons of faith should take the time to get to know it. The content of the Council itself naturally grew out of the public dispute between Augustine and Pelagius. This critical dispute had to do with the extent to which the natural man is responsible for his or her own regeneration (the new birth), i.e. whether the work of God in regeneration monergistic (God alone) or synergistic (a cooperation of man and God) ? The Council of Orange condemned the Semi-Pelagian doctrine that fallen creatures, although sinful, have an island of righteousness which made them morally competent enough to contribute toward their salvation by taking hold of the

offer of the grace of God through an act of their unregenerate natural will. Orange upheld Augustine's view that the will is evil by corruption of nature and becomes good only by a correction of grace. For what makes men to differ, the grace God or the will of man? Below we focus on five (5) of the 25 Canons that have been influential to the Reformed understanding of the work of Christ in salvation. These truths were hugely consequential in 16th century Reformation Theology and its apprehension of the doctrine's of grace. Grounded in Scripture, this Counsel is devotional theology at its best and will transform the outlook of all who take time to meditate on it. (Especially take note of Canon's 6-7)

# The Canons of the Council of Orange 529 AD

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CANON 1. If anyone denies that it is the whole man, that is, both body and soul, that was "changed for the worse" through the offense of Adam's sin, but believes that the freedom of the soul remains unimpaired and that only the body is subject to corruption, he is deceived by the error of Pelagius and contradicts the scripture which says, "The soul that sins shall die" (Ezek. 18:20); and, "Do you not know that if you yield yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are the slaves of the one whom you obey?" (Rom. 6:16); and, "For whatever overcomes a man, to that he is enslaved" (2 Pet. 2:19).

CANON 2. If anyone asserts that Adam's sin affected him alone and not his descendants also, or at least if he declares that it is only the death of the body which is the punishment for sin, and not also that sin, which is the death of the soul, passed through one man to the whole human race, he does injustice to God and contradicts the Apostle, who says, "Therefore as sin came into the world through one man and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all men sinned" (Rom. 5:12).

CANON 3. If anyone says that the grace of God can be conferred as a result of human prayer, but that it is not grace itself which makes us pray to God, he contradicts the prophet Isaiah, or the Apostle who says the same thing, "I have been found by those who did not seek me; I have shown myself to those who did not ask for me" (Rom 10:20, quoting Isa. 65:1).



CANON 4. If anyone maintains that God awaits our will to be cleansed from sin, but does not confess that even our will to be cleansed comes to us through the infusion and working of the Holy Spirit, he resists the Holy Spirit himself who says through Solomon, "The will is prepared by the Lord" (Prov. 8:35, LXX), and the salutary word of the Apostle, "For God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13).

CANON 5. If anyone says that not only the increase of faith but also its beginning and the very desire for faith, by which we believe in Him who justifies the ungodly and comes to the regeneration of holy baptism -- if anyone says that this belongs to us by nature and not by a gift of grace, that is, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit amending our will and turning it from unbelief to faith and from godlessness to godliness, it is proof that he is opposed to the teaching of the Apostles, for blessed Paul says, "And I am sure that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6). And again, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). For those who state that the faith by which we believe in God is natural make all who are separated from the Church of Christ by definition in some measure believers.

CANON 6. If anyone says that God has mercy upon us when, apart from his grace, we believe, will, desire, strive, labor, pray, watch, study, seek, ask, or knock, but does not confess that it is by the infusion and inspiration of the Holy Spirit within us that we have the faith, the will, or the strength to do all these things as we ought; or if anyone makes the assistance of grace depend on the humility or obedience of man and does not agree that it is a gift of grace itself that we are obedient and humble, he contradicts the Apostle who

says, "What have you that you did not receive?" (1 Cor. 4:7), and, "But by the grace of God I am what I am" (1 Cor. 15:10).

CANON 7. If anyone affirms that we can form any right opinion or make any right choice which relates to the salvation of eternal life, as is expedient for us, or that we can be saved, that is, assent to the preaching of the gospel through our natural powers without the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who makes all men gladly assent to and believe in the truth, he is led astray by a heretical spirit, and does not understand the voice of God who says in the Gospel, "For apart from me you can do nothing" (John 15:5), and the word of the Apostle, "Not that we are competent of ourselves to claim anything as coming from us; our competence is from God" (2 Cor. 3:5).

CANON 8. If anyone maintains that some are able to come to the grace of baptism by mercy but others through free will, which has manifestly been corrupted in all those who have been born after the transgression of the first man, it is proof that he has no place in the true faith. For he denies that the free will of all men has been weakened through the sin of the first man, or at least holds that it has been affected in such a way that they have still the ability to seek the mystery of eternal salvation by themselves without the revelation of God. The Lord himself shows how contradictory this is by declaring that no one is able to come to him "unless the Father who sent me draws him" (John 6:44), as he also says to Peter, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 16:17), and as the Apostle says, "No one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:3).

CANON 9. Concerning the succor of God. It is a mark of divine favor when we are of a right purpose and keep our feet from hypocrisy and unrighteousness; for as often as we do good, God is at work in us and with us, in order that we may do so.

CANON 10. Concerning the succor of God. The succor of God is to be ever sought by the regenerate and converted also, so that they may be able to come to a successful end or persevere in good works.

CANON 11. Concerning the duty to pray. None would make any true prayer to the Lord had he not received from him the object of his prayer, as it is written, "Of thy own have we given thee" (1 Chron. 29:14).

CANON 12. Of what sort we are whom God loves. God loves us for what we shall be by his gift, and not by our own deserving.

CANON 13. Concerning the restoration of free will. The freedom of will that was destroyed in the first man can be restored only by the grace of baptism, for what is lost can be returned only by the one who was able to give it. Hence the Truth itself declares: "So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed" (John 8:36).

CANON 14. No mean wretch is freed from his sorrowful state, however great it may be, save the one who is anticipated by the mercy of God, as the Psalmist says, "Let thy compassion come speedily to meet us" (Ps. 79:8), and again, "My God in his steadfast love will meet me" (Ps. 59:10).

CANON 15. Adam was changed, but for the worse, through his own iniquity from what God made him. Through the grace of God the believer is changed, but for the better, from what his iniquity has done for him. The one, therefore, was the change brought about by

the first sinner; the other, according to the Psalmist, is the change of the right hand of the Most High (Ps. 77:10).

CANON 16. No man shall be honored by his seeming attainment, as though it were not a gift, or suppose that he has received it because a missive from without stated it in writing or in speech. For the Apostle speaks thus, "For if justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose" (Gal. 2:21); and "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men" (Eph. 4:8, quoting Ps. 68:18). It is from this source that any man has what he does; but whoever denies that he has it from this source either does not truly have it, or else "even what he has will be taken away" (Matt. 25:29).

CANON 17. Concerning Christian courage. The courage of the Gentiles is produced by simple greed, but the courage of Christians by the love of God which "has been poured into our hearts" not by freedom of will from our own side but "through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us" (Rom. 5:5).

CANON 18. That grace is not preceded by merit. Recompense is due to good works if they are performed; but grace, to which we have no claim, precedes them, to enable them to be done.

CANON 19. That a man can be saved only when God shows mercy. Human nature, even though it remained in that sound state in which it was created, could be no means save itself, without the assistance of the Creator; hence since man cannot safe-guard his salvation without the grace of God, which is a gift, how will he be able to restore what he has lost without the grace of God?

CANON 20. That a man can do no good without God. God does much that is good in a man that the man does not do; but a man does

nothing good for which God is not responsible, so as to let him do it.

CANON 21. Concerning nature and grace. As the Apostle most truly says to those who would be justified by the law and have fallen from grace, "If justification were through the law, then Christ died to no purpose" (Gal. 2:21), so it is most truly declared to those who imagine that grace, which faith in Christ advocates and lays hold of, is nature: "If justification were through nature, then Christ died to no purpose." Now there was indeed the law, but it did not justify, and there was indeed nature, but it did not justify. Not in vain did Christ therefore die, so that the law might be fulfilled by him who said, "I have come not to abolish them, but to fulfil them" (Matt. 5:17), and that the nature which had been destroyed by Adam might be restored by him who said that he had come "to seek and to save the lost" (Luke 19:10).

CANON 22. Concerning those things that belong to man. No man has anything of his own but untruth and sin. But if a man has any truth or righteousness, it from that fountain for which we must thirst in this desert, so that we may be refreshed from it as by drops of water and not faint on the way.

CANON 23. Concerning the will of God and of man. Men do their own will and not the will of God when they do what displeases him; but when they follow their own will and comply with the will of God, however willingly they do so, yet it is his will by which what they will is both prepared and instructed.

CANON 24. Concerning the branches of the vine. The branches on the vine do not give life to the vine, but receive life from it; thus the vine is related to its branches in such a way that it supplies them with what they need to live, and does not take this from them. Thus it is to the advantage of the disciples, not Christ, both to have Christ abiding

in them and to abide in Christ. For if the vine is cut down another can shoot up from the live root; but one who is cut off from the vine cannot live without the root (John 15:5ff).

CANON 25. Concerning the love with which we love God. It is wholly a gift of God to love God. He who loves, even though he is not loved, allowed himself to be loved. We are loved, even when we displease him, so that we might have means to please him. For the Spirit, whom we love with the Father and the Son, has poured into our hearts the love of the Father and the Son (Rom. 5:5).

CONCLUSION. And thus according to the passages of holy scripture quoted above or the interpretations of the ancient Fathers we must, under the blessing of God, preach and believe as follows. The sin of the first man has so impaired and weakened free will that no one thereafter can either love God as he ought or believe in God or do good for God's sake, unless the grace of divine mercy has preceded him. We therefore believe that the glorious faith which was given to Abel the righteous, and Noah, and Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and to all the saints of old, and which the Apostle Paul commends in extolling them (Heb. 11), was not given through natural goodness as it was before to Adam, but was bestowed by the grace of God. And we know and also believe that even after the coming of our Lord this grace is not to be found in the free will of all who desire to be baptized, but is bestowed by the kindness of Christ, as has already been frequently stated and as the Apostle Paul declares, "For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake" (Phil. 1:29). And again, "He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:6). And again, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and it is not your own doing, it is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). And as the Apostle says of himself, "I have obtained

mercy to be faithful" (1 Cor. 7:25, cf. 1 Tim. 1:13). He did not say, "because I was faithful," but "to be faithful." And again, "What have you that you did not receive?" (1 Cor. 4:7). And again, "Every good endowment and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights" (Jas. 1:17). And again, "No one can receive anything except what is given him from heaven" (John 3:27). There are innumerable passages of holy scripture which can be quoted to prove the case for grace, but they have been omitted for the sake of brevity, because further examples will not really be of use where few are deemed sufficient.

According to the catholic faith we also believe that after grace has been received through baptism, all baptized persons have the ability and responsibility, if they desire to labor faithfully, to perform with the aid and cooperation of Christ what is of essential importance in regard to the salvation of their soul. We not only do not believe that any are foreordained to evil by the power of God, but even state with utter abhorrence that if there are those who want to believe so evil a thing, they are anathema. We also believe and confess to our benefit that in every good work it is not we who take the initiative and are then assisted through the mercy of God, but God himself first inspires in us both faith in him and love for him without any previous good works of our own that deserve reward, so that we may both faithfully seek the sacrament of baptism, and after baptism be able by his help to do what is pleasing to him. We must therefore most evidently believe that the praiseworthy faith of the thief whom the Lord called to his home in paradise, and of Cornelius the centurion, to whom the angel of the Lord was sent, and of Zacchaeus, who was worthy to receive the Lord himself, was not a natural endowment but a gift of God's kindness.

# Key Quotes from On the Bondage of the Will

by Martin Luther

“I frankly confess that, for myself, even if it could be, I should not want ‘free-will’ to be given me, nor anything to be left in my own hands to enable me to endeavour after salvation; not merely because in face of so many dangers, and adversities and assaults of devils, I could not stand my ground ...; but because even were there no dangers ... I should still be forced to labour with no guarantee of success ... But now that God has taken my salvation out of the control of my own will, and put it under the control of His, and promised to save me, not according to my working or running, but according to His own grace and mercy, I have the comfortable certainty that He is faithful and will not lie to me, and that He is also great and powerful, so that no devils or opposition can break Him or pluck me from Him. Furthermore, I have the comfortable certainty that I please God, not by reason of the merit of my works, but by reason of His merciful favour promised to me; so that, if I work too little, or badly, He does not impute it to me, but with fatherly compassion pardons me and makes me better. This is the glorying of all the saints in their God” - Martin Luther, *The Bondage of the Will* (Grand Rapids: Revell, 1957), 313-314.

"when you are finished with all your commands and exhortations ... I'll write Ro.3:20 over the top of it all" ("**...through the law comes knowledge of sin.**").

"For if man has lost his freedom, and is forced to serve sin, and cannot will good, what conclusion can more justly be drawn



concerning him, than that he sins and wills evil necessarily?" Martin Luther BW pg. 149

"...'if thou art willing' is a verb in the subjunctive mood, which asserts nothing...a conditional statement asserts nothing indicatively." "if thou art willing", "if thou hear", "if thou do" declare, not man's ability, but his duty. pg 157

"the commandments are not given inappropriately or pointlessly; but in order that through them the proud, blind man may learn the plague of his impotence, should he try to do as he is commanded." pg. 160

Speaking to Erasmus, "Throughout your treatment you forget that you said that 'free-will' can do nothing without grace, and you prove that 'free-will' can do all things without grace! Your inferences and analogies "For if man has lost his freedom, and is forced to serve sin, and cannot will good, what conclusion can more justly be drawn concerning him, than that he sins and wills evil necessarily?" Martin Luther BW pg. 149

"Even grammarians and schoolboys on street corners know that nothing more is signified by verbs in the imperative mood than what ought to be done, and that what is done or can be done should be expressed by words in the indicative. How is it that you theologians are twice as stupid as schoolboys, in that as soon as you get hold of a single imperative verb you infer an indicative meaning, as though the moment a thing is commanded it is done, or can be done? pg 159

"The passages of Scripture you cite are imperative; and they prove and establish nothing about the ability of man, but only lay down what is and what not to be done." pg 161

"Does it follow from: 'turn ye' that therefore you can turn? Does it follow from "'Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart' (Deut 6.5) that therefore you can love with all your heart? What do arguments of this kind prove, but the 'free-will' does not need the grace of God, but can do all things by its own power...But it does not follow from this that man is converted by his own power, nor do the words say so; they simply say: "if thou wilt turn, telling man what he should do. When he knows it, and sees that he cannot do it, he will ask whence he may find ability to do it..." 164

"By the law is the knowledge of sin' [Rom 3:20], so the word of grace comes only to those who are distressed by a sense of sin and tempted to despair." pg. 168

As to why some are touched by the law and others not, so that some receive and others scorn the offer of grace...[this is the] hidden will of God, Who, according to His own counsel, ordains such persons as He wills to receive and partake of the mercy preached and offered." pg. 169

The "imperative or hypothetical passages, or wishes, by which is signified, not what we can do, or do do...but what we ought to do, and what is required of us, so that our impotence may be made known to us and the knowledge of sin may be given to us." 174

God Incarnate says; 'I would, and thou wouldst not.' God Incarnate, I repeat, was sent for this purpose, to will, say, do, suffer and offer to all me, all that is necessary for salvation; albeit He offends many who, being abandoned or hardened by God's secret will of Majesty, do not receive Him thus willing, speaking, doing, and offering. As John says: "The light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness com comprehendeth it not' (John 1.5)

And again: "He came unto his own, and His own received Him not. (v. 11)"The law indicates the impotence of man and the saving power of God..."if any man will come after me': 'he that wills to save his life'; 'if ye love me'; 'if ye shall continue'. In sum, as I have said-let every occurrence of the conjunction 'if', and all imperative verbs, be collected together (so we may help the Diatribe...) [indicating that all commands to believe or follow Christ are conditional, not stating man's ability]

Let all the 'free-will' in the world do all it can with all its strength; it will never give rise to a single instance of ability to avoid being hardened if God does not give the Spirit, or of meriting mercy if it is left to its own strength." p. 202

"omnipotence and foreknowledge of God, I repeat, utterly destroy the doctrine of 'free-will'...doubtless it gives the greatest possible offense to common sense or natural reason, that God, Who is proclaimed as being full of mercy and goodness, and so on, should of His own mere will abandon, harden and damn men, as though He delighted in the sins and great eternal torments of such poor wretches. it seems an iniquitous, cruel, intolerable thought to think of God; and it is this that has been such a stumbling block to so many great men down through the ages. And who would not stumble at it? I have stumbled at it myself more than once, down to the deepest pit of despair, so that I wished I had never been made a man. (That was before I knew how health-giving that despair was, and how close to grace.)" Luther BW pg. 217

"...it was not of the merits of Jacob or Esau, 'but of Him that Calleth that it was said of Sara: the elder shall serve the younger' Paul is discussing whether they attained to what was spoken of them by the power or merits of 'free-will"; and he proves they they did not, but

that Jacob attained what Esau did not solely by the grace of "Him that Calleth"<sup>224</sup>

Now, since on God's own testimony, men are 'flesh', they can savour of nothing but the flesh; therefore 'free-will can avail only to sin. And if, while the Spirit of God is calling and teaching among them, they go from bad to worse, what could they do when left to themselves, without the Spirit of God? Your [Erasmus] observation that Moses is speaking of the men of that age is not to the point at all. The same is true of all men, for all are 'flesh'; as Christ says, 'That which is born of the flesh is flesh' (john 3:6) How grave a defect this is, He Himself there teaches, when he says: 'Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God (v. 5)...I call a man ungodly if he is without the Spirit of God; for Scripture says that the Spirit is given to justify the ungodly. As Christ distinguished the Spirit from the flesh, saying: "that which is born of the flesh is flesh', and adds that which is born of the flesh cannot enter the kingdom of God', it obviously follows that whatever is flesh is ungodly, under God's wrath, and a stranger to His kingdom. And if it is a stranger to God's kingdom and Spirit, it follows of necessity that it is under the kingdom and spirit of Satan. For there is no middle kingdom between the kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan, which are ever at war with each other. 241, 253

"I say that man without the grace of God nonetheless remains the general omnipotence of God who effects, and moves and impels all things in a necessary, infallible course; but the effect of man's being carried along is nothing--that is, avails nothing in God's sight, nor is reckoned to be anything but sin. 265

"the Baptist's word means that man can receive nothing unless given him from above; so that free-will is nothing!"

I say that man, before he is renewed into the new creation of the Spirit's kingdom, does and endeavours nothing to prepare himself for that new creation and kingdom, and when he is re-created has does and endeavors nothing towards his perseverance in that kingdom; but the Spirit alone works both blessings in us, regenerating us, and preserving us when regenerate, without ourselves..." 268

"All the passages in the Holy Scriptures that mention assistance are they that do away with "free-will", and these are countless...For grace is needed, and the help of grace is given, because "free-will" can do nothing." 270

"I think it is vital. If it is 'irreligious', 'idle', 'superfluous'- your words- to know whether or not God knows anything contingently; whether our will is in any way active in matters relating to eternal salvation, or whether it is merely the passive subject of the work of grace; whether we do our good and evil deeds of mere necessity-whether, that is, we are not rather passive while they are wrought in us-then may I ask what does constitute godly, serious, useful knowledge?...If it is not really essential, and is not surely known, then neither God, Christ, the gospel, faith nor anything else even of Judaism, let alone Christianity, is left!"

"Mankind has a free will; but it is free to milk cows and to build houses, nothing more."

## **The Necessity of Reforming the Church**

# John Calvin

To The Most Invincible Emperor Charles V., And The Most Illustrious Princes And Other Orders, Now Holding A Diet Of The Empire At Spires, [1543]

## A HUMBLE EXHORTATION

Seriously to Undertake The Task Of Restoring The Church.

Presented In The Name Of All Those Who Wish Christ To Reign.

AUGUST EMPEROR,

You have summoned this Diet, that, in concert with the Most Illustrious Princes and other Orders of the Empire, you may at length deliberate and decide upon the means of ameliorating the present condition of the Church, which we all see to be very miserable, and almost desperate. Now, therefore, while you are seated at this consultation, I humbly beg and implore, first of your Imperial Majesty, and at the same time of you also, Most Illustrious Princes, and distinguished Personages, that you will not decline to read, and diligently ponder, what I have to lay before you. The magnitude and weightiness of the cause may well excite in you an eagerness to hear, and I will set the matter so plainly in your view, that you can have no difficulty in determining what course to adopt. Whoever I am, I here profess to plead in defense, both of sound doctrine and of the Church. In this character I seem at all events entitled to expect that you will not deny me audience until such time as it may appear whether I falsely usurp the character, or whether I faithfully perform its duties, and make good what I profess. But though I feel that I am by no means equal to so great a task, I am not

at all afraid, that after you have heard the nature of my office, I shall be accused either of folly or presumption in having ventured thus to appear before you. There are two circumstances by which men are wont to recommend, or at least to justify, their conduct. If a thing is done honestly, and from pious zeal, we deem it worthy of praise; if it is done under the pressure of public necessity, we at least deem it not unworthy of excuse. Since both of these apply here, I am confident, from your equity, that I shall easily obtain your approval of my design. For where can I exert myself to better purpose or more honestly, where, too, in a matter at this time more necessary, than in attempting, according to my ability, to aid the Church of Christ, whose claims it is unlawful in any instance to deny, and which is now in grievous distress, and in extreme danger? But there is no occasion for a long preface concerning myself. Receive what I say as you would do if it were pronounced by the united voice of all those who either have already taken care to restore the Church, or are desirous that it should be restored to true order. In this situation are several Princes, of not the humblest class, and not a few distinguished communities. For all these I speak, though as an individual, yet so that it is more truly they who at once, and with one mouth, speak through me. To these add the countless multitude of pious men, who, scattered over the various regions of the Christian world, still unanimously concur with me in this pleading. In short, regard this as the common address of all who so eminently deplore the present corruption of the Church, that they are unable to bear it longer, and are determined not to rest till they see some amendment. I am aware of the odious names with which we are branded; but, meanwhile, whatever be the name by which it is thought proper to designate us, hear our cause, and, after you have heard, judge what the place is which we are entitled to hold.

First, then, the question is not, Whether the Church labors under diseases both numerous and grievous, (this is admitted even by all moderate judges,) but whether the diseases are of a kind the cure of which admits not of longer delay, and as to which, therefore, it is neither useful nor becoming to await the result of slow remedies. We are accused of rash and impious innovation, for having ventured to propose any change at all on the former state of the Church. What! Even if it has not been done either with out cause or imperfectly? I hear there are persons who, even in this case, do not hesitate to condemn us; their opinion being, that we were indeed right in desiring amendment, but not right in attempting it. From such persons, all I would ask at present is, that they will for a little suspend their judgment until I shall have shown from fact that we have not been prematurely hasty — have not attempted any thing rashly, any thing alien from our duty — have, in fine, done nothing until compelled by the highest necessity. To enable me to prove this, it is necessary to attend to the matters in dispute.

We maintain, then, that at the commencement, when God raised up Luther and others, who held forth a torch to light us into the way of salvation, and who, by their ministry, founded and reared our churches, those heads of doctrine in which the truth of our religion, those in which the pure and legitimate sonship of God, and those in which the salvation of men are comprehended, were in a great measure obsolete. We maintain that the use of the sacraments was in many ways vitiated and polluted. And we maintain that the government of the Church was converted into a species of foul and insufferable tyranny. But, perhaps these averments have not force enough to move certain individuals until they are better explained. This, therefore, I will do, not as the subject demands, but as far as my ability will permit. Here, however, I have no intention to review and discuss all our controversies; that would require a long discourse,



and this is not the place for it. I wish only to show how just and necessary the causes were which forced us to the changes for which we are blamed. To accomplish this, I must take up together the three following points.

First, I must briefly enumerate the evils which compelled us to seek for remedies.

Secondly, I must show that the particular remedies which our Reformers employed were apt and salutary.

Thirdly, I must make it plain that we were not at liberty any longer to delay putting forth our hand, in as much as the matter demanded instant amendment.

The first point, as I merely advert to it for the purpose of clearing my way to the other two, I will endeavor to dispose of in a few words, but in wiping off the heavy charge of sacrilegious audacity and sedition, founded on the allegation, that we have improperly, and with intemperate haste usurped an office which did not belong to us, I will dwell at greater length. If it be inquired, then, by what things chiefly the Christian religion has a standing existence amongst us and maintains its truth, it will be found that the following two not only occupy the principal place, but comprehend under them all the other parts, and consequently the whole substance of Christianity, viz., a knowledge, first, of the mode in which God is duly worshipped; and, secondly of the source from which salvation is to be obtained. When these are kept out of view, though we may glory in the name of Christians, our profession is empty and vain. After these come the Sacraments and the Government of the Church, which, as they were instituted for the preservation of these branches of doctrine, ought not to be employed for any other purpose; and indeed, the only means of ascertaining whether they are administered purely and in

due form, or otherwise, is to bring them to this test. If any one is desirous of a clearer and more familiar illustration, I would say, that rule in the Church, the pastoral office, and all other matters of order, resemble the body, whereas the doctrine which regulates the due worship of God, and points out the ground on which the consciences of men must rest their hope of salvation, is the soul which animates the body, renders it lively and active, and, in short, makes it not to be a dead and useless carcass.

As to what I have yet said, there is no controversy among the pious, or among men of right and sane mind.

Let us now see what is meant by the due worship of God. Its chief foundation is to acknowledge Him to be, as He is, the only source of all virtue, justice, holiness, wisdom, truth, power, goodness, mercy, life, and salvation; in accordance with this, to ascribe and render to Him the glory of all that is good, to seek all things in Him alone, and in every want have recourse to Him alone. Hence arises prayer, hence praise and thanksgiving — these being attestations to the glory which we attribute to Him. This is that genuine sanctification of His name which He requires of us above all things. To this is united adoration, by which we manifest for Him the reverence due to his greatness and excellency, and to this ceremonies are subservient, as helps or instruments, in order that, in the performance of divine worship, the body may be exercised at the same time with the soul. Next after these comes self-abasement, when, renouncing the world and the flesh, we are transformed in the renewing of our mind, and living no longer to ourselves, submit to be ruled and actuated by Him. By this self-abasement we are trained to obedience and devotedness to his will, so that his fear reigns in our hearts, and regulates all the actions of our lives. That in these things consists the true and sincere worship which alone God approves, and in which

alone He delights, is both taught by the Holy Spirit throughout the Scriptures and is also, antecedent to discussion, the obvious dictate of piety. Nor from the beginning was there any other method of worshipping God, the only difference being, that this spiritual truth, which with us is naked and simple, was under the former dispensation wrapt up in figures. And this is the meaning of our Savior's words,

“The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth,” (John 4:23.)

For by these words he meant not to declare that God was not worshipped by the fathers in this spiritual manner, but only to point out a distinction in the external form, viz., That while they had the Spirit shadowed forth by many figures, we have it in simplicity. But it has always been an acknowledged point, that God, who is a Spirit, must be worshipped in spirit and in truth.

Moreover, the rule which distinguishes between pure and vitiated worship is of universal application, in order that we may not adopt any device which seems fit to ourselves, but look to the injunction of Him who alone is entitled to prescribe. Therefore, if we would have Him to approve our worship, this rule, which he everywhere enforces with the utmost strictness, must be carefully observed. For there is a twofold reason why the Lord, in condemning and prohibiting all fictitious worship, requires us to give obedience only to his own voice. First, it tends greatly to establish His authority that we do not follow our own pleasures but depend entirely on his sovereignty; and, secondly, such is our folly, that when we are left at liberty, all we are able to do is to go astray. And then when once we have turned aside from the right path, there is no end to our wanderings, until we get buried under a multitude of superstitions. Justly, therefore, does

the Lord, in order to assert his full right of dominion, strictly enjoin what he wishes us to do, and at once reject all human devices which are at variance with his command. Justly, too, does he, in express terms, define our limits that we may not, by fabricating perverse modes of worship, provoke His anger against us.

I know how difficult it is to persuade the world that God disapproves of all modes of worship not expressly sanctioned by His Word. The opposite persuasion which cleaves to them, being seated, as it were, in their very bones and marrow, is, that whatever they do has in itself a sufficient sanction, provided it exhibits some kind of zeal for the honor of God. But since God not only regards as fruitless, but also plainly abominates, whatever we undertake from zeal to His worship, if at variance with His command, what do we gain by a contrary course? The words of God are clear and distinct,

“Obedience is better than sacrifice.” “In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men,” (1 Samuel 15:22; Matthew 15:9.)

Every addition to His word, especially in this matter, is a lie. Mere “will worship” *evqeloqrhskei*,<sup>a</sup> is vanity. This is the decision, and when once the judge has decided, it is no longer time to debate.

Will your Imperial Majesty now be pleased to recognize, and will you, Most Illustrious Princes, lend me your attention, while I show how utterly at variance with this view are all the observances, in which, throughout the Christian world in the present day, divine worship is made to consist? In word, indeed, they concede to God the glory of all that is good, but, in reality, they rob him of the half, or more than the half, by partitioning his perfections among the saints. Let our adversaries use what evasions they may, and defame us for exaggerating what they pretend to be trivial errors, I will simply state

the fact as every man perceives it. Divine offices are distributed among the saints as if they had been appointed colleagues to the Supreme God, and, in a multitude of instances, they are made to do his work, while He is kept out of view. The thing I complain of is just what everybody confesses by a vulgar proverb. For what is meant by saying, “the Lord cannot be known for apostles,” unless it be that, by the height to which apostles are raised, the dignity of Christ is sunk, or at least obscured? The consequence of this perversity is, that mankind, forsaking the fountain of living waters, have learned, as Jeremiah tells us, to hew them out

“cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water,” (Jeremiah 2:13.)

For where is it that they seek for salvation and every other good? Is it in God alone? The whole tenor of their lives openly proclaims the contrary. They say, indeed, that they seek salvation and every other good in Him; but it is mere pretense, seeing they seek them elsewhere.

Of this fact, we have clear proof in the corruptions by which prayer was first vitiated, and afterwards in a great measure perverted and extinguished. We have observed, that prayer affords a test whether or not suppliants render due glory to God. In like manner, will it enable us to discover whether, after robbing Him of his glory, they transfer it to the creatures. In genuine prayer, something more is required than mere entreaty. The suppliant must feel assured that God is the only being to whom he ought to flee, both because He only can succor him in necessity; and also, because He has engaged to do it. But no man can have this conviction unless he pays regard both to the command by which God calls us to himself, and to the promise of listening to our prayers which is annexed to the command. The command was not thus regarded when the generality of mankind

invoked angels and dead men promiscuously with God, and the wiser part, if they did not invoke them instead of God, at least regarded them as mediators, at whose intercession God granted their requests. Where, then, was the promise which is founded entirely on the intercession of Christ? Passing by Christ, the only Mediator, each betook himself to the patron who had struck his fancy, or if at any time a place was given to Christ, it was one in which he remained unnoticed, like some ordinary individual in a crowd. Then, although nothing is more repugnant to the nature of genuine prayer than doubt and distrust, so much did these prevail, that they were almost regarded as necessary, in order to pray aright. And why was this? Just because the world understood not the force of the expressions in which God invites us to pray to him, engages to do whatsoever we ask in reliance on his command and promises and sets forth Christ as the Advocate in whose name our prayers are heard. Besides, let the public prayers which are in common use in Churches be examined. It will be found that they are stained with numberless impurities. From them, therefore, we have it in our power to judge how much this part of divine worship was vitiated. Nor was there less corruption in the expressions of thanksgiving. To this fact, testimony is borne by the public hymns, in which the saints are lauded for every blessing, just as if they were the colleagues of God.

Then what shall I say of adoration? Do not men pay to images and statues the very same reverence which they pay to God? It is an error to suppose that there is any difference between this madness and that of the heathen. For God forbids us not only to worship images, but to regard them as the residence of his divinity, and worship it as residing in them. The very same pretexts which the patrons of this abomination employ in the present day, were formerly employed by the heathen to cloak their impiety. Besides, it is undeniable that saints, nay, their very bones, garments, shoes, and images, are

adored even in the place of God. But some subtle disputant will object, that there are divers species of adoration, — that the honor of dulia, as they term it, is given to saints, their images, and their bones; and that latria is reserved for God as due to him only, unless we are to except hyperdulia a species which as the infatuation increased, was invented to set the blessed Virgin above the rest. As if these subtle distinctions were either known or present to the minds of those who prostrate themselves before images. Meanwhile, the world is full of idolatry not less gross, and if I may so speak, not less capable of being felt, than was the ancient idolatry of the Egyptians, which all the Prophets everywhere so strongly reprobate.

I am merely glancing at each of these corruptions, because I will afterwards more clearly expose their demerits.

I come now to ceremonies, which, while they ought to be grave attestations of divine worship, are rather a mere mockery of God. A new Judaism, as a substitute for that which God had distinctly abrogated, has again been reared up by means of numerous puerile extravagances, collected from different quarters; and with these have been mixed up certain impious rites, partly borrowed from the heathen, and more adapted to some theatrical show than to the dignity of our religion. The first evil here is, that an immense number of ceremonies, which God had by his authority abrogated, once for all, have been again revived. The next evil is, that while ceremonies ought to be living exercises of piety, men are vainly occupied with numbers of them that are both frivolous and useless. But by far the most deadly evil of all is, that after men have thus mocked God with ceremonies of one kind or other, they think they have fulfilled their duty as admirably as if these ceremonies included in them the whole essence of piety and divine worship.

With regard to self-abasement, on which depends regeneration to newness of life, the whole doctrine was entirely obliterated from the minds of men, or, at least, half buried, so that it was known to few, and to them but slenderly. But the spiritual sacrifice which the Lord in an especial manner recommends, is to mortify the old, and be transformed into a new man. It may be, perhaps, that preachers stammer out something about these words, but that they have no idea of the things meant by them is apparent even from this, — that they strenuously oppose us in our attempt to restore this branch of divine worship. If at any time they discourse on repentance, they only glance, as if in contempt, at the points of principal moment, and dwell entirely on certain external exercises of the body, which, as Paul assures us, are not of the highest utility, (Colossians 2:23; 1 Timothy 4:8.) What makes this perverseness the more intolerable is, that the generality, under a pernicious error, pursue the shadow for the substance, and, overlooking true repentance, devote their whole attention to abstinence, vigils, and other things, which Paul terms “beggarly elements” of the world.

Having observed that the sword of God is the test which discriminates between his true worship and that which is false and vitiated, we thence readily infer that the whole form of divine worship in general use in the present day is nothing but mere corruption. For men pay no regard to what God has commanded, or to what he approves, in order that they may serve him in a becoming manner, but assume to themselves a license of devising modes of worship, and afterwards, obtruding them upon him as a substitute for obedience. If in what I say I seem to exaggerate, let an examination be made of all the acts by which the generality suppose that they worship God. I dare scarcely accept a tenth part as not the random offspring of their own brain. What more would we? God rejects, condemns, abominates all fictitious worship, and employs his



Word as a bridle to keep us in unqualified obedience. When shaking off this yoke, we wander after our own fictions, and offer to him a worship, the work of human rashness; how much soever it may delight ourselves, in his sight it is vain trifling, nay, vileness and pollution. The advocates of human traditions paint them in fair and gaudy colors; and Paul certainly admits that they carry with them a show of wisdom; but as God values obedience more than all sacrifices, it ought to be sufficient for the rejection of any mode of worship, that it is not sanctioned by the command of God.

We come now to what we have set down as the second principal branch of Christian doctrine, viz., knowledge of the source from which salvation is to be obtained. Now, the knowledge of our salvation presents three different stages. First, we must begin with a sense of individual wretchedness, filling us with despondency as if we were spiritually dead. This affect is produced when the original and hereditary depravity of our nature is set before us as the source of all evil — a depravity which begets in us distrust, rebellion against God, pride, avarice, lust, and all kinds of evil concupiscence, and making us averse to all rectitude and justice, holds us captive under the yoke of sin; and when, moreover, each individual, on the disclosure of his own sins, feeling confounded at his turpitude, is forced to be dissatisfied with himself and to account himself and all that he has of his own as less than nothing; then, on the other hand, conscience being cited to the bar of God, becomes sensible of the curse under which it lies, and, as if it had received a warning of eternal death, learns to tremble at the divine anger. This, I say, is the first stage in the way to salvation when the sinner, overwhelmed and prostrated, despairs of all carnal aid, yet does not harden himself against the justice of God, or become stupidly callous, but, trembling and anxious, groans in agony, and sighs for relief. From this he should rise to the second stage. This he does when, animated by the

knowledge of Christ, he again begins to breathe. For to one humbled in the manner in which we have described, no other course remains but to turn to Christ, that through his interposition he may be delivered from misery. But the only man who thus seeks salvation in Christ is the man who is aware of the extent of his power; that is, acknowledges Him as the only Priest who reconciles us to the Father, and His death as the only sacrifice by which sin is expiated, the divine justice satisfied, and a true and perfect righteousness acquired; who, in fine, does not divide the work between himself and Christ, but acknowledges it to be by mere gratuitous favor that he is justified in the sight of God. From this stage also he must rise to the third, when instructed in the grace of Christ, and in the fruits of his death and resurrection, he rests in him with firm and solid confidence, feeling assured that Christ is so completely his own, that he possesses in him righteousness and life.

Now, see how sadly this doctrine has been perverted. On the subject of original sin, perplexing questions have been raised by the Schoolmen, who have done what they could to explain away this fatal disease; for in their discussions they reduce it to little more than excess of bodily appetite and lust. Of that blindness and vanity of intellect, whence unbelief and superstition proceed, of inward depravity of soul, of pride, ambition, stubbornness, and other secret sources of evils they say not a word. And sermons are not a whit more sound. Then, as to the doctrine of free will, as preached before Luther and other Reformers appeared, what effect could it have but to fill men with an overweening opinion of their own virtue, swelling them out with vanity, and leaving no room for the grace and assistance of the Holy Spirit? But why dwell on this? There is no point which is more keenly contested, none in which our adversaries are more inveterate in their opposition, than that of justification, namely, as to whether we obtain it by faith or by works. On no

account will they allow us to give Christ the honor of being called our righteousness, unless their works come in at the same time for a share of the merit. The dispute is not, whether good works ought to be performed by the pious, and whether they are accepted by God and rewarded by him, but whether, by their own worth, they reconcile us to God; whether we acquire eternal life at their price, whether they are compensations which are made to the justice of God, so as to take away guilt, and whether they are to be confided in as a ground of salvation. We condemn the error which enjoins men to have more respect to their own works than to Christ, as a means of rendering God propitious, of meriting His favor, and obtaining the inheritance of eternal life; in short, as a means of becoming righteous in His sight. First, they plume themselves on the merit of works, as if they laid God under obligations to them. Pride such as this, what is it but a fatal intoxication of soul? For instead of Christ, they adore themselves, and dream of possessing life while they are immersed in the profound abyss of death. It may be said that I am exaggerating on this head, but no man can deny the trite doctrine of the schools and churches to be, that it is by works we must merit the favor of God, and by works acquire eternal life — that any hope of salvation unpropped by good works is rash and presumptuous — that we are reconciled to God by the satisfaction of good works, and not by a gratuitous remission of sins — that good works are meritorious of eternal salvation, not because they are freely imputed for righteousness through the merits of Christ, but in terms of law; and that men, as often as they lose the grace of God, are reconciled to Him, not by a free pardon, but by what they term works of satisfaction, these works being supplemented by the merits of Christ and martyrs, provided only the sinner deserves to be so assisted. It is certain, that before Luther became known to the world, all men were fascinated by these impious dogmas; and even in the present day,

there is no part of our doctrine which our opponents impugn with greater earnestness and obstinacy.

Lastly, there was another most pestilential error, which not only occupied the minds of men, but was regarded as one of the principal articles of faith, of which it was impious to doubt, viz., that believers ought to be perpetually in suspense and uncertainty as to their interest in the divine favor. By this suggestion of the devil, the power of faith was completely extinguished, the benefits of Christ's purchase destroyed, and the salvation of men overthrown. For, as Paul declares, that faith only is Christian faith which inspires our hearts with confidence, and emboldens us to appear in the presence of God, (Romans 5:2.) On no other view could his doctrine in another passage be maintained, viz., that

“we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father,” (Romans 8:15.)

But what is the effect of that hesitancy which our enemies require in their disciples, save to annihilate all confidence in the promises of God? Paul argues, that

“If they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect,” (Romans 4:14.)

Why so? Just because the law keeps a man in doubt, and does not permit him to entertain a sure and firm confidence. But they, on the other hand, dream of a faith, which, excluding and repelling man from that confidence which Paul requires, throws him back upon conjecture, to be tossed like a reed shaken by the wind. And it is not surprising that after they had once founded their hope of salvation on the merit of works, they plunged into all this absurdity. It could not but happen, that from such a precipice they should have such a

fall. For what can man find in his works but materials for doubt, and, finally, for despair? We thus see how error led to error.

Here, mighty Emperor, and most Illustrious Princes, it will be necessary to recall to your remembrance what I formerly observed, viz., that the safety of the Church depends as much on this doctrine as human life does on the soul. If the purity of this doctrine is in any degree impaired, the Church has received a deadly wound; and, therefore, when I shall have shown that it was for the greater part extinguished, it will be the same as if I had shown that the Church had been brought to the very brink of destruction. As yet, I have only alluded to this in passing, but by-and-by I will unfold it more clearly.

I come now to those things which I have likened to the body, viz., government and the dispensation of the sacraments, of which, when the doctrine is subverted, the power and utility are gone, although the external form should be faultless. What, then, if there was no soundness in them externally or internally? And it is not difficult to demonstrate that this was the fact. First, in regard to the sacraments, ceremonies devised by men were placed in the same rank with the mysteries instituted by Christ. For seven sacraments were received without any distinction, though Christ appointed two only, the others resting merely on human authority. Yet to these the grace of God was held to be annexed, just as much as if Christ had been present in them. Moreover, the two which Christ instituted were fearfully corrupted. Baptism was so disguised by superfluous additions, that scarcely a vestige of pure and genuine baptism could be traced; while the Holy Supper was not only corrupted by extraneous observances, but its very form was altogether changed. What Christ commanded to be done, and in what order, is perfectly clear. But in contempt of his command, a theatrical exhibition was got up, and substituted for the Supper. For what resemblance is there between the Mass and the

true Supper of our Lord? While the command of Christ enjoins believers to communicate with each other in the sacred symbols of his body and blood, the thing seen at Mass ought more properly to be termed excommunication. For the priest separates himself from the rest of the assembly, and devours apart that which ought to have been brought forward into the midst and distributed. Then, as if he were some successor of Aaron, he pretends that he offers a sacrifice to expiate the sins of the people. But where does Christ once mention sacrifice? He bids us take, eat, and drink. Who authorises men to convert taking into offering? And what is the effect of the change but to make the perpetual and inviolable edict of Christ yield to their devices? This is, indeed, a grievous evil. But still worse is the superstition which applies this work to the living and the dead, as a procuring cause of grace. In this way the efficacy of Christ's death has been transferred to a vain theatrical show, and the dignity of an eternal priesthood wrested from him to be bestowed upon men. If, at any time, the people are called to communion, they are admitted only to half a share. Why should this be? Christ holds forth the cup to all, and bids all drink of it: In opposition to this, men interdict the assembly of the faithful from touching the cup. Thus the signs, which by the authority of Christ were connected by an indissoluble tie, are separated by human caprice. Besides, the consecration, both of baptism and of the mass, differs in no respect whatever from magical incantations. For by breathings and whisperings, and unintelligible sounds, they think they work mysteries. As if it had been the wish of Christ, that in the performance of religious rites his word should be mumbled over, and not rather pronounced in a clear voice. There is no obscurity in the words by which the gospel expresses the power, nature, and use of baptism. Then, in the Supper, Christ does not mutter over the bread, but addresses the apostles in distinct terms, when he announces the promise and subjoins the command, "this do in remembrance of me." Instead of this public commemoration, they

whisper out secret exorcisms, fitter, as I have observed, for magical arts than sacraments. The first thing we complain of here is, that the people are entertained with showy ceremonies, while not a word is said of their significancy and truth. For there is no use in the sacraments unless the thing which the sign visibly represents is explained in accordance with the Word of God. Therefore, when the people are presented with nothing but empty figures, with which to feed the eye, while they hear no doctrine which might direct them to the proper end, they look no farther than the external act. Hence that most pestilential superstition, under which, as if the sacraments alone were sufficient for salvation, without feeling any solicitude about faith or repentance, or even Christ himself, they fasten upon the sign instead of the thing signified by it. And, indeed, not only among the rude vulgar, but in the schools also, the impious dogma everywhere obtained, that the sacraments were effectual by themselves, if not obstructed in their operation by mortal sin; as if the sacraments had been given for any other end or use than to lead us by the hand to Christ. Then, in addition to this, after consecrating the bread by a perverse incantation, rather than a pious rite, they keep it in a little box, and occasionally carry it about in solemn state, that it may be adored and prayed to instead of Christ. Accordingly, when any danger presses, they flee to that bread as their only protection, use it as a charm against all accidents, and, in asking pardon of God, employ it as the best expiation; as if Christ, when he gave us his body in the sacrament, had meant that it should be prostituted to all sorts of absurdity. For what is the amount of the promise? Simply this, — that as often as we received the sacrament, we should be partakers of his body and blood — "Take," says he, "eat and drink; this is my body, this is my blood. This do in remembrance of me." Do we not see that the promise is on either side inclosed by limits within which we must confine ourselves if we would secure what it offers? Those, therefore, are deceived who imagine that apart

from the legitimate use of the sacrament, they have anything but common and unconsecrated bread. Then, again, there is a profanation common to all these religious rites, viz., that they are made the subjects of a disgraceful traffic, as if they had been instituted for no other purpose than to be subservient to gain. Nor is this traffic conducted secretly or bashfully; it is plied openly, as at the public mart. It is known in each particular district how much a mass sells for. Other rites, too, have their fixed prices. In short, any one who considers must see that Churches are just ordinary shops, and that there is no kind of sacred rite which is not there exposed for sale.

Were I to go over the faults of ecclesiastical government in detail, I should never have done. I will, therefore, only point to some of the grosser sort, which cannot be disguised. And, first, the pastoral office itself, as instituted by Christ, has long been in desuetude. His object in appointing Bishops and Pastors, or whatever the name be by which they are called, certainly was, as Paul declares, that they might edify the Church with sound doctrine. According to this view, no man is a true pastor of the Church who does not perform the office of teaching. But, in the present day, almost all those who have the name of pastors have left that work to others. Scarcely one in a hundred of the Bishops will be found who ever mounts the pulpit in order to teach. And no wonder; for bishoprics have degenerated into secular principalities. Pastors of inferior rank, again, either think that they fulfill their office by frivolous performances altogether alien from the command of Christ, or, after the example of the Bishops, throw even this part of the duty on the shoulders of others. Hence the letting of sacerdotal offices is not less common than the letting of farms. What would we more? The spiritual government which Christ recommended has totally disappeared, and a new and mongrel species of government has been introduced, which, under whatever



name it may pass current, has no more resemblance to the former than the world has to the kingdom of Christ. If it be objected, that the fault of those who neglect their duty ought not to be imputed to the order, I answer, first, that the evil is of such general prevalence, that it may be regarded as the common rule; and, secondly, that, were we to assume that all the Bishops, and all the Presbyters under them, reside each in his particular station, and do what in the present day is regarded as professional duty, they would never fulfill the true institution of Christ. They would sing or mutter in the church, exhibit themselves in theatrical vestments, and go through numerous ceremonies, but they would seldom, if ever, teach. According to the precept of Christ, however, no man can claim for himself the office of bishop or pastor who does not feed his flock with the Word of the Lord.

Then while those who preside in the Church ought to excel others, and shine by the example of a holier life, how well do those who hold the office in the present day correspond in this respect to their vocation! At a time when the corruption of the world is at its height, there is no order more addicted to all kinds of wickedness. I wish that by their innocence they would refute what I say. How gladly would I at once retract. But their turpitude stands exposed to the eyes of all — exposed their insatiable avarice and rapacity — exposed their intolerable pride and cruelty. The noise of indecent revelry and dancing, the rage of gaming, and entertainments, abounding in all kinds of intemperance, are in their houses only ordinary occurrences, while they glory in their luxurious delicacies, as if they were distinguished virtues. To pass over other things in silence, what impunity in that celibacy which of itself they regard as a title to esteem! I feel ashamed to unveil enormities which I had much rather suppress, if they could be corrected by silence. Nor will I divulge what is done in secret. The pollutions which openly appear are more

than sufficient. How many priests, pray, are free from whoredom? Nay, how many of their houses are infamous for daily acts of lewdness? How many honorable families do they defile by their vagabond lusts? For my part, I have no pleasure in exposing their vices, and it is no part of my design, but it is of importance to observe what a wide difference there is between the conduct of the priesthood of the present day, and that which true ministers of Christ and his Church are bound to pursue.

Not the least important branch of ecclesiastical government is the due and regular election and ordination of those who are to rule. The Word of God furnishes a standard by which all such appointments ought to be tested, and there exist many decrees of ancient Councils which carefully and wisely provide for every thing which relates to the proper method of election. Let our adversaries then produce even a solitary instance of canonical election, and I will yield them the victory. We know the kind of examination which the Holy Spirit, by the mouth of Paul, (Epistles of Timothy and Titus,) requires a pastor to undergo, and that which the ancient laws of the Fathers enjoin. At the present day, in appointing Bishops is anything of the kind perceived? Nay, how few of those who are raised to the office are endowed even slenderly with those qualities without which they cannot be fit ministers of the Church? We see the order which the Apostles observed in ordaining ministers, that which the primitive Church afterwards followed, and, finally, that which the ancient Canons require to be observed. Were I to complain that at present this order is spurned and rejected, would not the complaint be just? What, then, should I say that every thing honorable is trampled upon, and promotion obtained by the most disgraceful and flagitious proceedings? The fact is of universal notoriety. For ecclesiastical honors are either purchased for a set price, or seized by the hand of violence, or secured by nefarious actions, or acquired by sordid

sycophancy. Occasionally even, they are the hire paid for panderism and similar services. In short, more shameless proceedings are exhibited here than ever occur in the acquisition of secular possessions.

And would that those who preside in the Church, when they corrupt its government, only sinned for themselves, or at least injured others by nothing but by their bad example! But the most crying evil of all is, that they exercise a most cruel tyranny, and that a tyranny over souls. Nay, what is the vaunted power of the Church in the present day, but a lawless, licentious, unrestricted domination over souls, subjecting them to the most miserable bondage? Christ gave to the Apostles an authority similar to that which God had conferred on the Prophets, an authority exactly defined, viz., to act as his ambassadors to men. Now, the invariable law is, that he who is entrusted with an embassy must faithfully and religiously conform to his instructions. This is stated in express terms in the Apostolical commission, — "Go and teach all nations whatsoever things I have delivered unto you." Likewise "preach," (not anything you please,) but the "gospel." If it is asked what the authority is with which their successors were invested, we have the definition of Peter, which enjoins all who speak in the Church to speak "the oracles" of God. Now, however, those who would be thought the rulers of the Church arrogate to themselves a licence to speak whatsoever they please, and to insist that as soon as they have spoken they shall be implicitly obeyed. It will be averred that this is a calumny, and that the only right which they assume is that of sanctioning by their authority what the Holy Spirit has revealed. They will, accordingly, maintain that they do not subject the consciences of believers to their own devices or caprice, but only to the oracles of the Spirit, which, being revealed to them, they confirm and promulgate to others. Forsooth an ingenious pretext! No man doubts that in whatever the Holy Spirit delivers by

their hands they are to be unhesitatingly obeyed. But when they add that they cannot deliver anything but the genuine oracles of the Holy Spirit, because they are under his guidance, and that all their decisions cannot but be true, because they sit in chairs of verity, is not this just to measure their power by their caprice? For if all their decrees, without exception, are to be received as oracles, there is no limit to their power. What tyrant ever so monstrously abused the patience of his subjects as to insist that every thing he proclaimed should be received as a message from heaven! Tyrants, no doubt, will have their edicts obeyed, be the edicts what they may. But these men demand much more. We must believe that the Holy Spirit speaks when they obtrude upon us what they have dreamed.

We see, accordingly, how hard and iniquitous the bondage is in which, when armed with this power, they have enthralled the souls of the faithful. Laws have been piled above laws, to be so many snares to the conscience. For they have not confined these laws to matters of external order, but applied them to the interior and spiritual government of the soul. And no end was made until they amounted to that immense multitude, which now looks not unlike a labyrinth. Indeed, some of them seem framed for the very purpose of troubling and torturing consciences, while the observance of them is enforced with not less strictness than if they contained the whole substance of piety. Nay, though in regard to the violation of the commands of God, either no question is asked, or slight penances are inflicted, any thing done contrary to the decrees of men requires the highest expiation. While the Church is oppressed by this tyrannical yoke, any one who dares to say a word against it is instantly condemned as a heretic. In short, to give vent to our grief is a capital offense. And in order to ensure the possession of this insufferable domination, they, by sanguinary edicts, prevent the people from reading and understanding the Scriptures, and fulminate against those who stir

any question as to their power. This excessive rigor increases from day to day, so that now on the subject of religion it is scarcely permitted to make any inquiry at all.

At the time when divine truth lay buried under this vast and dense cloud of darkness — when religion was sullied by so many impious superstitions — when by horrid blasphemies the worship of God was corrupted, and His glory laid prostrate — when by a multitude of perverse opinions, the benefit of redemption was frustrated, and men, intoxicated with a fatal confidence in works, sought salvation any where rather than in Christ—when the administration of the Sacraments was partly maimed and torn asunder, partly adulterated by the admixture of numerous fictions, and partly profaned by traffickings for gain — when the government of the Church had degenerated into mere confusion and devastation — when those who sat in the seat of pastors first did most vital injury to the Church by the dissoluteness of their lives, and, secondly, exercised a cruel and most noxious tyranny over souls, by every kind of error, leading men like sheep to the slaughter; — then Luther arose, and after him others, who with united counsels sought out means and methods by which religion might be purged from all these defilements, the doctrine of godliness restored to its integrity, and the Church raised out of its calamitous into somewhat of a tolerable condition. The same course we are still pursuing in the present day.

I come now, as I proposed, to consider the remedies which we have employed for the correction of these evils, not here intending to describe the manner in which we proceeded, (that will afterwards be seen,) but only to make it manifest that we have had no other end in view than to ameliorate in some degree the very miserable condition of the Church. Our doctrine has been assailed, and still is every day, by many atrocious calumnies. Some declaim loudly against it in their

sermons; others attack and traduce it in their writings. Both rake together every thing by which they hope to bring it into disrepute among the ignorant. But the Confession of our Faith, which we presented to your Imperial Majesty, is before the world, and clearly testifies how undeservedly we are harassed by so many odious accusations. And we have always been ready in times past, as we are at the present day, to render an account of our doctrine. In a word, there is no doctrine preached in our churches but that which we openly profess. As to controverted points, they are clearly and honestly explained in our Confession, while every thing relating to them has been copiously treated and diligently expounded by our writers. Hence judges not unjust must be satisfied how far we are from every thing like impiety. This much, certainly, must be clear alike to just and unjust, that our reformers have done no small service to the Church, in stirring up the world as from the deep darkness of ignorance, to read the Scriptures, in laboring diligently to make them better understood, and in happily throwing light on certain points of doctrine of the highest practical importance. In sermons little else was heard than old wives' fables, and fictions equally frivolous. The schools resounded with brawling questions, but Scripture was seldom mentioned. Those who held the government of the Church made it their sole care to prevent any diminution of their gains, and, accordingly, had no difficulty in permitting whatever tended to fill their coffers. Even the most prejudiced, how much soever they may in other respects defame our doctrine, admit that our people have in some degree reformed these evils.

I am willing, however, that all the advantage which the Church may have derived from our labors shall have no effect in alleviating our fault, if in any other respect we have done her injury. Therefore, let there be an examination of our whole doctrine, of our form of

administering the sacraments, and our method of governing the Church; and in none of these three things will it be found that we have made any change upon the ancient form, without attempting to restore it to the exact standard of the Word of God.

To return to the division which we formerly adopted. All our controversies concerning doctrine relate either to the legitimate worship of God, or to the ground of salvation. As to the former, unquestionably we do exhort men to worship God neither in a frigid nor a careless manner; and while we point out the mode, we neither lose sight of the end, nor omit any thing which bears upon the point. We proclaim the glory of God in terms far loftier than it was wont to be proclaimed before, and we earnestly labor to make the perfections in which His glory shines better and better known. His benefits towards ourselves we extol as eloquently as we can, while we call upon others to reverence His Majesty, render due homage to His greatness, feel due gratitude for His mercies, and unite in showing forth His praise. In this way there is infused into their hearts that solid confidence which afterwards gives birth to prayer; and in this way, too, each one is trained to genuine self-denial, so that his will being brought into obedience to God, he bids farewell to his own desires. In short, as God requires us to worship Him in a spiritual manner, so we most zealously urge men to all the spiritual sacrifices which He recommends.

Even our enemies cannot deny our assiduity in exhorting men to expect the good which they desire from none but God, to confide in His power, rest in His goodness, depend on His truth, and turn to Him with the whole heart — to recline upon Him with full hope, and recur to Him in necessity, that is, at every moment to ascribe to Him every good thing which we enjoy, and show we do so by open expressions of praise. And that none may be deterred by difficulty of

access, we proclaim that a complete fountain of blessings is opened up to us in Christ, and that out of it we may draw for every need. Our writings are witnesses, and our sermons witnesses, how frequent and sedulous we are in recommending true repentance, urging men to renounce their own reason and carnal desires, and themselves entirely, that they may be brought into obedience to God alone, and live no longer to themselves, but to Him. Nor, at the same time, do we overlook external duties and works of charity, which follow on such renovation. This, I say, is the sure and unerring form of worship, which we know that He approves, because it is the form which His word prescribes, and these the only sacrifices of the Christian Church which have His sanction.

Since, therefore, in our churches, only God is adored in pious form without superstition, since His goodness, wisdom, power, truth, and other perfections, are there preached more fully than any where else—since He is invoked with true faith in the name of Christ, His mercies celebrated both with heart and tongue, and men constantly urged to a simple and sincere obedience; since, in fine, nothing is heard but what tends to promote the sanctification of His name, what cause have those who call themselves Christians to be so inveterate against us? First, loving darkness rather than light, they cannot tolerate the sharpness with which we, as in duty sound, rebuke the gross idolatry which is every where beheld in the world. When God is worshipped in images, when fictitious worship is instituted in His name, when supplication is made to the images of saints, and divine honors paid to dead men's bones, against these, and similar abominations, we protest, describing them in their true colors. For this cause, those who hate our doctrine inveigh against us and represent us as heretics who have dared to abolish the worship of God, as of old approved by the Church. Concerning this name of church, which they are ever and anon holding up before them as a



kind of shield, we will shortly speak. Meanwhile, how perverse, when these flagitious corruptions are manifest, not only to defend them, but cloak their deformity, by impudently pretending that they belong to the genuine worship of God!

Both parties confess, that in the sight of God idolatry is an execrable crime. But when we attack the worship of images, our adversaries immediately take the opposite side, and lend their support to the crime which they had verbally concurred with us in condemning. Nay, what is more ridiculous, after agreeing with us as to the term in Greek, it is no sooner turned into Latin than their opposition begins. For they strenuously defend the worship of images, though they condemn idolatry — ingenious men denying that the honor which they pay to images is worship; as if, in comparing it with ancient idolatry, it were possible to see any difference. Idolaters pretended that they worshipped the celestial gods, though under corporeal figures which represented them. What else do our adversaries pretend? But does God accept of such excuses? Did the prophets cease to rebuke the madness of the Egyptians, when, out of the secret mysteries of their theology, they drew subtle distinctions under which to screen themselves? What, too, do we suppose the brazen serpent, whom the Jews worshipped, to have been, but some thing which they honored as a representation of God? “The Gentiles,” says Ambrose, (in Psalm 118,) “worship wood, because they think it an image of God, whereas the invisible image of God is not in that which is seen, but specially in that which is not seen.” And what is it that is done in the present day? Do they not prostrate themselves before images, as if God were present in them? Did they not suppose the power and grace of God attached to pictures and statues, would they flee to them when they are desirous to pray?

I have not yet adverted to the grosser superstitions, though these cannot be confined to the ignorant, since they are approved by public consent. They adorn their idols now with flowers and chaplets, now with robes, vests, zones, purses, and frivolities of every kind. They light tapers and burn incense before them, and carry them on their shoulders in solemn state. When they pray to the image of Christopher or Barbara, they mutter over the Lord's Prayer and the angels' salutation. The fairer or dingier the images are, the greater is their excellence supposed to be. To this is added a new recommendation from fabulous miracles. Some they pretend to have spoken, others to have extinguished a fire in the church by trampling on it, others to have removed of their own accord to a new abode, others to have dropt from heaven. While the whole world teems with these and similar delusions, and the fact is perfectly notorious, we, who have brought back the worship of the one God to the rule of his Word, we, who are blameless in this matter, and have purged our churches, not only of idolatry but of superstition also, are accused of violating the worship of God, because we have discarded the worship of images, that is, as we call it, idolatry, but as our adversaries will have it, *idolodulia*.

But, besides the clear testimonies which are everywhere met with in Scripture, we are also supported by the authority of the ancient Church. All the writers of a purer age describe the abuse of images among the Gentiles as not differing from what is seen in the world in the present day; and their observations on the subject are not less applicable to the present age than to the persons whom they then censured. As to the charge which they bring against us for discarding images, as well as the bones and relics of saints, it is easily answered. For none of these things ought to be valued at more than the brazen serpent, and the reasons for removing them were not less valid than those of Hezekiah for breaking it. It is certain that the idolomania,

with which the minds of men are now fascinated, cannot be cured otherwise than by removing bodily the source of the infatuation. And we have too much experience of the absolute truth of St Augustine's sentiment,

“No man prays or worships looking on an image without being impressed with the idea that it is listening to him.” (Ephesians 4:9.)

And, likewise, (in Psalm 115:4,) “Images, from having a mouth, eyes, ears, and feet, are more effectual to mislead an unhappy soul than to correct it, because they neither speak, nor see, nor hear, nor walk.” Also, “The effect in a manner extorted by the external shape is, that the soul living in a body, thinks a body which it sees so very like its own must have similar powers of perception.” As to the matter of relics, it is almost incredible how impudently the world has been cheated. I can mention three relics of our Savior's circumcision; likewise fourteen nails which are exhibited for the three by which he was fixed to the cross; three robes for that seamless one on which the soldiers cast lots; two inscriptions that were placed over the cross; three spears by which our Savior's side was pierced, and about five sets of linen clothes which wrapt his body in the tomb. Besides, they show all the articles used at the institution of the Lord's Supper, and an infinite number of similar impositions. There is no saint of any celebrity of whom two or three bodies are not in existence. I can name the place where a piece of pumice stone was long held in high veneration as the skull of Peter. Decency will not permit me to mention fouler exhibitions? Undeservedly, therefore, are we blamed for having studied to purify the Church of God from such pollutions.

In regard to the worship of God, our adversaries next accuse us, because, omitting empty and childish observances, tending only to hypocrisy, we worship God more simply. That we have in no respect

detracted from the spiritual worship of God, is attested by fact. Nay, when it had in a great measure gone into desuetude, we have reinstated it in its former rights. Let us now see whether the offense taken at us is just. In regard to doctrine, I maintain that we make common cause with the prophets. For, next to idolatry, there is nothing for which they rebuke the people more sharply than for falsely imagining that the worship of God consisted in external show. For what is the sum of their declarations? That God dwells not, and sets no value on ceremonies considered only in themselves, that he looks to the faith and truth of the heart, and that the only end for which he commanded, and for which he approves them, is, that they may be pure exercises of faith, and prayer, and praise. The writings of all the prophets are full of attestations to this effect. Nor, as I have observed, was there any thing for which they labored more. Now, it cannot, without effrontery, be denied, that when our Reformers appeared, the world was more than ever smitten with this blindness. It was therefore absolutely necessary to urge men with these prophetic rebukes, and draw them off, as by force, from that infatuation, that they might no longer imagine that God was satisfied with naked ceremonies, as children are with shows. There was a like necessity for urging the doctrine of the spiritual worship of God — a doctrine which had almost vanished from the minds of men. That both of these things have been faithfully performed by us in times past, and still are, both our writings and our sermons clearly prove.

In inveighing against ceremonies themselves, and also in abrogating a great part of them, we confess that there is some difference between us and the prophets. They inveighed against their countrymen for confining the worship of God to external ceremonies; but still ceremonies which God himself had instituted; we complain that the same honor is paid to frivolities of man's devising. They, while condemning superstition, left untouched a multitude of

ceremonies which God had enjoined, and which were useful and appropriate to an age of tutelage; our business has been to correct numerous rites which had either crept in through oversight, or been turned to abuse; and which, moreover, by no means accorded with the time. For, if we would not throw every thing into confusion, we must never lose sight of the distinction between the old and the new dispensations, and of the fact that ceremonies, the observance of which was useful under the law, are now not only superfluous, but vicious and absurd. When Christ was absent and not yet manifested, ceremonies, by shadowing him forth, cherished the hope of his advent in the breasts of believers; but now that his glory is present and conspicuous, they only obscure it. And we see what God himself has done. For those ceremonies which He had commanded for a time He has now abrogated forever. Paul explains the reason, — first, that since the body has been manifested in Christ, the types have, of course, been withdrawn; and, secondly, that God is now pleased to instruct his Church after a different manner, (Galatians 4:5; Colossians 2:4, 14, 17). Since, then, God has freed his Church from the bondage which he had imposed upon it, can anything, I ask, be more perverse than for men to introduce a new bondage in place of the old? Since God has prescribed a certain economy, how presumptuous to set up one which is contrary to it, and openly repudiated by Him! But the worst of all is, that though God has so often and so strictly interdicted all modes of worship prescribed by man, the only worship paid to him consisted of human inventions. What ground, then, have our enemies to vociferate that in this matter we have given religion to the winds? First, we have not laid even a finger on anything which Christ does not discountenance as of no value, when he declares that it is vain to worship God with human traditions. The thing might, perhaps, have been more tolerable if the only effect had been that men lost their pains by an unavailing worship; but since as I have observed God in many passages forbids

any new worship unsanctioned by his Word; since he declares that he is grievously offended with the presumption which invents such worship, and threatens it with severe punishment, it is clear that the reformation which we have introduced was demanded by a strong necessity.

I am not unaware how difficult it is to persuade the world that God rejects and even abominates every thing relating to his worship that is devised by human reason. The delusion on this head is owing to several causes, — “Every one thinks highly of his own,” as the old proverb expresses it. Hence the offspring of our own brain delights us, and besides, as Paul admits, this fictitious worship often presents some show of wisdom. Then, as it has for the most part an external splendor which pleases the eye, it is more agreeable to our carnal nature, than that which alone God requires and approves, but which is less ostentatious. But there is nothing which so blinds the understandings of men, and misleads them in their judgments in this matter, as hypocrisy. For while it is incumbent on true worshippers to give the heart and mind, men are always desirous to invent a mode of serving God of a totally different description, their object being to perform to him certain bodily observances, and keep the mind to themselves. Moreover, they imagine that when they obtrude upon him external pomp, they have, by this artifice, evaded the necessity of giving themselves. And this is the reason why they submit to innumerable observances which miserably fatigue them without measure and without end, and why they choose to wander in a perpetual labyrinth, rather than worship God simply in spirit and in truth.

It is mere calumny, then, in our enemies to accuse us of alluring men by facilities and indulgence. For were the option given, there is nothing which the carnal man would not prefer to do rather than

consent to worship God as prescribed by our doctrine. It is easy to use the words faith and repentance, but the things are most difficult to perform. He, therefore, who makes the worship of God consist in these, by no means loosens the reins of discipline, but compels men to the course which they are most afraid to take. Of this we have most pregnant proof from fact. Men will allow themselves to be astricted by numerous severe laws, to be obliged to numerous laborious observances, to wear a severe and heavy yoke; in short, there is no annoyance to which they will not submit, provided there is no mention of the heart. Hence, it appears, that there is nothing to which the human mind is more averse than to that spiritual truth which is the constant topic of our sermons, and nothing with which it is more engrossed than that splendid glare on which our adversaries so strongly insist. The very Majesty of God extorts this much from us, that we are unable to withdraw entirely from his service. Therefore, as we cannot evade the necessity of worshipping him, our only remaining course is to seek out indirect substitutes that we may not be obliged to come directly into his presence; or rather, by means of external ceremonies, like specious masks, we hide the inward malice of the heart, and, in order that we may not be forced to give it to him, interpose bodily observances, like a wall of partition. It is with the greatest reluctance that the world allows itself to be driven from such subterfuges as these; and hence the outcry against us for having dragged them out into the open light of day, out of their lurking places, where they securely sported with God.

In prayer there are three things which we have corrected. Discarding the intercession of saints, we have brought men back to Christ, that they might learn both to invoke the Father in his name, and trust in him as Mediator, and we have taught them to pray, first, with firm and solid confidence, and, secondly, with understanding also, instead of continuing as formerly to mutter over confused prayers in an

unknown tongue. Here we are assailed with bitter reproaches as at once acting contumeliously towards the saints, and defrauding believers of an invaluable privilege. Both charges we deny. It is no injury to saints not to permit the office of Christ to be attributed to them, and there is no honor of which we deprive them, save that which was improperly and rashly bestowed upon them by human error. I will not mention anything which may not be pointed to with the finger. First, when men are about to pray, they imagine God to be at a great distance, and that they cannot have access to him without the guidance of some patron. Nor is this false opinion current among the rude and unlearned only, but even those who would be thought leaders of the blind entertain it. Then, in looking out for patrons, every one follows his own fancy. One selects Mary, another Michael, another Peter. Christ they very seldom honor with a place in the list. Nay, there is scarcely one in a hundred who would not be amazed, as at some new prodigy, were he to hear Christ named as an intercessor. Therefore, passing by Christ, they all trust to the patronage of saints. Then the superstition creeps in farther and farther, till they invoke the saints promiscuously, just as they do God. I admit, indeed, that when they desire to speak more definitely, all they ask of the saints is to assist them before God with their prayers. But more frequently, confounding this distinction, they address and implore at one time God, and at another the saints, just according to the impulse of the moment. Nay, each saint has a peculiar province allotted to him. One gives rain, another fair weather, one delivers from fever, another from shipwreck. But, to say nothing of these profane heathen delusions which everywhere prevail in churches, this one impiety may suffice for all, that the great body of mankind, in inviting intercessors from this quarter and from that, neglect Christ, the only one whom God has set forth, and confide less in the Divine protection than in the patronage of saints.



But our censurers, even those of them who have somewhat more regard to equity, blame us for excess in having discarded entirely from our prayers the mention of dead saints. But will they tell me wherein, according to their view, lies the sin of faithfully observing the rule laid down by Christ, the Supreme Teacher, and by the Prophets and Apostles, and of not omitting any thing which either the Holy Spirit has taught in Scripture, or the servants of God have practiced from the beginning of the world down to the days of the Apostles? There is scarcely any subject on which the Holy Spirit more carefully prescribes than on the proper method of prayer; but there is not a syllable which teaches us to have recourse to the assistance of dead saints. Many of the prayers offered up by believers are extant. In none of them is there even a single example of such recourse. Sometimes, indeed, the Israelites entreated God to remember Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and David likewise. But all they meant by such expressions was, that he should be mindful of the covenant which he had made with them, and bless their posterity according to his promise. For the covenant of grace, which was ultimately to be ratified in Christ, those holy patriarchs had received in their own name, and in that of their posterity. Wherefore, the faithful of the Israelitish Church do not, by such mention of the patriarchs, seek intercession from the dead, but simply appeal to the promise which had been deposited with them until it should be fully ratified in the hand of Christ. How extravagant, then, and infatuated, to abandon the form of prayer which the Lord has recommended, and without any injunction, and with no example, to introduce into prayer the intercession of saints? But briefly to conclude this point, I take my stand on the declaration of Paul, that no prayer is genuine which springs not from faith, and that faith cometh by the Word of God, (Romans 10:14.) In these words he has if I mistake not, distinctly intimated that the Word of God is the only sure foundation for prayer. And while he elsewhere says, that every action of our lives

should be preceded by faith, i.e., a conscientious assurance, he shows that this is specially requisite in prayer, more so, indeed, than in any other employment. It is, however, still more conclusive of the point, when he declares that prayer depends on the Word of God. For it is just as if he had prohibited all men from opening their mouths until such time as God puts words into them. This is our wall of brass, which all the powers of hell will in vain attempt to break down. Since, then, there exists a clear command to invoke God only; since, again, one Mediator is proposed, whose intercession must support our prayers; since a promise has, moreover, been added, that whatever we ask in the name of Christ we shall obtain, men must pardon us, if we follow the certain truth of God, in preference to their frivolous fictions. It is surely incumbent on those who, in their prayers, introduce the intercession of the dead, that they may thereby be assisted more easily to obtain what they ask, to prove one of two things, — either that they are so taught by the Word of God, or that men have licence to pray as they please. But in regard to the former, it is plain that they are destitute of authority from the Scriptures, as well as of any approved example of such intercession, while, as to the latter, Paul declares that none can invoke God, save those who have been taught by his Word to pray. On this depends the confidence with which it becomes pious minds to be actuated and imbued when they engage in prayer. The men of the world supplicate God, dubious, meanwhile, of success. For they neither rely upon the promise, nor perceive the force of what is meant by having a Mediator through whom they will assuredly obtain what they ask. Moreover, God enjoins us to come free from doubt, (Matthew 21:22.) Accordingly, prayer proceeding from true faith obtains favor with God; whereas prayer accompanied with distrust rather alienates Him from us. For this is the proper mark which discriminates between genuine invocation and the profane wandering prayers of the

heathen. And, indeed, where faith is wanting, prayer ceases to be divine worship. It is to this James refers when he says,

“If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God; but let him ask in faith, doubting nothing. For he that doubteth is like a wave of the sea, driven with the winds, and tossed,” (James 1:6.)

It is not surprising that he who has no interest in Christ, the true Mediator, thus fluctuates in uncertainty and distrust. For, as Paul declares it is through Christ only that we have boldness and access with confidence to the Father. We have, therefore, taught men when brought to Christ no longer to doubt and waver in their prayers, as they were wont to do, but to rest secure in the word of the Lord, a word which, when it once penetrates the soul, drives far from it all dubiety, which is repugnant to faith.

It remains to point out the third fault in prayer, which I said that we have corrected. Whereas men generally prayed in an unknown tongue, we have taught them to pray with understanding. Every man, accordingly, is taught by our doctrine to know, when he prays in private, what it is he asks of God, while the public prayers in our churches are framed so as to be understood by all. And it is the dictate of natural reason that it should be so, even if God had given no precept on the subject. For the design of prayer is to make God the conscious witness of our necessities, and as it were to pour out our hearts before him. But nothing is more at variance with this design than to move the tongue without thought and intelligence. And yet, to such a degree of absurdity had it come, that to pray in the vulgar tongue was almost regarded as an offense against religion. I can name an Archbishop who threatened with incarceration, and the severer penances, the person who should repeat the Lord’s Prayer aloud in any language but Latin. The general belief, however, was,

that it mattered not in what language a man prayed at home, provided he had what was called a final intention directed to prayer; but that in churches the dignity of the service required that Latin should be the only language in which prayers were couched.

There seems, as I lately observed, something monstrous in this determination to hold converse with God in sounds which fall without meaning from the tongue. Even if God did not declare his displeasure, nature herself, without a monitor, rejects it. Besides, it is easy to infer from the whole tenor of Scripture how deeply God abominates such an invention. As to the public prayers of the Church, the words of Paul are clear — the unlearned cannot say Amen if the benediction is pronounced in an unknown tongue. And this makes it the more strange, that those who first introduced this perverse practice, ultimately had the effrontery to maintain, that the very thing which Paul regards as ineffably absurd, was conducive to the majesty of prayer. The method by which, in our churches, all pray in common in the popular tongue, and males and females indiscriminately sing the Psalms, our adversaries may ridicule if they will, provided the Holy Spirit bears testimony to us from heaven, while he repudiates the confused, unmeaning sounds which are uttered elsewhere.

In the second principal branch of doctrine, viz., that which relates to the ground of salvation, and the method of obtaining it, many questions are involved: For, when we tell a man to seek righteousness and life out of himself, i.e., in Christ only, because he has nothing in himself but sin and death, a controversy immediately arises with reference to the freedom and powers of the will. For, if man has any ability of his own to serve God, he does not obtain salvation entirely by the grace of Christ, but in part bestows it on himself. On the other hand, if the whole of salvation is attributed to

the grace of Christ, man has no thing left, has no virtue of his own by which he can assist himself to procure salvation. But though our opponents concede that man, in every good deed, is assisted by the Holy Spirit, they nevertheless claim for him a share in the operation. This they do, because they perceive not how deep the wound is which was inflicted on our nature by the fall of our first parents. No doubt, they agree with us in holding the doctrine of original sin, but they afterwards modify its effects, maintaining that the powers of man are only weakened, not wholly depraved. Their view, accordingly, is, that man, being tainted with original corruption, is, in consequence of the weakening of his powers, unable to act aright; but that, being aided by the grace of God, he has something of his own, and from himself, which he is able to contribute. We, again, though we deny not that man acts spontaneously, and of free will, when he is guided by the Holy Spirit, maintain that his whole nature is so imbued with depravity, that of himself he possesses no ability whatever to act aright. Thus far, therefore, do we dissent from those who oppose our doctrine, that while they neither humble man sufficiently, nor duly estimate the blessing of regeneration, we lay him completely prostrate, that he may become sensible of his utter insufficiency in regard to spiritual righteousness, and learn to seek it, not partially, but wholly, from God. To some not very equitable judges, we seem, perhaps, to carry the matter too far; but there is nothing absurd in our doctrine, or at variance either with Scripture or with the general consent of the ancient Church. Nay, we are able, without any difficulty, to confirm our doctrine to the very letter out of the mouth of Augustine; and, accordingly, several of those who are otherwise disaffected to our cause, but somewhat sounder in their judgments, do not venture to contradict us on this head. It is certain, as I have already observed, that we differ from others only in this, that by convincing man of his poverty and powerlessness, we train him more effectually to true humility, leading him to renounce all self-

confidence, and throw himself entirely upon God; and that, in like manner, we train him more effectually to gratitude, by leading him to ascribe, as in truth he ought, every good thing which he possesses to the kindness of God. They, on the other hand, intoxicating him with a perverse opinion of his own virtue, precipitate his ruin, inflating him with impious arrogance against God, to whom he ascribes the glory of his justification in no greater degree than to himself. To these errors they add a third, viz., that, in all their discussions concerning the corruption of human nature, they usually stop short at the grosser carnal desires, without touching on deeper-seated and more deadly diseases; and hence it is, that those who are trained in their school easily forgive themselves the foulest sins, as no sins at all, provided they are hid.

The next question relates to the value and merit of works. We both render to good works their due praise, and we deny not that a reward is reserved for them with God; but we take three exceptions, on which the whole of our remaining controversy concerning the work of salvation hinges.

First, we maintain, that of what description soever any man's works may be, he is regarded as righteous before God, simply on the footing of gratuitous mercy; because God, without any respect to works, freely adopts him in Christ, by imputing the righteousness of Christ to him, as if it were his own. This we call the righteousness of faith, viz., when a man, made void and empty of all confidence in works, feels convinced that the only ground of his acceptance with God is a righteousness which is wanting to himself, and is sorrowed from Christ. The point on which the world always goes astray, (for this error has prevailed in almost every age,) is in imagining that man, however partially defective he may be, still in some degree merits the favor of God by works. But Scripture declares, "Cursed is every one

that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them.” Under this curse must necessarily lie all who are judged by works — none being exempted save those who entirely renounce all confidence in works, and put on Christ, that they may be justified in Him, by the gratuitous acceptance of God. The ground of our justification, therefore, is, that God reconciles us to himself, from regard not to our works, but to Christ alone, and, by gratuitous adoption, makes us, instead of children of wrath, to be his own children. So long as God looks to our works, he perceives no reason why he ought to love us. Wherefore, it is necessary to bury our sins, and impute to us the obedience of Christ, (because the only obedience which can stand his scrutiny,) and adopt us as righteous through His merits. This is the clear and uniform doctrine of Scripture, “witnessed,” as Paul says, “by the law and the prophets,” (Romans 3:21;) and so explained by the gospel, that a clearer law cannot be desired. Paul contrasts the righteousness of the law with the righteousness of the gospel, placing the former in works, and the latter in the grace of Christ, (Romans 10:5, etc.) He does not divide it into two halves, giving works the one, and Christ the other; but he ascribes it to Christ entirely, that we are judged righteous in the sight of God.

There are here two questions; first, whether the glory of our salvation is to be divided between ourselves and God: and, secondly, whether, as in the sight of God, our conscience can with safety put any confidence in works. On the former question, Paul’s decision is — let every mouth “be stopped, and the whole world become guilty before God.” “All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God — being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus;” and that “to declare His righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus,” (Romans 3:19, etc.) We simply follow this definition, while our opponents maintain

that man is not justified by the grace of God, in any sense which does not reserve part of the praise for his own works.

On the second question, Paul reasons thus:

“If they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect.” Whence he concludes “it is of faith,” “to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed,” (Romans 4:14, 16.)

And again,

“Being justified by faith, we have peace with God,” (Romans 5:1;)

and no longer dread His presence. And he intimates that every one feels in his own experience, that our consciences cannot but be in perpetual disquietude and fluctuation, so long as we look for protection from works, and that we enjoy serene and placid tranquillity then only, when we have recourse to Christ as the only haven of true confidence. We add nothing to Paul’s doctrine; but that restless dubiety of conscience, which he regards as absurd, is placed by our opponents among the primary axioms of their faith.

The second exception which we take relates to the remission of sins. Our opponents, not being able to deny that men, during their whole lives walk haltingly, and often times even fall, are obliged, whether they will or not, to confess that all need pardon, in order to supply their want of righteousness. But then they have imaginary satisfactions, by means of which those who have sinned purchase back the favor of God. In this class, they place first contrition, and next works, which they term works of supererogation, and penances, which God inflicts on sinners. But, as they are still sensible that these compensations fall far short of the just measure required, they call in



the aid of a new species of satisfaction from another quarter, namely, from the benefit of the keys. And they say, that by the keys the treasury of the Church is unlocked, and what is wanting to ourselves supplied out of the merits of Christ and the saints. We, on the contrary, maintain that the sins of men are forgiven freely, and we acknowledge no other satisfaction than that which Christ accomplished, when, by the sacrifice of his death, he expiated our sins. Therefore, we preach that it is the purchase of Christ alone which reconciles us to God, and that no compensations are taken into account, because our heavenly Father contented with the sole expiation of Christ, requires none from us. In the Scriptures we have clear proof of this our doctrine, which, indeed, ought to be called not ours, but rather that of the Church Catholic. For the only method of regaining the divine favor, set forth by the Apostle, is, that

“He hath made him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him,” (2 Corinthians 5:21.)

And in another passage, where he is speaking of the remission of sins, he declares that through it righteousness without works is imputed to us, (Romans 6:5). We, therefore, strenuously, yet truly, maintain that their idea of meriting reconciliation with God by satisfactions, and buying off the penalties due to his justice, is execrable blasphemy, in as much as it destroys the doctrine which Isaiah delivers concerning Christ — that

“the chastisement of our peace was upon Him,” (Isaiah 53:5)

The absurd fiction concerning works of supererogation we discard for many reasons; but there are two of more than sufficient weight — the one, that it is impossible to tolerate the idea of man being able to perform to God more than he ought; and the other, that as by the term supererogation, they for the most part understand voluntary

acts of worship which their own brain has devised, and which they obtrude upon God, it is lost labor and pains, so far are such acts from having any title to be regarded as expiations which appease the divine anger. Moreover, that mixing up of the blood of Christ with the blood of martyrs, and forming out of them a heterogeneous mass of merits or satisfactions, to buy off the punishments due to sin, are things which we have not tolerated, and which we ought not to tolerate. For, as Augustine says, (*Tract. in Joan.* 84,) “No martyr’s blood has been shed for the remission of sins. This was the work of Christ alone, and in this work he has bestowed not a thing which we should imitate, but one we should gratefully receive.” With Augustine Leo admirably accords, when he thus writes, (*Ep.* 81, *item*, 97,) “Though precious in the sight of God has been the death of his many saints, yet no innocent man’s slaughter was the propitiation of the world; the just received crowns, did not give them, and the constancy of the faithful has furnished examples of patience, not gifts of righteousness.”

Our third and last exception relates to the recompence of works — we maintaining that it depends not on their own value or merit, but rather on the mere benignity of God. Our opponents, indeed, admit that there is no proportion between the merit of the work and its reward; but they do not attend to what is of primary moment in the matter, viz., that the good works of believers are never so pure as that they can please without pardon. They consider not, I say, that they are always sprinkled with some spots or blemishes, because they never proceed from that pure and perfect love of God which is demanded by the Law. Our doctrine, therefore, is, that the good works of believers are always devoid of a spotless purity which can stand the inspection of God; nay, that when they are tried by the strict rule of justice, they are, to a certain extent, impure. But, when once God has graciously adopted believers, he not only accepts and

loves their persons, but their works also, and condescends to honor them with a reward. In one word, as we said of man, so we may say of works, — they are justified not by their own desert, but by the merits of Christ alone; the faults by which they would otherwise displease being covered by the sacrifice of Christ. This consideration is of very great practical importance, both in retaining men in the fear of God, that they may not arrogate to their works that which proceeds from his fatherly kindness; and also in inspiring them with the best consolation, and so preventing them from giving way to despondency, when they reflect on the imperfection or impurity of their works, by reminding them that God, of his paternal indulgence, is pleased to pardon it.

Having considered the two principal heads of doctrine, we come now to the Sacraments, in which we have not made any correction which we are unable to defend by sure and approved authority. Whereas, seven sacraments were supposed to have been instituted by Christ, we have discarded five of the number, and have demonstrated them to be ceremonies of man's devising, with the exception of marriage, which we acknowledge to have been indeed commanded by God, but not in order that it might be a sacrament. Nor is it a dispute about nothing when we separate rites thus superadded on the part of men, though, in other respects, they should be neither wicked nor useless, from those symbols which Christ with his own lips committed to us and was pleased to make the testimonials of spiritual gifts, — gifts to which, as they are not in the power of man, men have no right to testify. It is assuredly no vulgar matter to seal upon our hearts the sacred favor of God, to offer Christ, and give a visible representation of the blessings which we enjoy in him. This being the office of the sacraments, not to discriminate between them and rites originating with man, is to confound heaven with earth. Here, indeed, a twofold error had prevailed. Making no distinction between things human

and divine, they derogated exceedingly from the sacred Word of God, on which the whole power of the sacraments depends, while they also falsely imagined Christ to be the author of rites which had no higher than a human origin.

From baptism, in like manner, have we rescinded many additions which were partly useless, and partly, from their superstitious tendency, noxious. We know the form of baptism which the apostles received from Christ, which they observed during their lifetime, and which they finally left to posterity. But the simplicity which had been approved by the authority of Christ, and the practice of the apostles, did not satisfy succeeding ages. I am not at present discussing whether those persons were influenced by sound reasons, who afterwards added chrism, salt, spittle, and tapers. I only say, what every one must know, that to such a height had superstition or folly risen, that more value was set on these additions than on the genuineness of baptism itself. We have studied also to banish the preposterous confidence which stopped short at the external acts and paid not the least regard to Christ. For, as well in the schools as in sermons, they so extolled the efficacy of signs, that, instead of directing men to Christ, they taught them to confide in the visible elements. Lastly, we have brought into our Churches the ancient custom of accompanying the administration of the sacraments with an explanation of the doctrine contained in it, and at the same time expounding with all diligence and fidelity both their advantages and their legitimate use; so that, in this respect, even our opponents cannot find any ground of censure. But nothing is more alien to the nature of a sacrament than to set before the people an empty spectacle, unaccompanied with explanation of the mystery. There is a well known passage quoted by Gratian out of Augustine — “If the word is wanting, the water is nothing but an element.” What he means by word he immediately explains when he says, “That is, the

word of faith which we preach.” Our opponents, therefore, ought not to think it a novelty when we disapprove of mere exhibition of the mystery. For this is a sacrilegious divorce, which reverses the order instituted by Christ. Another additional fault in the mode of administration, commonly used elsewhere, is that the thing which they consider as a religious act is not understood, just as is the case in the performance of magical incantations.

I have already observed, that the other sacrament of the Christian Church, the Holy Supper of our Lord, was not only corrupted, but nearly abolished. Wherefore it was the more necessary for us to labor in restoring its purity. First, it was necessary to eradicate from the minds of men that impious fiction of sacrifice, the source of many absurdities. For, besides the introduction of a rite of oblation in opposition to the express institution of Christ, there had been added a most pestilential opinion, that this act of oblation was an expiation for sin. Thus, the dignity of the priesthood, which belonged exclusively to Christ, had been transferred to mortal men, and the virtue of his death to their own act. Thus, also, it had come to be applied in behalf of the living and the dead. We have, therefore, abrogated that fictitious immolation and restored communion, which had been in a very great measure obsolete. For, provided men went once a year to the Lord’s Table, they thought it enough, for all the remainder of that period, to be spectators of what was done by the priest, under the pretext, indeed, of administering the Lord’s Supper, but without any vestige of the Supper in it. For what are the words of the Lord? Take, says he, and distribute among yourselves. But in the mass, instead of taking, there is a pretense of offering, while there are no distributions and even no invitation. The priest, like a member cut off from the rest of the body, prepares it for himself alone. How immense the difference between the things! We have, besides, restored to the people the use of the cup, which,

though it was not only permitted, but committed to them by our Lord, was taken from them (it could only be) at the suggestion of Satan. Of ceremonies, there are numbers which we have discarded, partly because they had multiplied out of measure, partly because some savored too much of Judaism, and others, the inventions of ignorant men, ill accorded with the gravity of so high a mystery. But, granting that there was no other evil in them than that they had crept in through oversight, was it not a sufficient ground for their abolition that we saw the vulgar gazing upon them in stupid amazement?

In condemning the fiction of transubstantiation, and like wise the custom of keeping and carrying about the bread, we were impelled by a stronger necessity. First, it is repugnant to the plain words of Christ; and, secondly, it is abhorrent to the very nature of a sacrament. For there is no sacrament where there is no visible symbol to correspond to the spiritual truth which it represents. And with regard to the Supper, what Paul says is clear, —

“We being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread,” (1 Corinthians 10:17.)

Where is the analogy or similitude of a visible sign in the Supper to correspond to the body and blood of our Lord, if it is neither bread that we eat, nor wine that we drink, but only some empty phantom that mocks the eye? Add that to this fiction a worse superstition perpetually adheres, viz., that men cling to that bread as if to God, and worship it as God, in the manner in which we have seen it done. While the sacrament ought to have been a means of raising pious minds to heaven, the sacred symbols of the Supper were abused to an entirely different purpose, and men, contented with gazing upon them and worshipping them, never once thought of Christ.

The carrying about of the bread in solemn state, or setting it on an elevated spot to be adored, are corruptions altogether inconsistent with the institution of Christ. For in the Supper the Lord sets before us his body and bloods but it is in order that we may eat and drink. Accordingly, he, in the first place, gives the command, by which he bids us take, eat, and drink, and then he, in the next place, subjoins and annexes the promise, in which he testifies, that what we eat is his body, and what we drink is his blood. Those, therefore, who either keep the bread set apart, or who carry it about to be worshipped, seeing they separate the promise from the command, in other words, sever an indissoluble tie, imagine, indeed, that they have the body of Christ, whereas, in fact, they have nothing but an idol which they have devised for themselves. For this promise of Christ, by which he offers his own body and blood under the symbols of bread and wine, belongs to those only who receive them at his hand, to celebrate the mystery in the manner which he enjoins; while to those who at their own hand pervert them to a different purpose, and so have not the promise, there remains nothing but their own dream.

Lastly, we have revived the practice of explaining the doctrine and unfolding the mystery to the people; whereas, formerly, the priest not only used a strange tongue, but muttered in a whisper the words by which he pretended to consecrate the bread and wine. Here our censurers have nothing to carp at, unless it be at our having simply followed the command of Christ. For he did not by a tacit exorcism command the bread to become his body, but with clear voice declared to his apostles that he gave them his body.

At the same time, as in the case of Baptism, so also in the case of the Lord's Supper, we explain to the people faithfully, and as carefully as we can, its end, efficacy, advantages, and use. First, we exhort all to come with faith, that by means of it they may inwardly discern the

thing which is visibly represented, viz., the spiritual food by which alone their souls are nourished unto life eternal. We hold, that in this ordinance the Lord does not promise or figure by signs, any thing which he does not exhibit in reality; and we, therefore, preach that the body and blood of Christ are both observed to us by the Lord in the Supper, and received by us. Nor do we thus teach that the bread and wine are symbols, without immediately adding that there is a truth which is conjoined with them, and which they represent. We are not silent in proclaiming what, and how excellent the fruit is which thence redounds to us and how noble the pledge of life and salvation which our consciences therein receive. None, indeed, who have any candor will deny, that with us this solemn ordinance is much more clearly explained, and its dignity more fully extolled, than is ever done elsewhere.

In the government of the Church we do not differ from others in anything for which we cannot give a most sufficient reason. The pastoral office we have restored, both according to the apostolic rule, and the practice of the primitive church, by insisting that every one who rules in the Church shall also teach. We hold that none are to be continued in the office but those who are diligent in performing its duties. In selecting them our advice has been, that more care and religion should be exercised, and we have ourselves studied so to act. It is well known what kind of examination bishops exercise by means of their suffragans or vicars, and we might even be able to conjecture what its nature is from the fruit which it produces. It is needless to observe how many lazy and good-for-nothing persons they every where promote to the honor of the priesthood. Among us should some ministers be found of no great learning, still none is admitted who is not at least tolerably apt to teach. That all are not more perfect is to be imputed more to the calamity of the times than to us. This, however, is, and always will be, our just boast, that the



ministers of our Church cannot seem to have been carelessly chosen if they are compared with others. But while we are superior in a considerable degree in the matter of trial and election, in this we particularly excel, that no man holds the pastoral office amongst us without executing its duties. Accordingly, none of our churches is seen without the ordinary preaching of the Word.

As it would shame our adversaries to deny these facts, (for in a matter so clear, what could they gain by the denial?) they quarrel with us, first, concerning the right and power, and, secondly, concerning the form of ordination. They quote ancient canons, which give the superintendence of this matter to the bishops and clergy. They allege a constant succession by which this right has been handed down to them, even from the apostles themselves. They deny that it can be lawfully transferred elsewhere. I wish they had, by their merit, retained a title to this boasted possession. But if we consider, first, the order in which for several ages bishops have been advanced to this dignity, next, the manner in which they conduct themselves in it, and, lastly, the kind of persons whom they are accustomed to ordain, and to whom they commit the government of churches, we shall see that this succession on which they pride themselves was long ago interrupted. The ancient canons require, that he who is to be admitted to the office of bishop or presbyters shall previously undergo a strict examination, both as to life and doctrine. Clear evidence of this is extant among the acts of the fourth African Council. Moreover, the magistracy and people had a discretionary power (*arbitrium*) of approving or refusing the individual who was nominated by the clergy, in order that no man might be intruded on the unwilling or not consenting. "Let him who is to preside over all," (says Leo, Ep. 90.,) "be elected by all; for he who is appointed, while unknown and unexamined, must of necessity be violently intruded." Again, (Ep. 77.,) "Let regard be had to the attestation of the

honorable, the subscription of the clergy, and the consent of the magistracy and people. Reason permits not any other mode of procedure.” Cyprian also contends for the very same thing, and, indeed, in stronger terms, affirming it as sanctioned by Divine authority, that the priest be elected in presence of the people, before the eyes of all, that he may be approved as fit and worthy by the testimony of all. This rule was in force for a short time while the state of the church was tolerable; for the letters of Gregory are full of passages which show that it was carefully observed in his day.

As the Holy Spirit in Scripture imposes on all bishops the necessity of teaching, so in the ancient church it would have been thought monstrous to nominate a bishop who should not, by teaching, demonstrate that he was a pastor also. Nor were they admitted to the office on any other condition.

The same rule prevailed in regard to presbyters, each being set apart to a particular parish. Hence those decrees, “Let them not involve themselves in secular affairs, let them not make distant excursions from their churches, let them not be long absent.” Then it was enjoined by synodal decrees, that at the ordination of a bishop all the other bishops of the province should assemble, or if that could not be conveniently done, at least three should be present. And the object of this was, that no man might force an entrance by tumult, or creep in by stealth, or insinuate himself by indirect artifices. In the ordination of a presbyter, each bishop admitted a council of his own presbyters. These things, which might be narrated more fully, and confirmed more accurately in a set discourse, I here only mention in passing, because they afford an easy means of judging how much importance is due to this smoke of succession with which our bishops endeavor to blind us.

They maintain that Christ left as a heritage to the apostles, the sole right of appointing over churches whomsoever they pleased, and they complain that we, in exercising the ministry without their authority, have, with sacrilegious temerity, invaded their province. How do they prove it? Because they have succeeded the apostles in an unbroken series. But is this enough, when all other things are different? It would be ridiculous to say so; they do say it, however. In their elections, no account is taken either of life or doctrine. The right of voting had been wrested from the people. Nay, even excluding the rest of the clergy, the dignitaries have drawn the whole power to themselves. The Roman Pontiff, again, wresting it from the provincial Bishop, arrogates it to himself alone. Then, as if they had been appointed to secular dominion, there is nothing they less think of than episcopal duty. In short, while they seem to have entered into a conspiracy not to have any kind of resemblance either to the Apostles or the holy Fathers of the Church, they merely clothe themselves with the pretense that they are descended from them in an unbroken succession; as if Christ had ever enacted it into a law, that whatever might be the conduct of those who presided over the Church, they should be recognized as holding the place of the Apostles, or as if the office were some hereditary possession, which transmits alike to the worthy and the unworthy. And then, as is said of the Milesians, they have taken precautions not to admit a single worthy person into their society; or if, perchance, they have unawares admitted him, they do not permit him to remain. It is of the generality I speak. For I deny not that there are a few good men among them, who, however, are either silent from fear, or not listened to. From those, then, who persecute the doctrine of Christ with fire and sword, who permit no man with impunity to speak sincerely of Christ, who, in every possible way, impede the course of truth, who strenuously resist our attempt to raise the Church from the distressed condition into which they have brought her, who

suspect all those who take a deep and pious interest in the welfare of the Church, and either keep them out of the ministry, or, if they have been admitted, thrust them out — of such persons, forsooth, it were to be expected that they would, with their own hands, instal into the office faithful ministers to instruct the people in pure religion!

But, since the sentiment of Gregory has passed into a common proverb, that “those who abuse privilege deserve to lose privilege,” they must either become entirely different from what they are, and select a different sort of persons to govern the Church, and adopt a different method of election, or they must cease to complain that they are improperly and injuriously despoiled of what in justice belonged to them. Or, if they would have me to speak more plainly, they must obtain their bishoprics by different means from those by which they have obtained them, they must ordain others to the office after a different way and manner; and if they wish to be recognised as bishops, they must fulfill their duty by feeding the people. If they would retain the power of nominating and ordaining, let them restore that just and serious examination of life and doctrine, which has for many ages been obsolete among them. But this one reason ought to be as good as a thousand, viz., that any man, who, by his conduct, shows that he is an enemy of sound doctrine, whatever title he may meanwhile boast, has lost all title to authority in the Church. We know what injunctions ancient councils give concerning heretics, and what power they leave them. They certainly in express terms forbid any man to apply to them for ordination. No one, therefore, can lay claim to the right of ordaining, who does not, by purity of doctrine, preserve the unity of the Church. Now, we maintain that those who, in the present day, under the name of bishops, preside over churches, not only are not faithful ministers and guardians of sound doctrine, but rather its bitterest enemies. We maintain that their sole aim is, to banish Christ and the truth of his gospel, and

sanction idolatry and impiety, — the most pernicious and deadly errors. We maintain that they, not only in word, pertinaciously impugn the true doctrine of godliness, but are infuriated against all who would rescue it from obscurity. Against the many impediments which they throw in the way, we studiously ply our labors in behalf of the Church, and for so doing, they expostulate with us as if we were making an illegal incursion into their province!

As to the form or ceremony of ordination, it is, forsooth, a mighty matter about which to molest us. Because with us the hands of priests are not anointed, because we do not blow into their face, because we do not clothe them in white and such like attire, they think our ordination is not duly performed. But the only ceremony we read of, as used in ancient times, was the laying on of hands. Those other forms are recent, and have nought to recommend them but the exceeding scrupulosity with which they are now generally observed. But what is this to the point? In matters so important, a higher than human authority is required. Hence, as often as the circumstances of the times demand, we are at liberty to change such rites as men have invented without express sanction, while those of more recent introduction are still less to be regarded. They put a chalice and paten into the hands of those whom they ordain to be priests. Why? That they may inaugurate them for sacrificing. But by what command? Christ never conferred this function on the apostles, nor did he ever wish it to be undertaken by their successors. It is absurd, therefore, to molest us about the form of ordination, in which we differ not either from the rule of Christ, or the practice of the apostles, or the custom of the ancient Church, whereas that form of theirs, which they accuse us of neglecting, they are not able to defend by the Word of God, by sound reason, or the pretext of antiquity.

On the subject of ecclesiastical regimen, there are laws of which we readily adopt such as are not snares for the conscience, or such as tend to the preservation of common order; but those which had either been tyrannically imposed to hold consciences in bondage, or were more subservient to superstition than to edification, we were forced to abrogate. Now, our enemies first charge us with fastidiousness and undue haste, and, secondly, accuse us of aiming at carnal indulgence, by shaking off the yoke of discipline, in order that we may wanton as we please. But, as I have already observed, we are by no means averse to the reverent observance of whatever rules are fitted to ensure that all things be done decently and in order, while, in regard to every single observance which we have abrogated, we refuse not to show cause why it behoved us so to do. Assuredly there is no difficulty in proving that the Church labored exceedingly under a load of human traditions, and that it was necessary, if her interest were consulted, that this load should be lessened. There is a well known complaint by Augustine, wherein he deplores it as the calamity of his time, that the Church which God, in his mercy, wished to be free, was even then so overburdened, that the condition of the Jews was more tolerable, (*Epist. 2, ad Januarium.*) It is probable that since that period the number has increased almost tenfold. Much more has the rigorous exaction of them increased. What then, if that holy man were now to rise and behold the countless multitude of laws under which miserable consciences groan oppressed? What if, on the other hand, he were to see the strictness with which the observance of them is enforced? Our censurers will, perhaps, object that we might, with Augustine, have lamented over any thing which displeased us, but that we ought not to have supplied our hand to the work of correction. This objection is easily refuted. For, this pernicious error of supposing that human laws were necessary to be observed, required to be corrected. As I have said, we deny not that laws enacted with a view to external

policy ought to be carefully obeyed, but in regard to the regulation of the conscience, we hold that there is no legislator but God. To Him alone, then, be reserved this authority, which He claims for himself in many passages of Scripture. In this matter, however, were subverted, first, the honor of God, from which it is impious to derogate in any degree, and, secondly, genuine liberty of consciences — a liberty which, as Paul strenuously insists, must not be subjected to the will of men. As it was, therefore, our duty to deliver the consciences of the faithful from the undue bondage in which they were held, so we have taught that they are free and unfettered by human laws and that this freedom which was purchased by the blood of Christ, cannot be infringed. If any one thinks we are blameable in this he must attribute the same blame to Christ and his Apostles. I do not yet enumerate the other evils which compelled us to set our face against human traditions. I will mention only two, and I am confident that, after I have mentioned them, all impartial readers will be satisfied. The one is, that as some of these traditions demanded things which it was impossible to perform, their only effect was to lead men to hypocrisy, or plunge them into despair; and the other, that all of them had practically realized what our Savior rebuked in the Pharisees — they had made the commandments of God of none effect.

I will here adduce examples by which this will be made more clear.

There are three things, in particular, for which they are offended with us: — First, that we have given liberty to eat flesh on any day; secondly, that we have permitted marriage to priests; and, thirdly, that we have rejected the secret confession which was made in a priest's ear.

Let our opponents answer honestly. Is not the man who may have tasted flesh on Friday punished more severely than the man who may have spent the whole year in a constant course of lewdness? Is it not deemed a more capital offense in a priest to marry than to be caught a hundred times in adultery? Do they not pardon him who has contemned many of the divine precepts on easier terms than him who may have neglected once a-year to confess his sins into the ear of a priest? Is it not monstrous, I ask, that it should seem a slight and venial offense to violate the holy law of God, and that it should be judged an inexpiable crime to transgress the decrees of men? The case, I admit, is not without precedent. For, as I have already observed, the wickedness with which our Savior charges the Pharisees is,

“Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect through your tradition,” (Matthew 15:6.)

Moreover, the arrogance of antichrist, of which Paul speaks, is,

“That he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God,” (2 Thessalonians 2:4.)

For where is the incomparable majesty of God, after mortal man has been exalted to such a height that his laws take precedence of God’s eternal decrees? I omit that an apostle describes the prohibitions of meats and of marriage as a doctrine of devils, (1 Timothy 4:1-3.) That is surely bad enough; but the crowning impiety is to set man in a higher rank than God. If they deny the truth of my statement, I appeal to fact.

Then, what are those two laws of celibacy and auricular confession but dire murderers of souls? As all the ministers of their churches vow perpetual chastity, it becomes unlawful for them, ever after,



from the terms in which the vow is conceived, to take wives. What, then, if one has not received the gift of continence? “There must be no exception here,” is the answer. But experience shows how much better it would have been never to have imposed this yoke upon priests, than to shut them up in a furnace of lust, to burn with a perpetual flame. Our adversaries recount the praises of virginity; they recount also the advantages of celibacy, in order to prove that priests have not been rashly interdicted from marrying. They even talk of it as decent and honorable. But will they by all these things prove the lawfulness of fettering consciences which Christ not only left free and unfettered, but whose freedom he has vindicated by his own authority, and at the price of his own blood? Paul does not presume to do so, (1 Corinthians 7:35.) Whence, then, this new license? Then, though virginity be extolled to the skies, what has this to do with the celibacy of priests, with whose obscenity the whole air is tainted? If the chastity which they profess in word they also exhibited in deed, then, perhaps, I might allow them to say that it is comely so to do. But when every man knows that the prohibition of marriage is only a license to priests to commit gross sin, with what face, I ask, dare they make any mention of comeliness? As to those whose infamy is not notorious, that it may not be necessary for me to discuss the matter with them at length, I leave them to the tribunal of God, that they may there talk of their chastity.

It will be said that this law is imposed on none but those who vow spontaneously. But what greater necessity can be imagined than that by which they are forced to vow? The condition announced to all is, that none shall be admitted to the priesthood who has not previously, by vow, bound himself to perpetual celibacy, and that he who has vowed must be forced, even against his will, to perform what he has once undertaken — that no excuse for the contrary can be listened to. Still, they maintain that a celibacy so exacted is voluntary. But, while

rhetoricians may be allowed to detail the disadvantages of marriage, and the advantages of celibacy, that, by declaiming on such topics in the schools they may improve their style, nothing they can say will prove the propriety of leading miserable consciences into a deadly snare, in which they must perpetually writhe till they are strangled. And the ridiculous part is, that, amidst all this flagitious turpitude, even hypocrisy finds a place. For, whatever their conduct may be, they deem themselves better than others, for the simple reason that they have no wives.

The case is the same with confession. For they number up the advantages which follow from it. We, on the contrary, are equally prepared to point out not a few dangers which are justly to be dreaded, and to refer to numerous most grievous evils which have actually flowed from it. These, I say, are the kind of arguments which both parties may employ. But the perpetual rule of Christ, which can not be changed or bent in this direction or in that; nay, which cannot, without impiety, be controverted, is, that conscience must not be brought into bondage. Besides, the law on which our opponents insist is one which can only torture souls, and ultimately destroy them. For it requires every individual to confess all his sins, once a year, to his own priest; when this is not done, it leaves him no hope of obtaining pardon. It has been experimentally found by those who have made the trial seriously, that is, in the true fear of God, that it is not possible thus to confess even a hundredth part of our sins. The consequence was, that not having any mode of extricating themselves, they were driven to despair. Those, again, who desired to satisfy God in a more careless manner, found this confession a most complete cloak for hypocrisy. For, thinking that they obtained an acquittal at the bar of God as soon as they had disgorged their sins into the ear of a priest, they were sold to sin more freely, in consequence of the expeditious mode in which they were

disburdened. Then, having in their minds a fixed persuasion that they fulfilled what the law enjoined, they thought that of whatever sort the enumeration might be, it comprehended all their sins, though, in point of fact, it did not embrace the thousandth part. See, then, on what ground our adversaries vociferate that we have destroyed the discipline of the Church, — simply because we have studied to succor miserable consciences when perishing under the pressure of a most cruel tyranny, and dragging hypocrites out of their lurking-places into open day, that they might both examine themselves more closely, and begin to have a better idea of the Divine justice, which they formerly evaded.

But some one will say, that however numerous the abuses, and however deserving of correction, still laws, in other respects sacred and useful, and in a manner consecrated by a high antiquity, ought not to have been thus abolished instantly and altogether.

In regard to the eating of flesh, my simple answer is, that the doctrine we hold accords with that of the ancient Church, in which we know that it was free to eat flesh at all times, or to abstain from it.

The prohibition of the marriage of priests I admit to be ancient, as is also the vow of perpetual continence, taken by nuns and monks. But if they concede that the declared will of God outweighs human custom, why, when perfectly aware that the will of God is with us, and clearly supports our views do they seek to quarrel with us about antiquity? The doctrine is clear, “marriage is honorable in all,” (Hebrews 13:4.) Paul expressly speaks of Bishops as husbands, (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6.) As a general rule, he enjoins marriage on all of a particular temperament, and classes the interdiction of marriage among the “doctrines of devils,” (1 Timothy 4:3.) What avails it to set human custom in opposition to the clear declarations of the Holy

Spirit, unless men are to be preferred to God? And it is of importance to observe how unfair judges they are, who, in this matter, allege against us the practice of the ancient Church. Is there any antiquity of the Church, either earlier, or of higher authority, than the days of the Apostles? But our opponents will not deny, that at that time marriage was permitted to all the ministers of the Church, and used by them. If the Apostles were of opinion that priests ought to be restrained from marrying, why did they defraud the Church of so great a boon? Yet, after them, about two hundred and fifty years elapsed, until the Council of Nice, when, as Sozomen relates, the question of enjoining celibacy on ministers was agitated, but by the interference of Paphnutius, the whole affair went off. For it is related, that after he, being himself a bachelor, had declared that a law of celibacy was not to be tolerated, the whole council readily assented to this opinion. But superstition gradually increasing, the law, which was then repudiated, was at length enacted. Among those Canons, which, as well from their antiquity, as the uncertainty of their author, bear the name of Apostolical, there is one which does not permit any clerical persons, except singers and readers, to marry, after they have been admitted to office. But by a previous Canon, priests and deacons are prohibited from putting away their wives under the pretext of religion. And in the fourth Canon of the Council of Gangra, anathema is pronounced against those who made a difference between a married and an unmarried clergy man, so as to absent themselves when he officiated. Hence it appears that there was still in those times considerably more equity than a subsequent age manifested.

Here, however, it was not my intention to discuss this subject fully. I only thought it proper to indicate in passing, that the primitive and purer Church is not in this matter so adverse to us as our enemies pretend. But grant that it is, why do they accuse us as fiercely as if we

were confounding things sacred and profane, or as if we could not easily retort against them, that we accord far better with the ancient Church than they do? Marriage, which the ancients denied to priests, we show! What do they say to the licentiousness which has everywhere obtained among them? They will deny that they approve it. But if they were desirous to obey the ancient Canons, it would become them to chastise it more severely. The punishment which the Council of Neo-Cesarea inflicts on a presbyter who married was deposition, while one guilty of adultery or fornication it punishes far more severely, adding to deposition excommunication also. In the present day, the marriage of a priest is deemed a capital crime, while for his hundred acts of whoredom he is mulcted in a small sum of money. Doubtless, if those who first passed the law of celibacy were now alive, instructed by present experience, they would be the first to abrogate it. However, as I have already said, it would be the height of injustice to condemn us on the authority of men, in a matter in which we are openly acquitted by the voice of God.

With regard to confession, we have a briefer and readier defense. Our opponents cannot show that the necessity of confessing was imposed earlier than Innocent III. For twelve hundred years this tyranny, for which they contend with us so keenly, was unknown to the Christian world. But there is a decree of the Lateran Council! True! But of the same description as many others. Those who have any tolerable knowledge of history are aware of the equal ignorance and ferocity of those times. This, indeed, is in accordance with the common observation, that the most ignorant governors are always the most imperious. But all pious souls will bear me witness, in what a maze those must be entangled who think themselves obliged by that law. To this cruel torturing of consciences has been added the blasphemous presumption of making it essential to the remission of sin. For they pretend that none obtain pardon from God but those

who are disposed to confess. What is this, pray, but for men to prescribe at their own hand the mode in which a sinner is reconciled to God — God offering pardon simply, while they withhold it until a condition which they have added shall have been fulfilled? On the other hand, the people were possessed with this most pernicious superstition, viz., that as soon as they had disburdened themselves of their sins, by pouring them into the ear of a priest, they were completely freed from guilt. This opinion many abused to a more unrestrained indulgence in sin, while even those who were more influenced by the fear of God paid greater regard to the priest than to Christ. That public and solemn acknowledgment, (exomologesis, as Cyprian calls it,) which penitents were anciently obliged to make when they were to be reconciled to the Church, there is no sane man who does not commend and willingly adopt, provided it be not stretched to some other end than that for which it was instituted. In short, we have no controversy in this matter with the ancient Church; we only wish, as we ought, to rid the necks of believers of a modern tyranny of recent date. Besides, when any person, in order to obtain consolation and counsel, visits his minister in private, and familiarly deposits in his breast the causes of his anxiety, we by no means object, provided it is done freely, and not of constraint. Let every man, I say, be left at liberty to do in this matter what he feels to be expedient for himself; let no man's conscience be tied down by fixed laws.

I hope your Imperial Majesty, and you, Most Illustrious Princes, will be satisfied with this apology. It is certainly just.

But how deservedly soever we complain that the doctrine of truth was corrupted, and the whole body of Christianity sullied by numerous blemishes, still our censurers deny that this was cause

sufficient for so disturbing the Church, and, in a manner, convulsing the whole world.

We, indeed, are not so stupid as not to perceive how desirable it is to avoid public tumults, nor so savage as not to be touched, and even to shudder in our inmost soul, on beholding the troubled condition in which the Church now is. But with what fairness is the blame of existing commotions imputed to us, when they have not been, in the least degree, excited by us? Nay, with what face is the crime of disturbing the Church laid to our charge by the very persons who obviously are the authors of all these disturbances? This is just the case of the wolves complaining of the lambs.

When Luther at first appeared, he merely touched, with a gentle hand, a few abuses of the grossest description, now grown intolerable. And he did it with a modesty which intimated that he had more desire to see them corrected, than determination to correct them himself. The opposite party forthwith sounded to arms; and when the contention was more and more inflamed, our enemies deemed it the best and shortest method to suppress the truth by cruelty and violence. Accordingly, when our people challenged them to friendly discussion, and desired to settle disputes by calm arguments, they were cruelly persecuted with sanguinary edicts, until matters have been brought to the present miserable pass.

Nor is this calumny against us without precedent. With the very same charge which we are now forced to hear, wicked Ahab once upbraided Elijah, viz., that he was the disturber of Israel. But the holy Prophet by his reply acquitted us;

“I,” says he, “have not troubled Israel, but thou and thy father’s house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord’s and thou hast followed Baalim,” (I Kings 18:17, 18.)

It is unfair, therefore, to load us with odium, on account of the fierce contest concerning religion which this day rages in Christendom, unless, in deed, it be thought proper first to condemn Elijah, with whom we have a common defense. His sole excuse is, that he had fought only to vindicate the glory and restore the pure worship of God, and he retorts the charge of exciting contention and disturbances upon those who stirred up tumults as a means of resisting the truth. And what is it that we have done hitherto, and what do we even now, but strive that the one God may be worshipped amongst us, and that his simple truth may reign in the Church? If our adversaries deny this, let them, at least, convict us of impious doctrine before they charge it upon us as a fault, that we dissent from others. For what were we to do? The only terms on which we could purchase peace were to betray the truth of God by silence. Though, indeed, it would not have been enough to be silent, unless we had also, by tacit consents approved of impious doctrine, of open blasphemies against God, and the most degrading superstitions. What else, then, at the very least, could we do, than testify with a clear voice that we had no fellowship with impiety? We have, therefore, simply studied to do what was our duty. That matters have blazed forth into such hostile strife is an evil, the blame of which must rest with those who chose to confound heaven and earth, rather than give a place to pious and sound doctrine — their object being, by whatever means, to keep possession of the tyranny which they had usurped.

It ought to be sufficient, and more than sufficient, for our defense, that the sacred truth of God, in asserting which we sustain so many contests, is on our side, whereas our adversaries, in contending with us, war not so much against us as God himself. Then it is not of our own accord that we engage in this fervor of contention. It is their intemperance which has dragged us into it against our expectation.



Let the result, then, have been what it may, there is no reason why we should be loaded with hatred. For as it is not ours to govern events, neither is it ours to prevent them. But there is an ancient practice which the wicked have resorted to in all ages, viz., to take occasion from the preaching of the gospel to excite tumult, and then to defame the gospel as the cause of dissension — dissension which, even in the absence of opportunity, they wickedly and eagerly court. And, as in the primitive Church, the prophecy behoved to be fulfilled, that Christ should be to his own countrymen a stone of stumbling and rock of offense, so it is not surprising if the same thing holds true in our time also. It may well indeed be thought strange for the builders to reject the stone which ought to occupy the principal place in the foundations but as this happened at the beginning, in the case of Christ, let it not surprise us that it is also a common event in the present day. Here I entreat your Imperial Majesty, and you, most Illustrious Princes, that as oft as this unhappy rending of the Church, and the other countless evils which have sprung from dissension, either occur to your own thoughts, or are suggested by others, you would, at the same time, call to mind that Christ has been set up as a sign to be spoken against, and that his gospel, wherever it is preached, instantly inflames the rage and resistance of the wicked. Then, from conflict a shock must necessarily ensue. Hence the uniform fate of the gospel, from its first commencement, has been, and always will be, even unto the end, to be preached in the world amid great contention. But it is the part of the prudent to consider from what source the evil springs. Whoever does this will readily free us from all blame. It certainly behoved us to bear testimony to the truth, as we have done. Woe to the world if it chooses to challenge Christ to combat, rather than embrace the peace which He offers! The man who will not bear to be corrected will undoubtedly be crushed by Him.

But here again it is objected, that all the corruptions of the Church are not to be corrected by such harsh remedies — that they are not to be cut in to the quick — that not even is medicine to be applied to all, but some are to be treated gently, and others submitted to, if they cannot without difficulty be removed. I answer, that we are not so unacquainted with ordinary life as not to know that the Church always has been, and always will be, liable to some defects which the pious are indeed bound to disapprove, but which are to be borne rather than be made a cause of fierce contention. But our adversaries are unjust when they accuse us of being excessively morose, as if we had brought the Church into trouble on account of small and trivial errors. For to their other misrepresentations they add this one also, of endeavoring, by every artifice in their power, to extenuate the importance of the things which we have made the subject of controversy; the object being to make it seem that we have been hurried on by a love of quarrelling, and not that we were drawn into it by a just cause. This they do, not in ignorance, but with cunning design, namely, because they know that there is nothing more odious than the rash haste which they impute to us. And yet they, at the same time, betray their own impiety in speaking so contemptuously of matters of the greatest moment. And is it indeed so, that when we complain that the worship of God was profaned — that His honor was utterly impaired — that the doctrine of salvation was entangled with numerous destructive errors—that the virtue of Christ's death was suppressed—and that, in short, all things sacred were sacrilegiously polluted; is it indeed so, that we are to be derided and charged with the folly of disturbing ourselves and the whole world besides, to no purpose, with disputes about insignificant questions?

But as a cursory glance at these things is not sufficient, it will now be necessary more diligently to explain to you the dignity and importance of the points in dispute, so as to make it manifest, not

only that they were not unworthy of notice, but that we could not possibly overlook them without involving ourselves in the greatest guilt, and becoming chargeable with impious perfidy towards God. This is the third of the three heads, of which at the outset I proposed to treat.

First, then, I wish to know, with what face they can call themselves Christians, when they charge us with rashly disturbing the Church with disputes about matters of no importance. For, if they set as much value on our religion as the ancient idolaters did on their superstitions, they would not speak so contemptuously of zeal for its preservation, but, in imitation of idolaters, would give it the precedence of all other cares and business. For, when idolaters spoke of fighting for their altars and their hearths, they alleged what they believed to be the best and strongest of all causes. Our opponents, on the contrary, regard as almost superfluous a contest which is undertaken for the glory of God and the salvation of men. For it is not true, as has been alleged, that we dispute about a worthless shadow. The whole substance of the Christian religion is brought into question. Were nothing else involved, is the eternal and inviolable truth of God, that truth to which he rendered so many illustrious testimonies, in confirming which so many holy prophets and so many martyrs met their death, truth heralded and witnessed by the Son of God himself, and ultimately sealed with his blood, is that truth of so little value, that it may be trampled under foot, while we look on and are silent?

But I descend to particulars. We know how execrable a thing idolatry is in the sight of God, and history abounds with narratives of the dreadful punishments with which He visited it, both in the Israelitish people and in other nations. From his own mouth, we hear the same vengeance denounced against all ages. For to us he speaks when he

swears by his holy name, that he will not suffer his glory to be transferred to idols, and when he declares that he is a jealous God, taking vengeance, to the third and fourth generation, upon all sins, and more especially on this one. This is the sin on account of which Moses, who was other wise of so meek a temper, being inflamed by the Spirit of God, ordered the Levites

“to go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor,” (Exodus 32:27;)

the sin on account of which God so often punished his chosen people, afflicting them with sword, pestilence, and famine, and, in short, all kinds of calamity; the sin on account of which, especially, the kingdom, first of Israel, and then of Judah, was laid waste, Jerusalem the holy city destroyed, the temple of God (the only temple then existing in the world) laid in ruins, and the people whom he had selected out of all the nations of the earth to be peculiarly his own, entering into covenant with them, that they alone might bear his standard, and live under his rule and protection — the people, in short, from whom Christ was to spring, were doomed to all kinds of disaster, stript of all dignity, driven into exile, and brought to the brink of destruction. It were too long here to give a full detail, for there is not a page in the Prophets which does not proclaim aloud that there is nothing which more provokes the divine indignation. What then? When we saw idolatry openly and everywhere stalking abroad, were we to connive at it? To have done so would have just been to rock the world in its sleep of death, that it might not awake.

Be pleased, Most Invincible Cæsar, and Most Illustrious Princes, to call to mind the many corruptions by which, as I have already shown, the worship of God was polluted, and you will assuredly find that

impiety had broken out like a deluge, under which religion was completely submerged. Hence, divine honors were paid to images, and prayers everywhere offered to them, under the pretense that the power and deity of God resided in them. Hence, too, dead saints were worshipped exactly in the manner in which of old the Israelites worshipped Baalim. And by the artifice of Satan, numerous other modes had been devised by which the glory of God was torn to pieces. The Lord exclaims, that he burns with jealousy when any idol is erected, and Paul demonstrates, by his own example, that His servants should be zealous in asserting His glory, (Acts 17:16.) It is no common zeal for the house of God which ought to penetrate and engross the hearts of believers. When, therefore, the Divine glory was polluted, or rather lacerated, in so many ways, would it not have been perfidy if we had winked or been silent? A dog, seeing any violence offered to his master, will instantly bark; could we, in silence, see the sacred name of God dishonored so blasphemously? In such a case, how could it have been said,

“The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me?”  
(Psalm 49:9.)

The mockery which worships God with nought but external gestures and absurd human fictions, how could we, without sin, allow to pass unrebuked? We know how much he hates hypocrisy, and yet in that fictitious worship, which was everywhere in use, hypocrisy reigned. We hear how bitter the terms in which the Prophets inveigh against all worship fabricated by human rashness. But a good intention, i.e., an insane licence of daring whatever man pleased, was deemed the perfection of worship. For it is certain that in the whole body of worship which had been established, there was scarcely a single observance which had an authoritative sanction from the Word of God. We are not in this matter to stand either by our own or by other

men's judgments. We must listen to the voice of God, and hear in what estimation he holds that profanation of worship which is displayed when men, overleaping the boundaries of His Word, run riot in their own inventions. The reasons which he assigns for punishing the Israelites with blindness, after they had lost the pious and holy discipline of the Church, are two, viz., the prevalence of hypocrisy, and *will-worship*, *evqeloqrhskeian*, meaning thereby a form of worship contrived by man.

“Forasmuch,” saith he, “as the people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honor me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men; therefore I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid,” (Isaiah 29:13, 14.)

When God stirred us up, a similar or worse perversity openly domineered throughout the Church. While God, then, was thundering from heaven, were we to sit quiet?

Perhaps they will consider as a trivial error the custom which prevailed, in defiance of the clear prohibition of God, of repeating the public prayers in an unknown tongue. But since it is manifest that by such procedure God was mocked, they cannot deny that we had too good cause to object to it. Then, what shall I say of the blasphemies which rung in the public hymns, and which no pious man is able to hear without the utmost horror? We all know the epithets which they applied to Mary — styling her the gate of heaven, hope, life, and salvation; and to such a degree of infatuation and madness had they proceeded, that they even gave her a right to order Christ! For still in many churches is heard the execrable and impious stanza, “Ask the

Father; command the Son.” In terms in no respect more modest do they celebrate certain of the saints, and these, too, saints of their own making, i.e., individuals whom they, on their own judgment, have admitted into the catalogue of saints. For, among the multitude of praises which they sing to Claud, they call him “the light of the blind,” “the guide of the erring,” “the life and resurrection of the dead.” The forms of prayer in daily use are stuffed with similar blasphemies. The Lord denounces the severest threatenings against those who, either in oaths or in prayers, confounded his name with Baalim. What vengeance, then, impends over our heads when we not only confound him with saints as minor gods, but with signal insult rob Christ of the proper and peculiar titles with which he is distinguished, in order that we may bestow them on creatures? Were we to be silent here, also, and by perfidious silence call down on ourselves his heavy judgments?

I say nothing of the fact that no man prayed, and that indeed no man could pray, to God with firm faith, i.e., in good earnest. For Christ being, in a manner, buried, the necessary consequence was, that men were always in doubt whether God had a Father’s kindness toward them — whether he was disposed to assist them — and whether he took any interest in their salvation. What! was it an error either trivial or tolerable, when the eternal priesthood of Christ, as if it had been set up to be preyed upon, was bestowed, without distinction, on any individual among the saints? Let us remember that Christ, by his death, purchased for himself the honor of being the eternal advocate and peace-maker to present our prayers and our persons to the Father; to obtain supplies of grace for us, and enable us to hope we shall obtain what we ask. As he alone died for us, and redeemed us by his death, so he admits of no partnership in this honor. Therefore, what fouler blasphemy than that which is ever and anon in the mouths of our opponents, viz., that Christ is indeed the only

mediator of redemption, but that all the saints are mediators of intercession? Is not Christ in this way left inglorious? as if, after having once in his death performed the office of priest, he had ever after resigned it to the saints. Are we, then, to be silent when the peculiar dignity of Christ, the dignity which cost him such a price, is wrested from him with the greatest contumely, and distributed among the saints, as if it were lawful spoil? But it seems that when they speak thus they do not deny that Christ intercedes for us even now; only we are to understand that he does it along with the saints, i.e., just as any other one in the catalogue. It must have been a mighty honor which Christ purchased for himself by his blood, if all he obtained was to be the associate of Hugo, Lubin, or some of the merest dregs of saintship which the Roman Pontiff has conferred at his own pleasure. For the question is not, whether the saints even do pray, (this being a subject of which it is better to have no knowledge, as Scripture does not mention it,) but the question is, whether, after passing by Christ, or treating him with neglect, or positively abandoning him altogether, we are entitled to look round for the patronage of saints, or, if they will have it in plainer terms, whether Christ is the only priest who opens up an asylum for us in heaven, leads us thither by the hand, and, by his intercession, inclines the Father to listen to our prayers, so that we ought to cast ourselves entirely on his advocacy, and present our prayers in his name; or whether, on the contrary, he holds this office in common with the saints?

I have shown above that Christ was in a great measure defrauded, not of the honor of the priesthood merely, but also of the gratitude due for his benefits. True, he is called a Redeemer, but in a manner which implies that men also, by their own free will, redeem themselves from the bondage of sin and death. True, he is called righteousness and salvation, but so that men still procure salvation



for themselves, by the merit of their works; for this inestimable gift, which no eloquence of men or angels is able adequately to describe, the schoolmen are not ashamed to restrict, telling us that though he confers the first merit, i.e., as they explain it, the occasion of meriting, yet after receiving this help, we merit eternal life by our own works. True, they confess that we are washed from our sins by the blood of Christ, but so that every individual cleanses himself by washings elsewhere obtained. True, the death of Christ receives the name of a sacrifice, but so that sins are expiated by the daily sacrifices of men. True, Christ is said to have reconciled us to the Father, but with this reservation, that men, by their own satisfactions, buy off the punishments which they owe to the justice of God. When supplementary aid is sought from the benefit of the keys, no more honor is paid to Christ than to Cyprian or Cyricius. For, in making up the treasury of the Church, the merits of Christ and of martyrs are thrown together in the slump.

In all these things, have we not just as many execrable blasphemies as we have words, blasphemies by which the glory of Christ is rent, and torn to shreds? For, being in a great measure despoiled of his honor he retains the name, while he wants the power. Here, too, no doubt, we might have been silent, though we saw the Son, on whom the Father hath bestowed all authority, and power, and glory, and in whom alone he bids us glory, so classified with his servants, that he had scarcely any pre-eminence above them. When we saw his benefits thus in oblivion — when we saw his virtue destroyed by the ingratitude of men — when we saw the price of his blood held in no estimation, and the fruits of his death almost annihilated — when, in fine, we saw him so deformed by false and profane opinions, that he had more resemblance to an unsubstantial phantom than to himself, did it behove us to bear it calmly and silently? O accursed patience, if, when the honor of God is impaired, not to say prostrated, we are

so slightly affected, that we can wink and pass on! O ill-bestowed benefits of Christ, if we can permit the memory of them to be thus suppressed by impious blasphemies!

I again return to the second branch of Christian doctrine.

Who can deny that men are laboring under a kind of delirium, when they suppose that they procure eternal life by the merit of their works? I admit that they conjoin the grace of God with their works, but in as much as their confidence of obtaining acceptance is made to depend on their own worthiness, it is clear that the ground of their confidence and boasting lies in their works. The trite and favourite doctrine of the schools, the opinion deeply seated in almost all minds, is — that every individual is loved by God in exact proportion to his deserts. Entertaining this view, are not souls, by means of a confidence which the devil inspires, raised to a height, from which, as from a loftier precipice, they are afterwards plunged into the gulf of despair? Again, when they pretend to merit the favor of God, it is not merely by true obedience, but by frivolous observances, of no value. The meritorious works to which the first place is assigned are these — to mumble over a multitude of little prayers, to erect altars, and place statues or pictures thereon — to frequent churches, and run up and down from one church to another — to hear many masses and to buy some — to wear out their bodies, by I know not what abstinences — abstinences having nothing in common with Christian fasting; and, in particular, to be most careful in observing the traditions of men. In the matter of satisfactions, is it not even a greater infatuation which makes them, after the manner of the heathen, set out in quest of expiations, by which they may reconcile themselves to God? After all these attempts, after great and long fatigue, what did they gain? Doing every thing with a dubious and trembling conscience, they were always exposed to that fearful

anxiety, or rather that dire torment, of which I have already spoken, because they were enjoined to doubt whether their persons and their works were not hateful to God. Confidence being in this way overthrown, the necessary consequence was, as Paul declares, that the promise of the eternal inheritance was made void. In such circumstances, what became of the salvation of men? Where there was such necessity for speaking, had we kept silence, we should have been not only ungrateful and treacherous towards God, but also cruel towards men, over whom we saw eternal destruction impending, unless they were brought back into the proper path.

Were a dog to see an injury offered to his master, equal to the insult which is offered to God in the sacraments, he would instantly bark, and expose his own life to danger, sooner than silently allow his master to be so insulted. Ought we to show less devotedness to God than a brute is wont to show to man? I say nothing of the fact that rites, founded merely on human authority, have been put on a footing with the mysteries instituted by Christ, and recommended by his Divine authority, though the procedure is deserving of the severest rebuke. But when the mysteries themselves were thus corrupted, by the many superstitions, and dishonored by the many false opinions, to which we have already adverted, for base and filthy lucre, ought we to have dissembled and borne it, or pretended not to see? Christ with a whip drove the money-changers out of the temple, threw down their tables, and scattered their merchandise. I admit it is not lawful for every man to take the whip into his own hand, but it is, incumbent on all who professedly belong to Christ to burn with the zeal with which Christ was animated, when he vindicated the glory of his Father. Therefore, that profanation of the temple, at which he, in a manner so marked, expressed his strong displeasure, it is at least our part to condemn, in a free, firm, and decided tone. Who is ignorant that sacraments have now for a long time been sold

in churches, as openly as the wares which stand exposed in the public market? Other rites, too, have their fixed price, while as to some a bargain is not struck till after long higgling.

But since the instances which are exhibited in the Lord's Supper are manifest, and of a nature more heinous than in the case of other rites, come and say with what conscience could we have connived at profanations of it, at once so numerous and so blasphemous? Seeing that even now I want words to express them, with what justice are we charged with excessive vehemence in inveighing against them? By the sacred body of Christ, which hung in sacrifice for us, by the holy blood which he shed for our ablution, I here beseech your Imperial Majesty, and you, Most Illustrious Princes, that you will be pleased seriously to consider how great must be the mystery in which that body is set before us for meat, and that blood for drink; to consider how carefully, how religiously, it ought to be kept unpolluted. What ingratitude, then, must it be when this heavenly mystery, which Christ has committed to us like a most precious jewel, is trodden under feet of swine, for any man to look on, and be silent? But we may see it not only trodden, but also defiled by every species of pollution. What an insult was offered, when the efficacy of Christ's death was transferred to a theatrical performance by men — when some priestling, as if he had been the successor of Christ, interposed himself as a Mediator between God and man—when, after destroying the virtue of the only sacrifice, a thousand sacrifices of expiation were daily offered in a single city — when Christ was sacrificed a thousand times a-day, as if he had not done enough in once dying for us? In heaping all these insults upon Christ, they abused the character of the Holy Supper; for they are all included in this single notion of sacrifice. I am not ignorant of the glosses which our opponents employ, in order to screen their absurdities. Up to the present age, they impudently practiced all the abominations to which

I have referred; but being now detected, they burrow in new holes, without being able, however, to hide their turpitude. They taught that the mass was a sacrifice, by which the sins not only of the living, but also of the dead, were expiated. What do they now gain by quibbling, except it be to betray their impudence? How deeply, too, is the sacrament polluted, when, instead of the open preaching of the Word, which constitutes its legitimate consecration, a charm is wrought with the bread by means of whiffs and whispers? When, instead of being distributed among the assembly of the faithful, it is devoured apart by one man, or set aside for another's use? And when, even in the case where a kind of distribution is made, the people are, in defiance of the clear injunction of our Lord, defrauded of the half, I mean the cup? What delirium to fancy that by their exercises the substance of bread is transmuted into Christ? How shameful to see a trade in masses plied as unblushingly as a trade in shoes! For if it is true, as they say, that the thing they vend is the merit of Christ's death, the insult which they offer to Christ is not less gross than if they spat in his face.

Be pleased, Most Invincible Emperor, and Most Illustrious Princes, to call to mind the disaster which of old befell the Corinthians on account of one, and that not at first sight, so very heinous an abuse of this sacrament. Each brought from home his own supper, not as a common contribution, but that the rich might feast luxuriantly while the poor hungered. For this cause the Lord chastised them with a severe and deadly pestilence. Such is the account of Paul, who, at the same time, bids us regard it as a paternal rod, by which the Lord called them to repentance. From this infer what we have at this day to expect, who have not declined merely in some little iota from the genuine institution of Christ, but wandered to an immeasurable distance from it; who have not only corrupted its purity in one instance, but defaced it in numerous instances, and these, too, of a

shocking description; who have not merely interfered with its legitimate end, by some single abuse, but perverted its whole administration. Nor can it be doubted, that now, for some time, God has begun to avenge this impiety. Now, for many years in succession, the world has been pressed by numerous varying troubles and calamities, until it has at length arrived at almost the extreme of wretchedness. We, indeed, stand amazed at our disasters, or suggest other reasons why God so afflicts us. But if we reflect how slight the error by which the Corinthians had vitiated the sacred Supper was, if contrasted with all the defilements by which, in the present day, it is sullied and polluted amongst ourselves, it is strange not to perceive that God, who so severely punished them, is justly more offended with us.

Were I to follow out all the flagitious corruptions of ecclesiastical government, I should enter an interminable forest. Of the lives of the priests, for many reasons, I at present decline to speak; but there are three vices of an intolerable description, on which each individual may reflect for himself: First, Disregarding the character of a holy vocation, clerical offices are everywhere acquired either by violence or by simony, or by other dishonest and impious arts: Secondly, The rulers of the Church, in so far as regards the performance of their duties, are more like empty shadows or lifeless images than true ministers; and, Thirdly, When they ought to govern consciences in accordance with the Word of God, they oppress them with an iniquitous tyranny, and hold them in bondage by the fetters of many impious laws. Is it true, that, not only in contempt of the laws of God and man, but in the absence of everything like a sense of shame, foul disorder reigns in the appointment of Bishops and Presbyters? that caprice assumes the place of justice, simony is seldom absent, and, as if these were evils of no consequence, the correction of them is deferred to a future age? What is become of the duty of teaching —

the proper characteristic of the ministry? As to true liberty of conscience, we know how many struggles Paul engaged in, and how earnestly he contended in its defense; but every person who judges impartially must certainly perceive, that at the present time we have much more cause to contend for it. In a corruption of sound doctrine so extreme, in a pollution of the sacraments so nefarious, in a condition of the Church so deplorable, those who maintain that we ought not to have felt so strongly, would have been satisfied with nothing less than a perfidious tolerance, by which we should have betrayed the worship of God, the glory of Christ, the salvation of men, the entire administration of the sacraments, and the government of the Church. There is something specious in the name of moderation, and tolerance is a quality which has a fair appearance, and seems worthy of praise; but the rule which we must observe at all hazards is, never to endure patiently that the sacred name of God should be assailed with impious blasphemy — that his eternal truth should be suppressed by the devil's lies — that Christ should be insulted, his holy mysteries polluted, unhappy souls cruelly murdered, and the Church left to writhe in extremity under the effect of a deadly wound. This would be not meekness, but indifference about things to which all others ought to be postponed.

I trust I have now clearly shown, as I proposed, that in correcting the corruption of the Church, we have by no means been more urgent than the case demanded. Even those who blame us are aware of this, and, accordingly, they have recourse to another charge, viz., that the utmost we have gained by our interference has been to fill the Christian world, which was formerly at peace, with intestine discord — that so far from any amendment appearing, things have gone on to worse — that of those who have embraced our doctrine few have been made better, nay, that some have been emboldened, if not to greater, at least to more unrestrained licentiousness. They object,

moreover, that in our churches there is no discipline, no laws of abstinence, no exercises of humility; that the people, thrown loose from the yoke, riot with impunity in vicious courses. Lastly, they throw upon us the odium of seizing on the property of ecclesiastics, asserting that our princes have made a rush upon it as if it had been lawful spoil; that in this way the Church has been violently and shamefully plundered, and that now the patrimony of the Church is possessed indiscriminately by those who, amid the uproar of contention, have usurped it without law or any proper title.

I, for my part, deny not that when impiety reigned, her kingdom was disturbed by us. But if, at the moment when the light of sound and pious doctrine beamed upon the world, all, as in duty bound, had spontaneously, and with ready mind, lent their aid, there would at the present day be no less peace and quietness in all the churches, (the kingdom of Christ flourishing,) than in the days when Antichrist tyrannised. Let those who, it is manifest impede the course of truth, desist from waging war with Christ, and there will instantly be perfect concord; or let them desist from throwing upon us the blame of dissensions, which they themselves excite. For it is certainly most unfair, while they refuse all terms of peace unless Antichrist be permitted, after putting the doctrine of piety to flight, and as it were again consigning Christ to the tombs to subjugate the Church; it is most unfair not only to boast as if they themselves were innocent, but also to insult over us; and that we, who desire nothing else than unity, and whose only bond of union is the eternal truth of God, should bear all the blame and odium, as much as if we were the authors of dissension. In regard to the allegation, that no fruit has been produced by our doctrine, I am well aware that profane men deride us, and allege that in probing sores which are incurable, we only enlarge the ulcer. For their opinion is, that the desperate condition of the Church makes it vain to attempt remedies, there



being no hope of cure; and they hence conclude that the best course is not to meddle with an evil well fixed. Those who speak in this way understand not that the restoration of the Church is the work of God, and no more depends on the hopes and opinions of men, than the resurrection of the dead, or any other miracle of that description. Here, therefore, we are not to wait for facility of actions either from the will of men, or the temper of the times, but must rush forward through the midst of despair. It is the will of our Master that his gospel be preached. Let us obey his command, and follow whithersoever he calls. What the success will be it is not ours to inquire. Our only duty is to wish for what is best, and beseech it of the Lord in prayer; to strive with all zeal, solicitude, and diligence, to bring about the desired result, and, at the same time, to submit with patience to whatever that result may be.

Groundless, therefore, is the charge brought against us of not having done all the good which we wished, and which was to be desired. God bids us plant and water. We have done so. He alone gives the increase. What, then, if he chooses not to give according to our wish? If it is clear that we have faithfully done our part, let not our adversaries require more of us: if the result is unfavourable, let them expostulate with God. But the pretense that no benefit has resulted from our doctrine is most false. I say nothing of the correction of external idolatry, and of numerous superstitions and errors; though that is not to be counted of no moment. But is there no fruit in this, that many who are truly pious feel their obligation to us, in that they have at length learned to worship God with a pure heart, and to invoke him with a calm conscience, have been freed from perpetual torments, and furnished with true delight in Christ, so as to be able to confide in him? But if we are asked for proofs which every eye can see, it has not fared so unhappily with us that we cannot point to numerous sources of rejoicing. How many who formerly led a vicious

course of life have been so reformed as to seem converted into new men? How many whose past lives had been free from censure, nay, who were held in the highest estimation, have, instead of retrograding, been able to testify by their conduct that our ministry has proved neither barren nor unfruitful? Our enemies, no doubt, have it in their power to traduce and lacerate us by their calumnies, especially among the ignorant; but this they can never wrest from us, viz., that in those who have embraced our doctrine, greater innocence, integrity, and true holiness, are found, than in all who among them are deemed of greatest excellence. But if there are any (and we confess the number is but too great) who pervert the gospel, by giving loose reins to their passions, the circumstance, assuredly, is not new; and if it was, how can we be made to bear the blame of it? It is admitted that the gospel is the only rule of a good and holy life; but in the fact that all do not allow themselves to be ruled by it, and that some, as if set free from restraint, even sin more presumptuously, we recognize the truth of Simeon's saying, that Christ

“is set up, that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed,” (Luke 2:35.)

If God sees meet to kindle the light of the gospel, in order that the hidden iniquity of the wicked may be exposed, out of this to concoct a charge against the ministers of the gospel, and their preaching, is the utmost stretch of malice and effrontery. But I do them no injury when I retort upon them the very thing out of which they attempt to rear up a charge against us. For where do the despisers of God learn their daring licentiousness, except it be from imagining, amid the uproar of dissensions, that there is nothing which they are not licensed to do? In this, therefore, let them recognize it as their own crime, viz., that by retarding the course of truth, they encourage the wicked with hopes of impunity.

As to the vituperative allegation, that we are devoid of discipline and laws, fitted to keep the people under due restraint, we are provided with a twofold answer. Were I to say that discipline is adequately established among us, I should be refuted by the daily discourses, in which our teachers lament that it still lies neglected. But while I deny not that we want the blessing of thorough discipline, still, I say, it ought to be considered who the persons are to whom it has hitherto been, and still is, owing that we do not enjoy it, in order that they may be made to bear the blame. Let our enemies deny, if they can, that they employ every artifice for the purpose, not only of hampering our exertions in forming and constituting our churches, but also of defeating and overthrowing whatever we begin. We labor sedulously in building up the Church, and when we are intent on the work, they, ever and anon, make a hostile entrance to disturb our operations, and allow us no interval which we might employ in arranging the domestic concerns of the Church. After this they upbraid us with the dilapidation of which they are themselves the cause. What kind of ingenuousness is this, to give us constant annoyance, and then make it a charge against us, that, in consequence of that annoyance, we are not at leisure to arrange all the departments of the Church? God is witness to our grief, men witnesses to our complaints, on account of the distance we still are from perfection. But then it is said, there are some things pertaining to discipline which we have discarded. True; but as men are wont, in rebuilding a fallen edifice, to drag out and collect the fragments which lie in heaps, or scattered about, in order that they may fit each into its proper place, so were we obliged to act. For if any part of ancient discipline survived, it was so mixed and buried with the confused mass of ruins; it had so lost its pristine form, that no use could be made of it till it was gathered out from amidst the confusion.

I wish, at all events, our opponents would stimulate us by their example. But how? The discipline which they clamorously maintain that we have not, do they themselves possess? Would it not be better were they to unite with us in admitting and confessing their fault before God, than to upbraid us with what may instantly be retorted on their own heads?

Discipline consists of two parts, the one relating to the clergy, the other to the people. Now, I wish to know with what strictness they confine their clergy to an upright and chaste behavior. That purer and more refined holiness to which the ancient canons bind the clergy, I exact not of them. For I know how they laugh in their hearts when any one raises up from oblivion those laws which have now been dead for several ages. All I ask of their clergy is common decency, so that, if they are not distinguished for purity of life, they may, at least, not be infamous for turpitude. When any one, by means of gifts, or favor, or sordid obsequiousness, or surreptitious certificates, winds his way into the priesthood, the canons pronounce it simony, and order it as such to be punished. How many, in the present day, enter the priesthood by any other means? But adieu, as I have said, to that stern rigour. Still, were no enactment on the subject in existence, how disgraceful is it that the houses of bishops should be forges of open and adulterous simony? What shall I say of the Roman See, where it now seems matter of course that sacerdotal offices are openly disposed of to the highest bidder, or where they are the hire paid for panderism and sorcery, and the obscene crimes? If common sense has any influence amongst us, can it but seem monstrous that boys of twelve years of age should be made archbishops? When Christ was buffeted, was he more insulted than by this? Can there be a greater mockery to God and man, than when a boy is set to rule a Christian people, and installed in the seat of a father and pastor?

The injunctions of the canons concerning bishops and presbyters are, that all should be vigilant in their stations, and no one long absent from his church. But, let us suppose that there was no such precept, who sees not that the Christian name is subjected to the derision even of Turks, when the denomination of pastor of a church is given to one who does not pay it a single visit during his whole life? For, as to constant residence in the place where he has been appointed pastor, it is now long since an example of it became rare. Bishops and abbots either hold their own courts, or dwell in ordinary in the courts of princes. Each, according to his disposition, selects the place where he may live in luxury. Those, again, who take more pleasure in their nest, are truly said to reside in their benefices, for they are lazy bellies, to whom nothing is less known than their duty!

It was forbidden by the ancient canons to give two churches to one individual. Well, let this prohibition be as if it had never been. Still, with what gloss will they excuse the absurdity of bestowing five benefices, or more, on one man? of allowing one, and that one sometimes a boy, to possess three bishoprics, seated at such a distance from each other that he could scarcely make the circuit of them in a year, were he to do nothing else?

The canons require, that in promoting priests, a strict and minute examination be made into life and doctrine. Let us concede to the present times, that they cannot be tied down to so stern a rule. But we see how the ignorant, and those utterly devoid both of learning and prudence, are inducted without discrimination. Even in hiring a mule-driver, more regard is paid to his past life than in choosing a priest. This is no fiction, no exaggeration. True, they go through the form like players on a stage, that they may exhibit some image of ancient practice. The bishops, or their suffragans, put the question, whether those whom they have determined to ordain are worthy?

There is some one present to answer that they are worthy. There is no occasion to go far for a witness, or to bribe him for his testimony. The answer is merely a form; all beadles, tonsors, and doorkeepers, know it by heart.

Then, after ordination, the least suspicion of lewdness in the clergy ought, according to the ancient canons, to be corrected, and the proof of it punished with deposition and excommunication. Let us remit somewhat of this ancient rigour. Yet, what will be said to such a toleration of daily lewdness, as might almost imply a right to commit it? The canons declare, that on no account shall a clergyman be permitted to indulge in hunting, or gaming, or revelry, and dancing. Nay, they even expel from the ministry every man to whom any kind of infamy attaches. In like manner, all who involve themselves in secular affairs, or so intermeddle in civil offices as to distract their attention from the ministry — all, in fine, who are not assiduous in the discharge of their duties, they order to be severely censured, and, if they repent not, deposed. It will be objected, that these severe remedies, which cut all vices to the quick, this age cannot bear. Be it so, I do not call upon them for so much purity. But that an unbridled licentiousness should reign in the clergy, a licentiousness so unbridled that they, more than any other order, give additional taint to a world already most corrupt, who can forgive them?

With regard to the discipline exercised over the people, the matter stands thus: — Provided the domination of the clergy remains intact, provided no deduction is made from their tribute or plunder, almost any thing else is done with impunity, or carelessly overlooked. We see the general prevalence of all kinds of wickedness in the manners of society. In proof of this, I will call no other witnesses than your Imperial Majesty and Most Illustrious Princes. I admit that the fact is

attributable to many causes, but among the many, the primary cause is, that the priests, either from indulgence or carelessness, have allowed the wicked to give loose reins to their lusts. How do they act at the present hour? What care do they employ in eradicating vices, or at least in checking them? Where their admonitions? Where their censures? To omit other things, what use is made of excommunication, that best nerve of discipline? True, they possess, under the name of excommunication, a tyrannical thunderbolt which they hurl at those whom they call contumacious. But what contumacy do they punish, unless it be of persons who, when cited to their tribunal about money matters, have either not appeared, or, from poverty, have failed to satisfy their demands? Accordingly, the most salutary remedy for chastising the guilty, they merely abuse in vexing the poor and the innocent. They have, moreover, the ridiculous custom of sometimes flagellating hidden crimes with an anathema, as in the case where a theft has been committed and the thief is unknown. This practice is altogether at variance with the institution of Christ. But, though so many disgraceful proceedings take place openly before the eyes of all, as to them excommunication is asleep. And yet the very persons among whom all these disorders prevail have the hardihood to upbraid us with want of order! No doubt, if we are equally guilty, we gain nothing by accusing them; but in what I have hitherto said, my object has not been, by recrimination, to evade the charge which they bring against us, but to show the real value of that discipline which they complain that we have overthrown. If it is thought proper to compare the two, we are confident that our disorder, such as it is, will be found at all events some what more orderly than the kind of order in which they glory. I mean not to palliate or flatter our defects, when I thus speak. I know how much we require to be improved. Undoubtedly, were God to call us to account, excuse would be difficult; but when called to answer

our enemies we have a better cause, and an easier victory than we could wish.

With similar effrontery, they clamor that we have seized upon the wealth of the Church, and applied it to secular purposes. Were I to say that we have not sinned in this respect, I should lie. Indeed, changes of such magnitude are seldom made without bringing some inconveniences along with them. If, herein, aught has been done wrong, I excuse it not. But, with what face do our adversaries present this charge against us? They say, it is sacrilege to convert the wealth of the Church to secular uses. I admit it. They add, that we do so. I reply, that we have not the least objection to answer for ourselves, provided they, too, in their turn, come prepared to plead their cause. We will immediately attend to our own case; meanwhile, let us see what they do. Of bishops I say nothing, except what all see, that they not only rival princes in the splendor of their dress, the luxuries of their table, the number of their servants, the magnificence of their palaces, in short, every kind of luxury; but also, that they dilapidate and squander ecclesiastical revenues, in expenditure of a much more shameful description. I say nothing of field sports, nothing of gaming, nothing of the other pleasures which absorb no small portion of their incomes. But, to take from the Church, in order to spend on pimps and harlots, is surely too bad. Then how absurd, not only to plume themselves on pomp and show, but to carry them to the utmost excess.

Time was, when poverty in priests was deemed glorious. So it was in the Council of Aquila. On one occasion, too, it was decreed that a bishop should reside within a short distance of his church in a humble dwelling, with a scanty table and mean furniture, (Conc. Carth. 4. cap. 4 Can. 14.) But, without going to that ancient rigor, after numerous corruptions had crept in with the progress of wealth,



even then the ancient law was again confirmed which divided ecclesiastical revenues into four portions; one to go to the bishop for hospitality, and the relief of those in want, another to the clergy, a third to the poor, and a fourth to the repairing of churches. Gregory attests that this rule was in full observance even in his day. Besides, were there no laws on the subject, and at one time there were none, (for that which I have mentioned was, as in the case of other laws, rendered necessary by the corruption of manners,) still there is no man who will not admit the truth of what Jerome says, (*ad Nepotianum*,) that it is the glory of a bishop to provide for the wants of the poor, and the disgrace of all priests to have a hankering after private wealth. It will, perhaps, be thought that another injunction, which he gives in the same passage, is too severe, viz., that open table should be kept for the poor, and for strangers. It is, however, equally well-founded.

The nearer abbots approach to bishops in extent of revenue, the more they resemble them. Canons and parish priests, not deriving enough from one cure for gluttony, luxury, and pomp, soon found out a compendious method of remedying the inconvenience. For there is nothing to prevent him who could, in one month, swallow much more than he draws in a year, from holding four or five benefices. The burden is nothing thought of. For there are vicars at hand ready to stoop, and take it on their shoulders, provided they are allowed to gobble up some small portion of the proceeds. Nay, few are found who will be contented with one bishopric, or one abbacy. Those of the clergy who live at the public expense of the Church, though able to live on their patrimony, Jerome styles sacrilegious, (*C. Cler. I. Quaest. 2.*) What, then, must be thought of those who at once engulf three bishoprics, i.e., from fifty to a hundred tolerable patrimonies? And, lest they complain that they are unjustly traduced for the fault of a few, what are we to think of those who not only

luxuriate on the public revenues of the Church, but abuse them in paying the hire of panders and courtesans? I speak only of what is notorious.

Then, were we to ask, I say, not at the whole order, but at the few who reside in their benefices, by what right they receive even a frugal and moderate stipend, even such a question they are not able to answer. For what duties do they perform in return? In the same way as anciently, under the law, those who served at the altar lived by the altar,

“even so hath the Lord ordained, that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel,” (1 Corinthians 9:9.)

These are Paul’s words. Let them, then, show us that they are ministers of the gospel, and I will have no difficulty in conceding their right to stipend. The ox must not be muzzled that treadeth out the corn. But is it not altogether at variance with reason that the ploughing oxen should starve, and the lazy asses be fed? They will say, however, that they serve at the altar. I answer, that the priests under the law deserved maintenance, by ministering at an altar; but that, as Paul declares, the case under the New Testament is different. And what are those altar services, for which they allege that maintenance is due to them? Forsooth, that they may perform their masses and chant in churches, i.e., partly labor to no purpose, and partly perpetrate sacrilege, thereby provoking the anger of God. See for what it is that they are alimented at the public expense!

There are some who accuse our princes of inexpressible sacrilege, as having, with violence and the greatest injustice, seized upon the patrimony of the Church, which had been consecrated to God, and as now dilapidating it for profane uses.

I have already declared that I am unwilling to be the apologist of everything that is done amongst us; nay, rather, I openly declare my dissatisfaction that more regard is not paid to the due application of ecclesiastical revenues to those purposes only for which they were destined. This I deplore in common with all good men. But the only point under discussion at present is, whether our princes sacrilegiously seized on the revenues of the Church, when they appropriated what they had rescued out of the hands of priests and monks? Is it profanation to apply these to some other purpose than stuffing such lazy bellies? For it is their own cause which our adversaries plead, not the cause of Christ and his Church. No doubt, heavy judgments are denounced against those who rob the Church, and carry off for their own use what belongs to her. But the reason is at the same time added, viz., because they defraud true ministers of their maintenance, and because, starving the poor to death, they are guilty of their blood. But what have our opponents to do with this? For who among their whole tribe can make the declaration which Ambrose once made, that whatever he possessed was the revenue of the needy; and again, that every thing which a bishop possesses belongs to the poor? (Ambrose, Epist. Lib. 5. Ep. 31 et 33.) say, how few of them do not abuse what they possess with as much license as if it had been given to be profusely squandered as they list? It is vain, therefore, for them to expostulate, because deprived of that which they possessed without any right, and wasted with the greatest iniquity.

And it was not only lawful, but necessary also, for our princes so to deprive them. When they saw the Church absolutely destitute of true ministers, and the revenues destined for their support absorbed by lazy idle men; when they saw the patrimony of Christ and the poor either ingulfed by a few, or dissolutely wasted on expensive luxuries, were they not to interfere? Nay, when they saw the obstinate enemies

of the truth lying like an incubus on the patrimony of the Church, and abusing it, to attack Christ, to oppress sound doctrine, and persecute its ministers, was it not right immediately to wrest it from their hands, that, at all events, they might not be armed and equipped by the resources of the Church to vex the Church? King Josiah is commended, on the authority of the Holy Spirit, because, on perceiving that the sacred oblations were improperly consumed by the priests, he appointed an officer to call them to account, (2 Chronicles 24:14.) And yet they were priests whom God had entrusted with the ordinary administration. What, then, is to be done with those who exercise no lawful ministry, and who not only, like them, neglect the repairing of the temple, but exert all their nerves and resources to pull down the Church?

But some one will ask, how are the appropriated revenues administered? Certainly not in a manner altogether free from blame, but still in a manner far better and holier than by our enemies. Out of them, at all events, true ministers are supported, who feed their flocks with the doctrine of salvation, whereas, formerly, churches left utterly destitute of pastors were burdened with the payment of them. Wherever schools or hospitals for the poor existed they remain; in some instances their revenues have been increased; in none have they been diminished. In many places, also, in lieu of monasteries, hospitals have been established where there were none before; in others new schools have been erected, in which not only have regular salaries been given to the masters, but youths also are trained, in the hope of being afterwards of service to the Church.

In fine, churches derive many advantages in common from these revenues, with which, before, only monks and priests were gorged. Nor is it a small portion which is devoted to extraordinary expenses, though these are well entitled to be taken into account. It is certain

that much more is consumed when matters are in disorder, than would be if proper arrangements were made among the churches. But nothing could be more unjust than to deny to our princes and magistrates the right of making expenditure of this kind, not for their private benefit, but to meet the public necessities of the Church. Besides, our adversaries forget to deduct their spoliations and unjust exactions, by which communities were pillaged for sacrifices, of which they are now relieved. But there is one reason which renders all this discussion, in a great measure, superfluous. More than three years ago, our princes declared their readiness to make restitution, provided the same course were enforced against those who detain a much larger amount for a less honorable cause, and who are guilty of much greater corruption in the administration of it. Our princes, therefore, stand bound to your Imperial Majesty by their promise. The document also is before the world; so that this should not be any hinderance to uniformity of doctrine.

The last and principal charge which they bring against us is, that we have made a schism in the Church. And here they boldly maintain against us, that in no case is it lawful to break the unity of the Church. How far they do us injustice, the books of our authors bear witness. Now, however, let them take this brief reply — that we neither dissent from the Church, nor are aliens from her communion. But, as by this specious name of Church, they are wont to cast dust in the eyes even of persons otherwise pious and right-hearted, I beseech your Imperial Majesty, and you, Most Illustrious Princes, first, to divest yourselves of all prejudice, that you may give an impartial ear to our defense; secondly, not to be instantly terrified on hearing the name of Church, but to remember that the Prophets and Apostles had, with the pretended church of their days, a contest similar to that which you see us have in the present day with the Roman Pontiff and his whole train. When they, by the command of

God, inveighed freely against idolatry, superstition, and the profanation of the temple, and its sacred rites, against the carelessness and lethargy of priests, and against the general avarice, cruelty, and licentiousness, they were constantly met with the objection which our opponents have ever in their mouths — that by dissenting from the common opinion, they violated the unity of the Church. The ordinary government of the Church was then vested in the priests. They had not presumptuously arrogated it to themselves, but God had conferred it upon them by his law. It would occupy too much time to point out all the instances. Let us, therefore, be contented with a single instance, in the case of Jeremiah.

He had to do with the whole college of priests, and the arms with which they attacked him were these,

“Come, and let us devise devices against Jeremiah; for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet,” (Jeremiah 18:18.)

They had among them a High Priest, to reject whose judgment was a capital crime, and they had the whole order to which God himself had committed the government of the Jewish Church concurring with them. If the unity of the Church is violated by him, who, instructed solely by Divine truth, opposes himself to ordinary authority, the prophet must be a schismatic; because, not at all deterred by such menaces from warring with the impiety of the priests, he steadily persevered. That the eternal truth of God, preached by the prophets and apostles, is on our side, we are prepared to show, and it is indeed easy for any man to perceive. But all that is done is to assail us with this battering-ram, “Nothing can excuse withdrawal from the Church.” We deny out and out that we do so. With what, then, do they urge us? With nothing more than

this, that to them belongs the ordinary government of the Church. But how much better right had the enemies of Jeremiah to use this argument? To them, at all events, there still remained a legal priesthood, instituted by God; so that their vocation was unquestionable. Those who, in the present day, have the name of prelates, cannot prove their vocation by any laws, human or divine. Be it, however, that in this respect both are on a footing, still, unless they previously convict the holy prophet of schism, they will prove nothing against us by that specious title of Church. I have thus mentioned one prophet as an example. But all the others declare that they had the same battle to fight — wicked priests endeavoring to overwhelm them by a perversion of this term Church. And how did the apostles act? Was it not necessary for them, in professing themselves the servants of Christ, to declare war upon the synagogue? And yet the office and dignity of the priesthood were not then lost. But it will be said, that, though the prophets and apostles dissented from wicked priests in doctrine, they still cultivated communion with them in sacrifices and prayers. I admit they did, provided they were not forced into idolatry. But which of the prophets do we read of as having ever sacrificed in Bethel? Which of the faithful, do we suppose, communicated in impure sacrifices, when the temple was polluted by Antiochus, and profane rites were introduced into it?

On the whole, we conclude that the servants of God never felt themselves obstructed by this empty title of Church, when it was put forward to support the reign of impiety. It is not enough, therefore, simply to throw out the name of Church, but judgment must be used to ascertain which is the true Church, and what is the nature of its unity. And the thing necessary to be attended to, first of all, is, to beware of separating the Church from Christ its Head. When I say Christ, I include the doctrine of his gospel, which he sealed with his

blood. Our adversaries, therefore, if they would persuade us that they are the true Church, must, first of all, show that the true doctrine of God is among them; and this is the meaning of what we often repeat, viz., that the uniform characteristics of a wellordered Church are the preaching of sound doctrine, and the pure administration of the Sacraments. For, since Paul declares that the Church is

“built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets,” (Ephesians 2:20)

it necessarily follows that any church not resting on this foundation must immediately fall. I come now to our opponents.

They, no doubt, boast in lofty terms that Christ is on their side. As soon as they exhibit him in their word we will believe it, but not sooner. They, in the same way, insist on the term Church. But where, we ask, is that doctrine which Paul declares to be the only foundation of the Church? Doubtless your Imperial Majesty now sees that there is a vast difference between assailing us with the reality and assailing us only with the name of Church. We are as ready to confess as they are that those who abandon the Church, the common mother of the faithful, the “pillar and ground of the truth,” revolt from Christ also; but we mean a Church which, from incorruptible seed, begets children for immortality, and, when begotten, nourishes them with spiritual food, (that seed and food being the Word of God,) and which, by its ministry, preserves entire the truth which God deposited in its bosom. This mark is in no degree doubtful, in no degree fallacious, and it is the mark which God himself impressed upon his Church, that she might be discerned thereby. Do we seem unjust in demanding to see this mark? Wherever it exists not, no face of a church is seen. If the name, merely, is put forward, we have only to quote the wellknown passage of Jeremiah,



“Trust ye not in lying words, saying, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, The temple of the Lord, are these,” (Jeremiah 7:4.)

“Is this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes?” (Jeremiah 7:11.)

In like manner, the unity of the Church, such as Paul describes it, we protest we hold sacred, and we denounce anathema against all who in any way violate it. The principle from which Paul derives unity is, that there is “one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all” who hath called us into one hope, (Ephesians 4:4, 5.) Therefore, we are one body and one spirit, as is here enjoined, if we adhere to God only, i.e., be sound to each other by the tie of faith. We ought, moreover, to remember what is said in another passage, “that faith cometh by the word of God.” Let it, therefore, be a fixed point, that a holy unity exists amongst us, when, consenting in pure doctrine, we are united in Christ alone. And, indeed, if concurrence in any kind of doctrine were sufficient, in what possible way could the Church of God be distinguished from the impious factions of the wicked? Wherefore, the Apostle shortly after adds, that the ministry was instituted “for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God: That we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ,” (Ephesians 4:12- 15.) Could he more plainly comprise the whole unity of the Church in a holy agreement in true doctrine, than when he calls us back to Christ and to faith, which is included in the knowledge of him, and to obedience to the truth? Nor is any lengthened demonstration of this needed by those who believe the Church to be that sheepfold of which Christ alone is the Shepherd, and where his

voice only is heard, and distinguished from the voice of strangers. And this is confirmed by Paul, when he prays for the Romans,

“The God of patience and consolation grant you to be like minded one toward another, according to Christ Jesus; that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” (Romans 15:5, 6.)

Let our opponents, then, in the first instance, draw near to Christ, and then let them convict us of schism, in daring to dissent from them in doctrine. But, since I have made it plain, that Christ is banished from their society, and the doctrine of his gospel exterminated, their charge against us simply amounts to this, that we adhere to Christ in preference to them. For what man, pray, will believe that those who refuse to be led away from Christ and his truth, in order to deliver themselves into the power of men, are thereby schismatics, and deserters from the communion of the Church? I certainly admit that respect is to be shown to priests, and that there is great danger in despising ordinary authority. If, then, they were to say, that we are not at our own hand to resist ordinary authority, we should have no difficulty in subscribing to the sentiment. For we are not so rude, as not to see what confusion must arise when the authority of rulers is not respected. Let pastors, then, have their due honor — an honor, however, not derogatory in any degree to the supreme authority of Christ, to whom it behoves them and every man to be subject. For God declares, by Malachi, that the government of the Israelitish Church was committed to the priests, under the condition that they should faithfully fulfill the covenant made with them, viz., that their “lips should keep knowledge,” and expound the law to the people, (Malachi 2:7.) When the priests altogether failed in this condition, he declares, that, by their perfidy, the covenant was abrogated and made null. Pastors are mistaken if

they imagine that they are invested with the government of the Church on any other terms than that of being ministers and witnesses of the truth of God. As long, therefore, as, in opposition to the law and to the nature of their office, they eagerly wage war with the truth of God, let them not arrogate to themselves a power which God never bestowed, either formerly on priests, or now on bishops, on any other terms than those which have been mentioned.

But, because they hold that the communion of the Church is confined to a kind of regimen which they have struck out for themselves, they think it sufficient to decide the victory in their favor, when they point to our alienation from the Romish See. But to this vaunted primacy of the Romish See it is not difficult to reply. It is a subject, however, on which I will not here enter, both because it would occupy too much time, and because it has been amply discussed by our writers. I will only beg your Imperial Majesty, and Most Illustrious Princes, to listen to Cyprian, when he points out a better method of ascertaining the true communion of the Church, than that of referring it, as our opponents do, to the Roman Pontiff alone. For, after placing the only source of ecclesiastical concord in the episcopal authority of Christ, which episcopal authority he affirms that each bishop, to the extent to which it has been communicated, holds entire, he thus proceeds: "There is one church, which, by the increase of its fruitfulness, spreads into a multitude, just as there are many rays of the sun, but only one light, many branches in a tree, but one trunk, upheld by its tenacious root; and when many streams flow from one fountain, though, from the copiousness of the supply, there seems a division into parts, still, in regard to the origin, unity is preserved. Separate a ray from the body of the sun, the unity of the light is not divided. Break a branch from a tree, that which is broken cannot germinate. Cut off a stream from the fountain, and it dries up. So, also, the Church of God, irradiated with light, sends its beams over the whole

world. Still it is one light which is everywhere diffused. The unity of the body is not violated.” (Cyprian De Unitat. Ecclesiae.) Heresies and Schisms, therefore, arise when a return is not made to the origin of truth, when neither the head is regarded, nor the doctrine of the heavenly Master preserved. Let them then show us a hierarchy in which the bishops are distinguished, but not for refusing to be subject to Christ, in which they depend upon him as the only head, and act solely with reference to him, in which they cultivate brotherly fellowship with each other, bound together by no other tie than his truth; then, indeed, I will confess that there is no anathema too strong for those who do not regard them with reverence, and yield them the fullest obedience. But is there any thing like this in that false mask of hierarchy on which they plume themselves? The Roman Pontiff alone as Christ’s vicar is in the ascendant, and domineers without law and without measure, after the manner of a tyrant, nay, with more abandoned effrontery than any tyrant. The rest of the body is framed more according to his standard than that of Christ. The light of which Cyprian speaks is extinguished, the copious fountain cut off; in short, the only thing exhibited is the tallness of the tree, but a tree dissevered from its root.

I am aware that our adversaries have good reason for laboring so strenuously to maintain the primacy of the Romish See. They feel that on it both themselves and their all depend. But your part, Most Invincible Emperor, and Most Illustrious Princes, is to be on your guard in order that they may not with vain glosses deceive you, as they are wont to deceive the unwary. And, first, this vaunted supremacy, even themselves are forced to confess, was established by no divine authority, but by the mere will of man. At least, when we give proof of this fact, though they do not expressly assent, they seem as if ashamed to maintain the opposite. There was a time, indeed, when they audaciously perverted certain passages of Scripture to

confirm this palpable falsehood, but as soon as we came to close quarters, it was found easy to pluck out of their hands the bits of lath, to which, when at a distance, they had given the appearance of swords. Abandoned, accordingly, by the Word of God, they flee for aid to antiquity. But here, also, without much ado, we dislodge them. For both the writings of holy Fathers, the acts of Councils, and all history, make it plain that this height of power, which the Roman Pontiff has now possessed for about four hundred years, was attained gradually, or rather was either craftily crept into, or violently seized. But let us forgive them this, and let them take for granted that primacy was divinely bestowed on the Romish See, and has been sanctioned by the uniform consent of the ancient Church; still there is room for this primacy only on the supposition that Rome has both a true church and a true bishop. For the honor of the seat cannot remain after the seat itself has ceased to exist. I ask, then, in what respect the Roman Pontiff performs the duty of a bishop, so as to oblige us to recognize him as a bishop? There is a celebrated saying of Augustine, "Bishopric is the name of an office, and not a mere title of honor." And ancient Synods define the duties of a bishop to consist in feeding the people by the preaching the Word, in administering, the sacraments, in curbing clergy and people by holy discipline, and, in order not to be distracted from these duties, in withdrawing from all the ordinary cares of the present life. In all these duties, presbyters ought to be the bishop's coadjutors. Which of them do the Pope and his Cardinals pretend to perform? Let them say, then, on what ground they claim to be regarded as legitimate pastors, while they do not, with their little finger, in appearance even, touch any part of the duty.

But let us grant all these things, viz., that he is a bishop who entirely neglects every part of his duty, and that a Church which is destitute, as well of the ministry of the Word as of the pure administration of

the Sacraments; still, what answer is made when we add not only that these are wanting, but that every thing which exists is directly the reverse? For several centuries that See has been possessed by impious superstitions, open idolatry, perverse doctrines, while those great truths, in which the Christian religion chiefly consists, have been suppressed. By the prostitution of the Sacraments to filthy lucre, and other abominations, Christ has been held up to such extreme derision, that he has in a manner been crucified afresh. Can she be the mother of all churches, who not only does not retain, I do not say the face, but even a single lineament, of the true Church, and has snapt asunder all those bonds of holy communion by which believers should be linked together? The Roman Pontiff is now opposing himself to the reviving doctrines of the gospel, just as if his head were at stake. Does he not, by this very fact, demonstrate that there will be no safety for his See unless he can put to flight the kingdom of Christ? Your Imperial Majesty is aware how wide a field of discussion here opens upon me. But to conclude this point in a few words: I deny that See to be Apostolical, wherein nought is seen but a shocking apostacy — I deny him to be the vicar of Christ, who, in furiously persecuting the gospel demonstrates by his conduct that he is Antichrist — I deny him to be the successor of Peter, who is doing his utmost to demolish every edifice that Peter built — and I deny him to be the head of the Church, who by his tyranny lacerates and dismembers the Church, after dissevering her from Christ, her true and only Head. Let these denials be answered by those who are so bent on chaining the hierarchy of the Church to the Romish See, that they hesitate not to subordinate the sure and tried doctrines of the gospel to the authority of the Pope. Yea, I say, let them answer; only do you, Most Invincible Emperor, and Most Illustrious Princes, consider whether, in so calling upon them, the thing I ask is just or unjust.

From what has been said, it will doubtless be easy for you to perceive how little attention is due to the calumny of our adversaries, when they accuse us of impious presumption, and as it were inexpiable audacity, in having attempted to purify the Church from corruption, both in doctrine and ceremonies, without waiting for the beck of the Roman Pontiff. They say we have done what private individuals have no right to do. But, in regard to ameliorating the condition of the Church, what was to be hoped from him to whom we were required to give place? Any man who considers how Luther and the other Reformers acted at the outset, and how they afterwards proceeded, will deem it unnecessary to call upon us for any defense. When matters were still entire, Luther himself humbly besought the Pontiff that he would be pleased to cure the very grievous disorders of the Church. Did his supplication succeed? The evils having still increased, the necessity of the case, even had Luther been silent, should have been stimulus enough to urge the Pope to delay no longer. The whole Christian world plainly demanded this of him, and he had in his hands the means of satisfying the pious wishes of all. Did he do so? He now talks of impediments. But if the fact be traced to its source, it will be found that he has all along been, both to himself and to others, the only impediment. But why insist on these lighter arguments? Is it not in itself alone an argument of sufficient clearness and sufficient weight, that, from the commencement up to the present time, he gives us no hope of transacting with him until we again bury Christ, and return to every impiety which formerly existed, that he may establish them on a firmer basis than before? This, unquestionably, is the reason why still, in the present day, our opponents so strenuously maintain that we had no right to intermeddle with the revival of the church — not that the thing was not necessary, (this it were too desperate effrontery to deny,) but because they are desirous that as well the safety as the ruin of the

Church should be suspended on the mere beck and pleasure of the Roman Pontiff.

Let us now attend to the only remedy left us by those who think it impiety to move a finger, how great soever the evils by which the Church is oppressed. They put us off to an universal council. What? If the major part, from obstinacy, rush upon their own destruction, must we therefore perish along with them, when we have the means of consulting for our own safety? But they tell us it is unlawful to violate the unity of the Church, and that unity is violated if any party decide an article of faith by themselves, without calling in the others. Then they enlarge on the inconveniences to which such a course might lead — that nothing could be expected but fearful devastation and chaotic confusions were each people and nation to adopt for itself its peculiar form of faith. Things like these might be said justly, and even appositely to the occasion, if any one member of the Church, in contempt of unity, should of its own accord separate itself from the others. But that is not the point now in dispute. I wish, indeed, it were possible for all the monarchs and states of the Christian world to unite in a holy league, and resolve on a simultaneous amendment of the present evils. But since we see that some are averse to amelioration, and that others involved in war, or occupied with other cares, cannot give their attention to the subject, how long, pray, must we, in waiting for others, defer consulting for ourselves? And more freely to explain the source of all our evils, we see that the Roman Pontiff, if he can prevent it, will never permit all churches to unite, I do not say in due consultation, but in assembling any council at all. He will, indeed, as often as he is asked, give promises in abundance, provided he sees all the ways shut up, and all modes of access interrupted, while he has in his hand obstructions which he can every now and then throw in, so as never to want pretexts for tergiversation. With a few exceptions, he has all the



cardinals, bishops, and abbots, consenting with him in this matter, since their only thought is how to retain possession of their usurped tyranny. As to the welfare or destruction of the Church, it gives them not the least concern.

I am not afraid, Most Invincible Caesar, and Most Illustrious Princes, that my statement will seem incredible, or that it will be difficult to persuade you of its truth. Nay, rather I appeal to the consciences of you all, whether I have stated any thing which your own experience does not confirm. Meanwhile, the Church lies in the greatest peril. An infinite number of souls, not knowing in what direction to turn, are miserably perplexed; many even, forestalled by death, perish, if not saved miraculously by the Lord; diversified sects arise; numbers, whose impiety was formerly hid, assume, from the present dissensions, a license to believe nothing at all, while many minds, otherwise not ill disposed, begin to part with their religious impressions. There is no discipline to check these evils; amongst us who glory in the name of Christ only, and have the same baptism, there is no more agreement than if we professed religions entirely different. And the most miserable thing of all is, that there is at hand, nay, almost in sight, a breaking up of the whole Church, for which, after it has taken place, it will be in vain to seek for remedies. Seeing, therefore, that in bringing assistance to the Church in her great distress and extreme danger, no celerity can be too rapid, what else do those who put us off to a General Council, of which there is no prospect, but insult both God and man? The Germans must therefore submit to have this sentence passed upon them, that they choose to look on quietly and see the Church of God perish from their land, when they have the means of curing her disorders, or they must instantly bestir themselves to the work. This second alternative they will never adopt so speedily, as not to be even now deservedly condemned for not adopting sooner. But those persons, whoever

they be, who, under the pretext of a General Council, interpose delay, clearly have no other end in view, than by this artifice to spin out the time, and are no more to be listened to than if they confessed in word what they in deed demonstrate, that they are prepared to purchase their private advantage by the destruction of the Church.

But it is said that it would be unprecedented for the Germans alone to undertake this reformation; that in no case when controversy has arisen concerning the doctrines of religion, was it ever heard that a single province could undertake the investigation and decision. What is this I hear? Do they imagine that by their mere assertion they will persuade the world to believe what the histories of all times refute? As often as some new heresy emerged, or the Church was disturbed by some dispute, was it not the usual custom immediately to convene a Provincial Synod, that the disturbance might thereby be terminated? It never was the custom to recur to a General Council until the other remedy had been tried. Before bishops from the whole Christian world met at Nice to confute Arius, several Synods had been held with that view in the East. For the sake of brevity, I pass over the other instances, but the thing which our enemies shun as unusual is proved by the writings of the ancients to have been the ordinary practice. Have done, then, with this lying pretense of novelty.

Had this superstitious idea possessed the African Bishops, they would have been too late in meeting the Donatists and Pelagians. The Donatists had already gained over a great part of Africa to their faction, nor was any place entirely free from the contagion. It was a controversy of the greatest moment, relating to the unity of the Church and the due administration of baptism. According to the new wisdom of our opponents, the orthodox Bishops, in order not to cut themselves off from the other members of the Church, ought to have

referred the question to a General Council. Is this what they do? Nay, rather, knowing that in extinguishing an actual fire no time can be lost, they press and follow close upon the Donatists, now summoning them to a Synod, now coming, as it were, to close quarters with them in discussion.

Let our enemies condemn of impious separation from the Church, Augustine, and the other holy men of that age who concurred with him, for having, by imperial authority, without convoking a General Council, forced the Donatists to dispute with them, and hesitated not to treat in a Provincial Synod of a most difficult and dangerous controversy. There, too, Pelagius had shown his horns; instantly a Synod was held to repress his audacity. When, after having for a short time feigned penitence, he had returned to his vomit, with the stigma which had been fixed on his impiety in Africa he betook himself to Rome, where he was received with considerable favor. What course do the pious Bishops take? Do they allege that they are only a member of the Church, and must wait for relief from a General Council? Nay, they themselves assemble on the very first opportunity, and again and again anathematise the impious dogma with which many had now been infected, freely deciding and defining what ought to be held on the subjects of original sin and regenerating grace. Afterwards, indeed, they send to Rome a copy of their proceedings, partly that, by a common authority and consent, they may the more effectually crush the contumacy of the heretics, partly that they may admonish others of a danger, against which all ought to stand upon their guard. The flatterers of the Roman Pontiff give the matter a different turn, as if the Bishops had suspended their judgment until the proceedings were ratified by Innocent V., who then presided over the Church of Rome. But this impudent averment is more than refuted by the words of the holy Fathers. For they neither ask Innocent to counsel them as to what they ought to do,

nor do they refer it to him to decide, nor do they wait for his nod and authority, but they narrate that they had already taken cognisance of the cause, and passed sentence, condemning both the man and the doctrine, in order that Innocent, too, might imitate their example, if he desired not to fail in his duty. These things were done while as yet the churches agreed with each other in sound doctrine. Now, then, when all things threaten ruin if not speedily remedied, why hang waiting for the consent of those who leave not a stone unturned to prevent the truth of God, which they had put to flight from again beaming forth?

Ambrose, in his day, had a controversy with Auxentius on the primary article of our faith, viz., the divinity of Christ. The Emperor favored the view of Auxentius. He does not, however, appeal to a General Council, under the pretext of its being unlawful that so important a cause should be decided in any other manner. He only demands, that, being a question of faith, it should be discussed in the church in presence of the people. And to what end the Provincial Synods, which were once regularly held twice a-year, unless that Bishops might consult together on emerging circumstances, as the nineteenth Canon of the Council of Chalcedon explains. An ancient enactment orders that the Bishops of every province shall convene twice a-year. The Council of Chalcedon gives us the reason, that any errors which may have emerged may be corrected. Our opponents, contrary to what all know, deny the lawfulness of touching a corruption of doctrine or manners, until it has been laid before a General Council. Nay, the very subterfuge by which the Arians Palladius and Secundinianus declined the Council of Aquileia was, because it was not full and general, all the Eastern Bishops being absent, and few even of the West making their appearance. And it is certain that of the Italians scarcely a half had convened. The Roman Bishop had neither come in person, nor sent any one of his

presbyters to represent him. To all these objections Ambrose replies, that it was not a thing without example for the Western Bishops to hold a synod since the practice was familiar to those of the East — that the pious Emperors who summoned the Council had acted wisely in leaving all at liberty to come, without compelling any; and, accordingly, all who thought proper had come, none being prohibited. Though the heretics continued to press their quibbling objections, the holy Fathers did not, therefore, abandon their purpose. Assuredly, after such examples, your Imperial Majesty is not to be prohibited from using the means within your reach of bringing back the body of the empire to sacred concord.

Though, as has been observed, our enemies, who advise procrastination, do it not with the view of shortly after consulting for the welfare of the Church, but only of gaining time by delay, knowing, that if they can throw us back to a General Council, the truce will be long enough; let us, however, assume that there is no obstacle to a General Council being immediately called; let us even assume that it has been summoned in good earnest, that the day of meeting is at hand, and all things prepared. The Roman Pontiff will, of course, preside, or if he declines to come, he will send one of his Cardinals as Legate to preside in his stead, and he will doubtless select the one whom he believes will be most faithful to his interests. The rest of the Cardinals will take their seats, and next them the Bishops and Abbots. The seats beneath will be occupied by ordinary members, who are, for the most part, selected for subservience to the views of those above. It will, indeed, happen, that some few honest men will have seats among them, but they will be despised for the smallness of their number, and, made weak by fear, or dispirited by the hopelessness of doing any good, will be silent. Should any one of them, per chance, attempt to speak, he will instantly be put down by noise and clamor. But the great body will be ready to suffer any

thing, sooner than allow the Church to be restored to a better condition.

I say nothing of doctrine. Would that they could only come to the cause with an honest and docile temper. But it is certain as certainty itself, that the single resolution of all will be not to listen to any thing that is said, or to the arguments by which it is supported, be they what they may. Nay, they will not only stuff their ears with stubbornness and obstinacy, that they may not obey the truth, but will also arm themselves with ferocity to resist it. And why? Is it credible that those who do not admit into their ears any mention of sound doctrine, will spontaneously withdraw their opposition, as soon as it comes to be a matter of present practice? Can we hope that those who are constantly plotting to prevent the fallen kingdom of Christ from again rising in the world, will give a helping hand to raise it up, and advance it? Will those who are now, with fire and sword, raging against the truth, and doing all they can to whet and inflame the cruelty of others, show themselves moderate and humane? But were there nothing else, I leave it to your prudence, Most Invincible Emperor, and yours, Most Illustrious Princes, to consider whether or not it is for the private interest of the Roman Pontiff, and his whole faction, that the Church should be restored to true order, and its most corrupt condition reformed, according to the strict standard of the gospel. How much it is their wont to forget their own advantage, and, in disregard of it, to engage with heart and soul in promoting the common welfare, you have learned by a sure experience!

Sire, will you leave the Church to them, that they may decide concerning its reformation at their own will, or rather their own caprice? Will you remain waiting for their nod, resolved never to consult for the Church till they consent? If they know this to be your intention, they will disentangle themselves by an easy process. They

will decide that things must remain as they are. But let us suppose that they will be so overcome, either by a sense of shame, or by the authority of your Majesty, and the other Princes, as to put on some appearance of moderation, and part with some small portion of their power; will they, even of their own accord, condescend so far as to allow themselves to be reduced into order, that the kingdom of Christ may be upraised? But if they will not, to what end is the care of reforming the Church committed to them, unless it be to expose the sheep to the wolves? If there is no other alternative, it were better that the Church should be given up as desperate, than that she should fall into the hands of such physicians.

It had, indeed, become those who have the name and hold the office of pastors, to be the first of all to fly to her assistance. It had, I admit, become them to come forward as leaders, and unite the princes with them, as associates and coadjutors in this holy work. But what if they decline to do it themselves? What if they are unwilling it should be done by others? What if they leave not a stone unturned in order to prevent it? Are we, then, still to have regard to them? must no man move till they give the signal? Must we still listen to that solemn saw of theirs, “Nothing must be attempted till the Pope has approved?” Let your Majesty, then, be assured, and do you also, Most Illustrious Princes and distinguished personages, lay it to heart, as a certain fact, that the Church, not only betrayed, deserted, and left destitute by her pastors, but vexed, overwhelmed with calamity, and doomed to destruction, throws herself on your protection. Nay, rather view it in this way — God has now furnished you with the means of giving a sure and striking proof of your fidelity towards Him. There is nothing in which all men ought to feel a deeper interest, nothing in which God wishes us to exhibit a more intense zeal, than in endeavoring that the glory of His name may remain unimpaired, His kingdom be advanced, and the pure doctrine, which alone can guide

us to true worship, flourish in full vigor. How much more, therefore, does it become princes to make these things their care, to design, commence, and prosecute them to a close, seeing God has honored them with a communication of His name, that they may be on earth the guardians and vindicators of His glory? Be unwilling, I beseech you, to lend an ear to ungodly men, who either cajole you with a false show of counsel, in order that the Church may receive no alleviation at your hand, or disparage the cause — though it is the greatest of all causes — that you may be more remiss in undertaking it, or urge you to violent methods of proceeding in it. Hitherto, Most Invincible Emperor, in endeavoring to inflame you with rage, and, in a manner, clothe you in armor, they have lost their labor, and you will certainly transmit to posterity the distinguished praise, both of mildness and prudence, in not having suffered yourself to be once moved from moderation by the turbulent counsels, which have been so often and so strongly pressed upon you. Be it at all times your care that this praise be not wrested from you by the importunity of our enemies. Augustine acknowledges the discipline to be bad which terrifies heretics, but does not teach them. If heretics, who, by their intemperance, and without any just cause, disturb the Church, are to be treated with a mildness ensuring that instruction shall always precede chastisement, how much more becoming is it to use humanity in this cause, in which we call God and men to witness that we seek nothing but a sincere consent on both sides to the pure doctrine of God? That the Roman Pontiff and his followers breathe nothing but blood and slaughter, you yourself, Sire, are the best witness. Had you yielded to their fury, Germany had long ago been deluged with her own blood. You, too, Most Illustrious Princes, well know the fact. Can it be that it is the Spirit of God which drives them on headlong to such cruelty? But thus it is; licentiousness, which has long stalked abroad without hinderance, no sooner feels the curb than it breaks out into madness. If there are any, besides those who



desire to see us crushed by violence and arms, either enkindled by the breath of others, or instigated from within by an inconsiderate zeal, they hate a cause which they know not. For the very same thing of which Tertullian complains in his Apology, as having happened to the Church when she first arose, is also experienced by us in the present day. We are condemned merely from prejudice against our name, without any investigation of our cause. And what do we contend for now, save that our cause, after due cognisance has once been taken of it, may at length be decided, according to truth and equity, and not according to any falsely preconceived opinion? Sire, it is, indeed, a noble proof both of humanity and of singular wisdom, that you have hitherto resisted the urgency with which our enemies have endeavored to hurry you into an unjust severity. The next best thing is not to yield to the pernicious counsels of those who, under specious pretexts for delay, have for a long time hindered this holy work, (I mean the reformation of the Church;) and what is worse, are endeavoring to prevent it altogether.

There is, perhaps, one remaining difficulty which prevents you from commencing the work. Very many, not otherwise indisposed, are deterred from engaging in this holy undertaking, merely because antecedently to the attempt they despair of its success. But here two things ought to be considered; the one, that the difficulty is not so great as it appears to be, and the other, that, however great it be, there is nothing in it which ought to dispirit you, when you reflect that it is the cause of God, and that He overruling it, both our hopes may be surpassed and our impressions prove erroneous. The former of these it is no part of my present design to explain; a fitter opportunity will be found, when once the matter comes to be taken into serious consideration. This only I will say, that the execution will be more expeditious, and of less difficulty than is commonly supposed, provided there is courage enough in attempting it.

However, considering, according to the well known sentiment of an old proverb, that there is nothing illustrious which is not also difficult and arduous, can we wonder, that in the greatest and most excellent of all causes, we must fight our way through many difficulties? I have already observed, that if we would not give deep offense to God, our minds must take a loftier view. For it is just to measure the power of God by the extent of our own powers, if we hope no more of the restoration of the Church than the present state of affairs seems to promise. How slender soever the hope of success, God bids us be of good courage, and put far away every thing like fear, that we may with alacrity begirt ourselves for the work. Thus far, at least, let us do Him honor. Confiding in his Almighty power, let us not decline to try what the success is which He may be pleased to give.

In the present condition of the empire, your Imperial Majesty, and you, Most Illustrious Princes, necessarily involved in various cares, and distracted by a multiplicity of business, are agitated, and in a manner tempest-tossed. But be always assured, that of all works this one is undoubtedly entitled to take precedence. I feel what nerve, what earnestness, what urgency, what ardor, the treatment of this subject requires. And I am well aware that persons will not be wanting to express their surprise, that on a subject so noble and splendid I should be so cold. But what could I do? I bend under its weight and magnitude; and I therefore see not how I can do better than set the matter before you simply, without any embellishment of words, that you may afterwards ponder and scrutinize it. First, call to mind the fearful calamities of the Church, which might move to pity even minds of iron. Nay, set before your eyes her squalid and unsightly form, and the sad devastation which is everywhere beheld. How long, pray, will you allow the spouse of Christ, the mother of you all, to lie thus prostrated and afflicted — thus, too, when she is

imploping your protection, and when the means of relief are in your hand? Next, consider how much worse calamities impend. Final destruction cannot be far off, unless you interpose with the utmost speed. Christ will, indeed, in the way which to him seems good, preserve his Church miraculously, and beyond human expectation; but this I say, that the consequence of a little longer delay on your part will be, that in Germany we shall not have even the form of a Church. Look round, and see how many indications threaten that ruin which it is your duty to prevent, and announce that it is actually at hand. These things speak loud enough, though I were silent.

Such indications, however, ought not only to move us by their actual aspect; they ought also to remind us of coming vengeance. Divine worship being vitiated by so many false opinions, and perverted by so many impious and foul superstitions, the sacred Majesty of God is insulted with atrocious contumely, his holy name profaned, his glory only not trampled under foot. Nay, while the whole Christian world is openly polluted with idolatry, men adore, instead of Him, their own fictions. A thousand superstitions reign, superstitions which are just so many open insults to Him. The power of Christ is almost obliterated from the minds of men, the hope of salvation is transferred from him to empty, frivolous, and nugatory ceremonies, while there is a pollution of the Sacraments not less to be execrated. Baptism is deformed by numerous additions, the Holy Supper is prostituted to all kinds of ignominy, religion throughout has degenerated into an entirely different form.

If we are negligent in remedying these evils, God assuredly will not forget himself. How could He who declares that he will not allow his honor to be in any way impaired, fail to interpose when it is cast down and destroyed? How could He who threatens with destruction all the nations among whom prophecy shall have failed, permit our

open and contumacious contempt of the prophecies to go unpunished? How could He who punished a slight stain on his Supper so severely in the Corinthians, spare us in presuming to pollute it with so many unutterable blasphemies? How could He who, by the mouths of all his prophets, testifies and proclaims that he is armed with vengeance against idolatry, leave untouched in us so many monstrous idolatries? Assuredly He does not so leave them, for we see how, sword in hand, he urges and pursues us. The Turkish war now occupies the minds of all, and fills them with alarm. It well may. Consultations are held to prepare the means of resistance. This, too, is prudently and necessarily done. All exclaim that there is need of no ordinary dispatch. I admit that there cannot be too much dispatch, provided, in the meantime, the consultation which ought to be first, the consultation how to restore the Church to its proper state, is neither neglected nor retarded. Already delays more than enough have been interposed. The fuel of the Turkish war is within, shut up in our bowels, and must first be removed, if we would successfully drive back the war itself.

In future, therefore, as often as you shall hear the croaking note — The business of reforming the Church must be delayed for the present — there will be time enough to accomplish it after other matters are transacted — remember, Most Invincible Emperor, and Most Illustrious Princes, that the matter on which you are to deliberate is, whether you are to leave to your posterity some empire or none. Yet, why do I speak of posterity? Even now, while your own eyes behold, it is half bent, and totters to its final ruin. In regard to ourselves, whatever be the event, we will always be supported, in the sight of God, by the consciousness that we have desired both to promote his glory and do good to his Church; that we have labored faithfully for that end; that, in short, we have done what we could. Our conscience tells us, that in all our wishes, and all our endeavors,

we have had no other aim. And we have essayed, by clear proof, to testify the fact. And, certainly, while we feel assured, that we both care for and do the work of the Lord, we are also confident, that he will by no means be wanting either to himself or to it.

But be the issue what it may, we will never repent of having begun, and of having proceeded thus far. The Holy Spirit is a faithful and unerring witness to our doctrine. We know, I say, that it is the eternal truth of God that we preach. We are, indeed, desirous, as we ought to be, that our ministry may prove salutary to the world; but to give it this effect belongs to God, not to us. If, to punish, partly the ingratitude, and partly the stubbornness of those to whom we desire to do good, success must prove desperate, and all things go to worse, I will say what it befits a Christian man to say, and what all who are true to this holy profession will subscribe:—We will die, but in death even be conquerors, not only because through it we shall have a sure passage to a better life, but because we know that our blood will be as seed to propagate the Divine truth which men now despise.

## **A Treatise of the Eternal Predestination of God**

## John Calvin

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NINE years have now elapsed since Albertus Pighius, the Campanian, a man of evidently phrensied audacity, attempted, at the same time, and in the same book, to establish the free-will of man. and to subvert the secret counsel of God, by which He chooses some to salvation and appoints others to eternal destruction. But as he attacked me by name, that he might stab, through my side, holy and, sound doctrine, I have deemed it necessary to curb the sacrilegious madness of the man. At that time, however, being distracted by various engagements, I could not embrace, in one short space of time, the discussion of both subjects; but having published my thoughts upon the former, I promised to consider, when an opportunity should be given, the doctrine of predestination. Shortly after my book on free-will appeared, Pighius died. And that I might not insult a dead dog, I turned my attention to other serious matters. And from that time till now I have always found plenty to do. Moreover, as I had already copiously treated of this great point of doctrine, and had set it forth clearly, and confirmed it by solid testimonies of Scripture, this new labour upon it did not seem so absolutely, necessary, but that it might safely be suffered to rest for a time.

But since, at the present day, certain maddened and exulting spirits :strive, after the example of Pighius, with all their might to destroy all that is contained in the Scriptures concerning the free election of the godly and the eternal judgment of the reprobate, I have considered it my duty to prevent this contagion from spreading farther, by collecting and summarily refuting those frivolous objections by which such men delude themselves and others. Among

these characters there started forth, in Italy, a certain one, Georgius, a Sicilian --an ignorant man indeed and more worthy of contempt than public notice in any form, were it not that a notoriety, obtained by fraud and imposture, has given him considerable power to do mischief. For when he was a monk he remained unknown in his cell, until Lucius Abbas, one of the Tridentine fathers, raised him on high by a lying commendation, hoping that he himself should be able, from the shoulders of his favourite, to take a flight into heaven itself. This abandoned fellow, having mendaciously given it out that Christ had appeared to him, and appointed him an interpreter of the whole Scripture, persuaded many, without much trouble, to believe, with a stupid, shameless, and more than vain folly, that which he had thus published. And that he might push the drama to the last act, he so trumpeted forth his insane visions, that he rendered his ignorant adherents, already fast bound by prejudice, perfectly astonished. And certain it is, that the greater part of men in our day are worthy of just such prophets. For the hearts of most of them, hardened and rendered obstinate by wickedness, will receive no healing; while the ears of others are ever itching with the insatiable desire of depraved speculations. There are, perhaps, others who are exceptions, and whom we might mention willingly and becomingly; but we will leave them unmentioned, resolving to make all our readers see and understand how frivolous and worthless are the objections of all the enemies of the truth.

I propose, now, to enter into the sacred battle with Pighius and George, the Sicilian, a pair of unclean beasts (Lev. xi. 3) by no means badly matched. For though I confess that in some things they differ, yet, in hatching enormities of error, in adulterating the Scripture with wicked and revelling audacity, in a proud contempt of the truth, in forward impudence, and in brazen loquacity, the most perfect likeness and sameness will be found to exist between them. Except

that Pighius, by inflating the muddy bombast of his magniloquence, carries himself with greater boast and pomp; while the other fellow borrows the boots by which he elevates himself from his invented revelation. And though both of them, at their commencement, agree in their attempt to overthrow predestination, yet they afterwards differ in the figments which they advance. An invention of them both is, that it lies in each one's own liberty, whether he will become a partaker of the grace of adoption or not; and that it does not depend on the counsel and decree of God who are elect and who are reprobate; but that each one determines for himself the one state or the other by his own will, and with respect to the fact that some believe the Gospel, while others remain in unbelief; that this difference does not arise from the free election of God, nor from His secret counsel, but from the will of each individual.

Now Pighius explains his mind on the great matter before us thus: that God, by His immutable counsel, created all men to salvation without distinction; but that, as He foresaw the Fall of Adam, in order that His election might nevertheless remain firm and unaltered, He applied a remedy which might, therefore, be common to all, which remedy was His confirmation of the election of the whole human race in Christ; so that no one can perish but he who, by his own obstinacy, blots his name out of the book of life. And his view of the other side of the great question is that, as God foresaw that some would determinably remain unto the last in malice and a contempt of Divine grace, He by His foreknowledge reprobated such, unless they should repent. This, with him, is the origin of reprobation, by which he makes it out that the wicked deprive themselves of the benefit of universal election, irrespectively and independently of the counsel and will of God altogether. And he moreover declares that all those who hold and teach that certain persons are positively and absolutely chosen to salvation, while



others are as absolutely appointed to destruction, think unworthily of God, and impute to Him a severity utterly foreign to His justice and His goodness. And our human reasoner here condemns the sentiments of Augustine, mentioning him by name.

And in order to show, as he thinks, that the foreknowledge of God detracts nothing from the freedom of our own will, our impostor betakes himself to that cunning device of Nicolaus of Cusa, who would make us believe that God did not foresee, in their future aspect and reality, those things that were known to Him from all eternity, but viewed them, as it were, in a then present light. And here, moreover, he elevates his brow in a manner peculiar to himself, as if he had discovered some deeply hidden thing; whereas this subterfuge of his is in the mouth of every schoolboy. But as he still finds himself truth-bound by the leg, he struggles to escape by introducing a twofold foreknowledge of God. He asserts that God formed the design of creating man to life before He foreknew his Fall, and that therefore the thought of man's salvation preceded the foreknowledge of his death, as to its order, in the mind of God Himself. And as he rolls out these sentiments in a muddy torrent of words, he thinks that he thereby so befloods the senses of his readers, that they can perceive nothing distinctly and clearly. I hope, however, by my brevity, to dispel presently the darkness of this man's loquacity.

It is the figment of Georgius, that no man whatever, neither one nor another, is predestinated to salvation, but that God pre-appointed a time in which He would save the whole world. In his attempt to prove this, he wrests certain passages of Paul, such as this: "Even the mystery, which hath been hid from ages, and from generations, but now is made manifest to His saints" (Col. i. 26). Having twisted this passage of the apostle to his purpose, he slips away in security,

thinking himself victorious. Just as if no testimony of Scripture plainly declares that some are chosen of God to salvation, while others are passed by. In a word, in the matter of election this man considers nothing but the time of the New Testament.

What my mind on this momentous subject is, my "Institute" furnishes a full and abundant testimony, even if I should now add nothing more. I would, in the first place, entreat my readers carefully to bear in memory the admonition which I there offer: that this great subject is not, as many imagine, a mere thorny and noisy disputation, nor a speculation which wearies the minds of men without any profit; but a solid discussion eminently adapted to the service of the godly, because it builds us up soundly in the faith, trains us to humility, and lifts us up into an admiration of the unbounded goodness of God towards us, while it elevates us to praise this goodness in our highest strains. For there is not a more effectual means of building up faith than the giving our open ears to the election of God which the Holy Spirit seals upon our heart while we hear, shewing us that it stands in the eternal and immutable goodwill of God towards us; and that, therefore, it cannot be moved or altered by any storms of the world, by any assaults of Satan, by any changes, or by any fluctuations or weaknesses of the flesh. For our salvation is then sure to us, when we find the cause of it in the breast of God. Thus, when we lay hold of life in Christ, made manifest to our faith, the same faith being still our leader and guide, our sight is permitted to penetrate much farther, and to see from what source that life proceeded. Our confidence of salvation is rooted in Christ, and rests on the promises of the Gospel. But it is no weak prop to our confidence, when we are brought to believe in Christ, to hear that all was originally given to us of God, and that we were as much ordained to faith in Christ before the foundation of the world, as we were chosen to the inheritance of eternal life in Christ.

Hence, therefore, arises the impregnable and insubvertible security of the saints. The Father, who gave us to the Son as His peculiar treasure, is stronger than all who oppose us; and He will not suffer us to be plucked out of His hand. What a cause for humility then in the saints of God when they see such a difference of condition made in those who are, by nature, all alike! Wherever the sons of God turn their eyes, they behold such wonderful instances of blindness, ignorance and insensibility, as fill them with horror; while they, in the midst of such darkness, have received Divine illumination, and know it, and feel it, to be so. How (say they) is it that some, under the clear light, continue in darkness and blindness? Who makes this difference? One thing they know by their own experience, that whereas their eyes were also once closed, they are now opened. Another thing is also certain, that those who willingly remain ignorant of any difference between them and others, have never yet learned to render unto God the glory due to Him for making that difference.

Now no one doubts that humility lies at the bottom of all true religion, and is the mother of all virtues. But how shall he be humble who will not hear of the original sin and misery from which he has been delivered? And who, by extending the saving mercy of God to all, without difference, lessens, as much as in him lies, the glory of that mercy? Those most certainly are the farthest from glorifying the grace of God, according to its greatness, who declare that it is indeed common to all men; but that it rests effectually in him, because they have embraced it by faith. The cause of faith itself, however, they would keep buried all the time out of sight, which is this: that the children of God who are chosen to be sons are afterwards blessed with the spirit of adoption. Now, what kind of gratitude is that in me if, being endowed with so pre-eminent a benefit, I consider myself no greater a debtor than he who hath not received one hundredth part

of it? Wherefore, if, to praise the goodness of God worthily, it is necessary to bear in mind how much we are indebted to Him, those are malignant towards Him and rob Him of His glory who reject and will not endure the doctrine of eternal election, which being buried out of sight, one half of the grace of God must of necessity vanish with it.

Let those roar at us who will. We will ever brighten forth, with all our power of language, the doctrine which we hold concerning the free election of God, seeing that it is only by it that the faithful can understand how great that goodness of God is which effectually called them to salvation. I merely give the great doctrine of election a slight touch here, lest anyone, by avoiding a subject so necessary for him to know, should afterwards feel what loss his neglect has caused him. I will, by and by, in its proper place, enter into the Divine matter with appropriate fulness. Now, if we are not really ashamed of the Gospel, we must of necessity acknowledge what is therein openly declared: that God by His eternal goodwill (for which there was no other cause than His own purpose), appointed those whom He pleased unto salvation, rejecting all the rest; and that those whom He blessed with this free adoption to be His sons He illumines by His Holy Spirit, that they may receive the life which is offered to them in Christ; while others, continuing of their own will in unbelief, are left destitute of the light of faith, in total darkness.

Against this unsearchable judgment of God many insolent dogs rise up and bar Some of them, indeed, hesitate not to attack God openly, asking why, foreseeing the Fall of Adam, He did not better order the affairs of men? To curb such spirits as these, no better means need be sought than those which Paul sets before us. He supposes this question to be put by an ungodly person: How can God be just in showing mercy to whom He will and hardening whom He will? Such

audacity in men the apostle considers unworthy a reply. He does nothing but remind them of their order and position in God's creation: "Who art thou, O man, that replies against God?" (Rom. ix. 20.) Profane men, indeed, vainly babble that the apostle covered the absurdity of the matter with silence for want of an answer. But the case is far otherwise.

The apostle in this appeal adopts an axiom, or universal acknowledgment, which not only ought to be held fast by all godly minds, but deeply engraved in the breast of common sense; that the inscrutable judgment of God is deeper than can be penetrated by man. And what man, I pray you, would not be ashamed to compress all the causes of the works of God within the confined measure of his individual intellect? Yet, on this hinge turns the whole question: Is there no justice of God, but that which is conceived of by us? Now if we should throw this into the form of one question-- whether it be lawful to measure the power of God by our natural sense--there is not a man who would not immediately reply that all the senses of all men combined in one individual must faint under an attempt to comprehend the immeasurable power of God; and yet, as soon as a reason cannot immediately be seen for certain works of God, men somehow or other are immediately prepared to appoint a day for entering into judgment with Him. What therefore can be more opportune or appropriate than the apostle's appeal: that those who would thus raise themselves above the heavens in their reasonings utterly forget who and what they are?

And suppose God, ceding His own right, should offer Himself as ready to render a reason for His works?

When the matter came to those secret counsels of His, which angels adore with trembling, who would not be utterly bereft of his senses

before such glorious splendour? Marvellous, indeed, is the madness of man! Who would more audaciously set himself above God than stand on equal ground with any Pagan judge! It is intolerable to you, and hateful, that the power and works of God should exceed the capacity of your own mind; and yet you will grant to an equal the enjoyment of [â€¦] own mind and judgment. Now, will you, with such madness as this, dare to make mention of the adorable God? What do you really think of God's glorious Name? And will you vaunt that the apostle is devoid of all reason, because he does not drag God from His throne and set Him before you, to be questioned and examined?

Let us, however, be fully assured that the apostle, in the first place, here curbs with becoming gravity the licentious madness of these men, who make nothing of attacking openly the justice of God; and that, in the next place, he gives to the worshippers of God a more useful counsel of moderation, than if he had taught them to soar on eagles' wings above the forbidden clouds. For that soberness of mind which, regulated by the fear of God, keeps itself within the bounds of comprehension prescribed by Him, is far better than all human wisdom. Let proud men revile this sobriety if they will, calling it ignorance. But let this sober-mindedness ever hold fast that which is the height of all true wisdom; that by holding the will of God to be the highest rule of righteousness, we ascribe to Him His own proper and peculiar glory.

But Pighius and his fellows are not hereby satisfied. For, pretending a great concern for the honour of God, they bark at us, as imputing to Him a cruelty utterly foreign to His nature. Pighius denies that he has any contest with God. What cause, or whose cause is it, then, that Paul maintains? After he had adopted the. above axiom--that God hardens whom He will and has mercy on whom He will--he subjoins

the supposed taunt of a wicked reasoner: "Why doth He yet find fault? For who hath resisted His will?" (Rom. ix. 19.) He meets such blasphemy as this by simply setting against it the power of God. If those clothe God with the garment of a tyrant, who refer the hardening of men even to His eternal counsel, we most certainly are not the originators of this doctrine. If they do God an injury who set His will above all other causes, Paul taught this doctrine long before us. Let these enemies of God, then, dispute the matter with the apostle. For I maintain nothing, in the present discussion, but what I declare is taught by him. About these barking dogs, however, I would not be very anxious. I am the rather moved with an anxiety about some otherwise good men who, while they fear lest they should ascribe to God anything unworthy of His goodness, really seem to be horror-struck at that which He declares, by the apostle, concerning Himself.

Now, we are holding fast, all the while, a godly purpose of vindicating the justice of God from all calumny. And the modesty of these timid ones would be worthy of all praise, if it were not the offspring of moroseness, inflated with a certain secret pride. For such men speak according to their own natural sense and understanding. But why do they fear to concede to the power of God that which is beyond the power of their own mind to comprehend, lest His justice should be endangered? Why, I say, is this? It is because they presume to subject the tribunal of God to their own judgment. Now Paul shows us that it is an act of intolerable pride in any man to assume to himself the judgment of his brother, because there is one Judge by whom we all stand or fall, and to whom every knee must bow. What madness is it, then, for a man to raise his crest against this only Judge Himself, and to presume to measure His infinite power by natural sense!

They, therefore, who allege as an excuse that modesty prevents them from subscribing to the Apostle Paul's testimony, must of necessity, in the first place, confess that whatever praise they give to the justice of God is restricted to the bounds of their own natural comprehensions. And in the next place; if agreeing in reality with us, they choose rather to suppress this part of the great doctrine, lest they should give rein to the insolence of the wicked, such caution is quite preposterous. As if the honour of God could be protected by our lies! God Himself not only rejects such protection as this, but declares, in the Book of Job, that it is hateful to Him. Let such defenders take care, lest by affecting greater caution than the Lord prescribes in His Word, they become guilty of a twofold madness and folly. The moderation and caution which these men recommend are, indeed, beneficial in repressing the blasphemies of the impious. But if such persons persuade themselves that they shall be able by their words to put the bridle on rebels against God and His truth, their hope and expectation are ridiculous. The Apostle Paul, after having dwelt upon the secret counsels of God as far as was needful, puts forth his hand, as it were, to forbid us to go farther. Restless spirits, however, will kick and butt, and, with unsettled levity, leap over the barrier placed before them. How think ye, then, that such will stop at the nod of this or that sober mind, that would set still narrower bounds to their headlong course? You may as well attempt to hold with a cobweb a fierce-spirited horse, that has burst the bars and prances in his strength. But you will say, In a matter so difficult and deep as this, nothing is better than to think moderately. Who denies it? But we must, at the same time, examine what kind and degree of moderation it is, lest we should be drawn into the principle of the Papists, who, to keep their disciples obedient to them, make them like mute and brute beasts. But shall it be called Christian simplicity to consider as hurtful the knowledge of those things which God sets



before us? But (say our opponents), this subject is one of which we may remain ignorant without loss or harm.

As if our heavenly Teacher were not the best judge of what it is expedient for us to know, and to what extent we ought to know it! Wherefore, that we may not struggle amid the waves, nor be borne about in the air, unfixed and uncertain, nor, by getting our foot too deep, be drowned in the gulph below; let us so give ourselves to God, to be ruled by Him and taught by Him, that, contented with His Word alone, we may never desire to know more than we find therein. No! not even if the power so to do were given to us! This teachableness, in which every godly man will ever hold all the powers of his mind under the authority of the Word of God, is the true and only rule of wisdom.

Now wherever, and how far soever, He who is "the Way" thus leads us with His outstretched hand, whose Spirit spoke by the apostles and the prophets, we may most safely follow. And he remaining ignorant, of all those things which are not learnt in the school of God far excels all the penetration of human intellect. Wherefore Christ requires of His sheep that they should not only hold their ears open to His voice, but keep them shut against the voice of strangers. Nor can it ever be but that the vain winds of error from every side must blow through a soul devoid of sound doctrine. Moreover, I can, with all truth, confess that I never should have spoken or written on this subject unless the Word of God in my own soul had led the way. All godly readers will, indeed, gather this from my former writings, and especially from my "Institute." But this present refutation of my enemies, who oppose themselves to me, will, perhaps, afford my friends some new light upon the matter.

But since the authority of the ancient Church is, with much hatred, cast in my teeth, it will perhaps be worth our while to consider at the commencement how unjustly the truth of Christ is smothered under this enmity, the ground of which is, in one sense, false; and in another frivolous. This accusation, however, such as it is, I would rather wipe off with the words of Augustine than with my own; for the Pelagians of old annoyed him with the same accusation, saying, that he had all other writers of the Church against him. In his reply he remarks that before the heresy of Pelagius, the fathers of the primitive Church did not deliver their opinions so deeply and accurately upon predestination, which reply, indeed, is the truth. And he adds: "What need is there for us to search the works of those writers, who, before the heresy of Pelagius arose, found no necessity for devoting themselves to this question, so difficult of solution? Had such necessity arisen, and had they been compelled to reply to the enemies of predestination, they would doubtless have done so." This remark of Augustine is a prudent one, and a wise one. For if the enemies of the grace of God had not worried Augustine himself, he never would have devoted so much labour (as he himself confesses) to the discussion of God's election.

Hence, in reference to his book, entitled, "On the Blessing of Perseverance," he pointedly says, "This predestination of the saints is certain and manifest; which necessity afterwards compelled me to defend more diligently and laboriously when I was discussing the subject in opposition to a certain new sect. For I have learned that every separate heresy introduces into the Church its peculiar questions, which call for a more diligent defence of the Holy Scripture, than if no such necessity of defence had arisen. For what was it that compelled me to defend, in that work of mine, with greater copiousness and fuller explanation those passages of the Scriptures in which predestination is set before us? What, but the

starting up of the Pelagians, who say that the grace of God is given to us according as we render ourselves deserving of it?"

Augustine had, moreover, just before denied that any prejudice against his books could be justly entertained because of their want of the authority of the ancient Church. "No one," says he, "can surely be so unjust, or so invidious, as not to allow me to gain some instruction and profit for myself from this important subject." And he afterwards contends that it could be gathered from the testimonies of some of the ancient fathers, that their sentiments and teaching were the same as his own. Not to mention other authorities to which he refers, that is a more than satisfactory one which he cites from Ambrose: "Whom Christ has mercy on, He calls." Again, "When He will, He makes out of careless ones devoted ones." And again, "But God calls whom He condescends to call; and whom He will, He makes religious." Now who does not see that the sum of the whole Divine matter is comprehended in these few words? Ambrose here assigns the reason or cause why all men do not come to Christ that they may obtain salvation. Because God does not effectually touch their hearts. The holy man declares that the conversion of a sinner proceeds from the free election of God, and that the reason why He calls some, while others are left reprobate, lies solely in His own will. Ambrose neither hesitates nor dissembles here. Now, who that is endowed with the most common judgment does not perceive that the state of the whole question is contained in, and defined by, these three summaries?

In a word, Augustine is so wholly with me, that if I wished to write a confession of my faith, I could do so with all fulness and satisfaction to myself out of his writings. But that I may not, on the present occasion, be too prolix, I will be content with three or four instances of his testimony, from which it will be manifest that he does not differ from me one pin's point. And it would be more manifest still,

could the whole line of his confession be adduced, how fully and solidly he agrees with me in every particular. In his book, "Concerning the Predestination of the Saints," he has these words: "Lest any one should say, My faith, my righteousness (or anything of the kind) distinguishes me from others; meeting all such thoughts, the great teacher of the Gentiles asks, 'What hast thou that thou hast not received?' As if the apostle had said, From whom indeed couldst thou receive it, but from Him who separates thee from every other, to whom He has not given what He has given to thee?" Augustine then adds, "Faith, therefore, from its beginning to its perfection is the gift of God. And that this gift is bestowed on some and not on others, who will deny but he who would fight against the most manifest testimonies of the Scripture? But why faith is not given to all ought not to concern the believer, who knows that all men by the sin of one came into most just condemnation. But why God delivers one from this condemnation and not another belongs to His inscrutable judgments, and His ways are past finding out.' And if it be investigated and inquired how it is that each receiver of faith is deemed of God worthy to receive such a gift, there are not wanting those who will say, It is by their human will. But we say that it is by grace, or Divine predestination."

The holy father then makes these beautiful and striking observations: "Indeed the Saviour of the world Himself, the adorable Son of God, is the brightest luminary of Divine grace and eternal predestination, not only with respect to His Divine nature as the Son of God, but especially also in reference to His human nature as 'Man.' For in what way, I pray you, did 'THE MAN Christ Jesus,' as Man, merit so great a glory as that, being taken into union with the Divine. Person of the Son by the word of the co-eternal Father, He should become the 'only-begotten Son of God'? What good word or work preceded in this glorious case? What good thing did 'THE MAN' perform? What

act of faith did He exercise? What prayer did He offer up that He should be exalted to such preeminent dignity? Now here, perhaps, some profane and insolent being may be inclined to say, 'Why was it not I that was predestinated to this excellent greatness?' If we should reply in the solemn appeal of the apostle, 'Nay, but who art thou, O man, that replies against God?' and if such an one should not even then restrain his daring spirit, but should give more rein to his blasphemy and say, 'Why do you utter to me the caution, "Who art thou, O man?" etc. Am I not a man as He was, concerning whom thou speakest? Why, then, am I not now what He is? He, forsooth, is what He is, and as great as He is, by grace. Why, then, is the grace different where the nature is the same? For most assuredly there is no acceptance of persons with God.' Now I would solemnly ask, What Christian man, nay, what madman, would thus reason, speak, or think? Let, then, our glorious Head Himself, the Fountain of all grace, be an ever-shining luminary of eternal predestination and a Divine example of its sovereign nature. And from Him let the stream of electing grace flow through all His members, according to the measure of the gift in each. This, then, is the eternal predestination of the saints, which shone with such surpassing splendour in the SAINT of saints! And as He alone was predestinated, as MAN, to be our HEAD, so many of us are also predestinated to be His members."

Now, that no one might attribute it to faith that one is preferred above another, Augustine testifies that men are not chosen because they believe, but, on the contrary, are chosen that they might believe. In like manner, when writing to Sextus, he says, "As to the great deep--why one man believes and another does not, why God delivers one man and not another--let him who can, search into that profound abyss; but let him beware of the awful precipice." Again, in another place he says: "Who created the reprobate but God? And why? Because He willed it. Why did He will it?-- 'Who art thou, O

man, that replies against God?" And again, elsewhere, after he had proved that God is moved by no merits of men to make them obedient to His commands, but that He renders unto them good for evil, and that for His own sake and not for theirs, he adds, "If anyone should ask why God makes some men His sheep and not others, the Apostle, dreading this question, exclaims, 'O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!'"

And as Augustine, tracing the beginning or origin of election to the free and gratuitous will of God, places reprobation in His mere will likewise, so he teaches that the security of our salvation stands in that will also, and in nothing else. For, writing to Paulinus, he affirms that those who do not persevere unto the end, belong not to the calling of God, which is always effectual and without any repentance in Him. And, in another work, he maintains more fully that perseverance is freely bestowed on the elect, from which they can never fall away. "Thus," says he, "when Christ prayed for Peter, that his faith might not fail, what else did He ask of God, but that there might be with, or in, Peter's faith a fully free, fully courageous, fully victorious, fully persevering will, or determination? And He had just before said, 'The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His.' The faith of such, which worketh by love either faileth not at all, or, if there be any in whom it does partially fail, it is renewed and restored before this life is ended. That iniquity which had interrupted it is done away, and the faith still perseveres unto the end. But those who are not designed of God to persevere--if they fall from the Christian faith, and the end of life finds them in that state thus fallen--such, doubtless, could not have been of this number of God's elect, even while they were, to all appearance, living well and righteously. For such were never separated from the general mass of perdition by the foreknowledge

and predestination of God, and therefore were never 'called according to His purpose.'" And, that no one might be disturbed in mind because those sometimes fall away who had been considered the sons of God, he meets such perplexed ones thus: "Let no one think that those ever fall away who are the subjects of predestination, who are the called according to God's purpose, and who are truly the children of promise. Those who live godly in appearance are, indeed, called by men the children of God; but, because they are destined sometime or other to live ungodly, and to die in that ungodliness, God does not call them His children in His foreknowledge. They who are ordained unto life are understood, by the Scripture, to be given unto Christ. These are predestinated and called, according to God's purpose. Not one of these ever perishes. And on this account no such one, though changed from good to bad for a time, ever ends his life so, because he is for that end ordained of God, and for that end given unto Christ, that he might not perish, but have eternal life."

A little afterwards the same Augustine saith, "Those who, by the all-foreseeing appointment of God, are foreknown, predestinated, called, justified and glorified, are the children of God, not only before they are regenerated, but before they are born of woman; and such can never perish." He then assigns the reason: "Because (says he) God works all things together for the good of such; and He so makes all things thus to work together for their good, that if some of them go out of the way, and even exceed all bounds, He makes even this to work for their good and profit; for they return to Him more humble and more teachable than before."

And if the matter be carried higher, and a question be moved concerning the first creation of man, Augustine meets that question thus: "We most wholesomely confess that which we most rightly believe, that God, the Lord of all things, who created all things 'very

good,' foreknew that evil would arise out of this good; and He also knew that it was more to the glory of His omnipotent goodness to bring good out of evil, than not to permit evil to be at all! And He so ordained the lives of angels and of men that He might first show in them what free-will could do, and then afterwards show what the free gift of His grace and the judgment of His justice could do."

In his "Manual" to Laurentinus, he more freely and fully explains whatever of doubt might yet remain. "When Christ shall appear (says he) to judge the world at the last day, that shall be seen, in the clearest light of knowledge, which the faith of the godly now holds fast, though not yet made manifest to their comprehension; how sure, how immutable, how all-efficacious is the will of God; how many things He could do, or has power to do, which He wills not to do (but that He wills nothing which He has not power to do); and how true that is which the Psalmist sings, "The Lord hath done in heaven whatsoever pleased Him." This, however, is not true, if He willed some things and did them not. Nothing, therefore, is done but that which the Omnipotent willed to be done, either by permitting it to be done or by doing it Himself. Nor is a doubt to be entertained that God does righteously in permitting all those things to be done which are done evilly. For He permits not this, but by righteous judgment. Although, therefore, those things which are evil, in so far as they are evil, are not good, yet it is good that there should not only be good things, but evil things also. For, unless there were this good, that evil things also existed, those evil things would not be permitted by the Great and Good Omnipotent to exist at all. For He, without doubt, can as easily refuse to permit to be done what He does not will to be done, as He can do that which He wills to be done. Unless we fully believe this the very beginning of our faith is perilled, by which we profess to believe in God ALMIGHTY!"



Augustine then adds this short sentence: "These are the mighty works of the Lord, shining with perfection in every instance of His will; and so perfect in wisdom, that when the angelic and human nature had sinned-- that is, had done not what God willed, but what each nature itself willed--it came to pass that by this same will of the creature, God, though in one sense unwilling, yet accomplished what He willed, righteously and with the height of all wisdom, overruling the evils done, to the damnation of those whom He had justly predestinated to punishment, and to the salvation of those whom He had mercifully predestinated to grace. Wherefore, as far as these natures themselves were concerned, they did what they did contrary to the will of God; but, as far as the omnipotence of God is concerned, they acted according to His will; nor could they have acted contrary to it. Hence, by their very acting contrary to the will of God, the will of God concerning them was done. So mighty, therefore, are the works of God, so gloriously and exquisitely perfect in every instance of His will, that by a marvellous and ineffable plan of operation peculiar to Himself, as the 'all-wise God,' that cannot be done, without His will, which is even contrary to His will; because it could not be done without His permitting it to be done, which permission is evidently not contrary to His will, but according to, His will." I have gladly extracted these few things out of many like them in the writings of Augustine, that my readers may clearly see with what a very modest face it is that Pighius represents him as differing from me and makes use of him to support his own errors. I shall, indeed, hereafter occasionally refer to the testimonies of this same holy man in the course of this discussion.

I will now enter upon the more express subject and object of the present undertaking, which are to prove that nothing has been taught by me concerning this important doctrine but that which God Himself clearly teaches us all in the Sacred Oracles. The sum of

which is this: that the salvation of believers depends on the eternal election of God, for which no cause or reason can be rendered but His own gratuitous good pleasure. Most plain and eloquent on this point are the words of the Apostle Paul in his first chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians: "Blessed (saith he) be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world." Now I hear, in a moment the babble of Pighius, that the whole human race were chosen in Christ; that whosoever should take hold of Him by faith should obtain salvation. In this absurd invention of his there are two most gross blunders, which may be immediately refuted by the words of the same apostle.

In the first place, there is, most certainly and evidently, an inseparable connection between the elect and the reprobate. So that the election, of which the apostle speaks, cannot consist unless we confess that God separated from all others certain persons whom it pleased Him thus to separate. Now, this act of God is expressed by the term predestinating, which the apostle afterwards twice repeats. He moreover calls those "chosen" (or elected) who are engrafted by faith into the body of Christ; and that this blessing is by no means common to all men is openly manifest. The apostle, therefore, by the "chosen," evidently means those whom Christ condescends to call after they have been given to Him by the Father. But, to make faith the cause of election is altogether absurd, and utterly at variance with the words of the apostle. "Paul does not (as Augustine wisely observes) declare that the children of God were 'chosen,' because He foreknew they would believe, but in order that they might believe. Nor does the apostle (says he) call them 'chosen,' because God had foreseen that they would be holy and without spot, but in order that they might be made such." Again, "God did not (says he) choose us

because we believed, but in order that we might believe, lest we should appear to have first chosen Him. Paul loudly declares that our very beginning to be holy is the fruit and effect of election. They act most preposterously, therefore, who put election after faith." He further observes, "When Paul lays down, as the sole cause of election, that good pleasure of God which He had in Himself, he excludes all other causes whatsoever." Augustine, therefore, rightly admonishes us ever to go back to that first great cause of election, lest we should be inclined to boast of the good pleasure of our own will!

Paul then proceeds to declare that "God abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence, according to the riches of His grace, having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself." Thou hearest in these words, reader, the grace of illumination, flowing like a river from the fountain of that eternal counsel which had been before hidden. Far, very far, is this removed from the idea that God had any respect to our faith in choosing us, which faith could not possibly have existed except that God had then appointed it for us by the free grace of His adoption of us. And Paul further confirms all this by declaring that God was moved by no external cause--by no cause out of Himself in the choice of us; but that He Himself, in Himself, was the cause and the author of choosing His people, not yet created or born, as those on whom He would afterwards confer faith: "According to the purpose of Him (saith the apostle) who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will" (Eph. i. 11).

Who does not see that the eternal purpose of God is here set in diametrical opposition to our own purpose and will? This passage also was deeply weighed by Augustine, who, in his interpretation of it, observes "that God so works out all things, that He works also in us the very willingness by which we believe." It is thus, I think,

clearly brought out and proved who they are whom God calls by the Gospel to the hope of salvation, whom He engrafts into the body of Christ, and whom He makes heirs of eternal life; that they are those whom He had adopted unto Himself by His eternal and secret counsel to be His sons; and that He was so far from being moved by any faith in them to come thus to adopt them, that this His election is the cause and the beginning of all faith in them; and that, therefore, election is, in order, before faith.

Equally plain and manifest is that which we have in the eighth chapter of the apostle's Epistle to the Romans. For after he had said that all things work together for good (or are a help) to the faithful who love God; that men might not trace the source of their happiness to themselves, or suppose that by their first loving God they had, by thus first loving Him, merited such goodness at His hands; the apostle, by way of correcting every error of that kind, immediately adds, "Who are the called according to His purpose." Whereby we see that Paul is anxious to secure to God Himself all the originating glory, for he shews that it is He Who, by His calling, causes men to love Him, who of themselves could do nothing but hate Him.

For if you thoroughly examine the whole human race, what inclination will you find in any one of them by nature to love God? Nay! Paul in this very same chapter declares that all the senses of the flesh, the whole "carnal mind, is enmity against God." Now, if all men are, by nature, enemies to God and His adversaries, it is quite evident that it is by His calling alone that some are separated from the rest, and caused to lay aside their hatred, and brought to love Him. Moreover, there can exist no doubt that the apostle here designs that effectual calling, by which God regenerates those whom He had before adopted unto Himself to be His sons. For the apostle does not simply say "who are the called" (for this is sometimes

applicable to the reprobate whom God calls, or invites, promiscuously with His own children, to repentance and faith), but he says, in all fulness of explanation, "Who are the called according to His purpose;" which purpose must, from its very nature and effect, be firm and ratifying.

Now, to explain this text as applying to the purpose of man is (as Augustine argues) absurd in the extreme. Indeed, the context itself banishes every scruple, as if to render the intrusion of an interpreter wholly unnecessary. For the apostle immediately adds, "Whom He did predestinate (or definitely appoint), them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified." Here it is evident that the apostle is speaking of a certain number whom God destined for Himself as a peculiar property and treasure. For although God calls very many--by many means, and especially by the external ministry of men--yet He justifies, and at last glorifies, no one but him whom He had ordained unto eternal life. The calling of God, therefore, is a certain special calling, which so seals and ratifies His eternal election, as to manifest openly what was before hidden in God concerning each one so called.

I know well what are the cavilling of many here. They say that when Paul affirms that those were predestinated whom God foreknew, he means that each one was chosen in respect of his future faith when he should believe. But I do not concede to these that which they falsely imagine, that we are to understand that God foresaw something in them which would move Him to confer upon them His favour and grace. For it is evident that the elect of God were foreknown when, and because, they were freely chosen. Hence, the same apostle elsewhere teaches that God knoweth them that are His, because, that is, He has them marked as it were, and holds them as numbered on His roll.

Nor is even this important point omitted by Augustine: that by the term foreknowledge we are to understand the counsel of God by which He predestinates His own unto salvation. Now that it was foreknown of God who should be heirs of eternal life no one will deny. The only question that can possibly arise is this: Whether God foreknew what He would do in them, or what they would be in themselves. But it is a piece of futile cunning to lay hold on the term foreknowledge, and so to use that as to pin the eternal election of God upon the merits of men, which election the apostle everywhere ascribes to the alone purpose of God. Peter also salutes the Church as "elect according to the foreknowledge of God." Did he do this believing that some virtue in them foreseen of God gained them His favour? No! Peter is not comparing men with men, so as to make some of them better or more worthy than others, but he is placing on high, above all other causes, that decree which God determined in Himself. As if he had said, that those to whom he wrote were now numbered among the children of God, because they were chosen or elected of Him before they were born. On this same principle he afterwards teaches, in the same chapter, that Christ was "verily foreordained before the foundation of the world" to be the Saviour, Who should wash away by His blood the sins of the world; by which that apostle doubtless means that the expiation of sin, completed by Christ, was preordained by the eternal counsel of God. Nor can that be otherwise explained which we find in the sermon of Peter, recorded by Luke in the Acts of the Apostles, that Christ was delivered to death "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God." Peter here joins "foreknowledge" to "counsel," that we may learn that Christ was not hurried away to death by any casualty, nor by the mere violent assault of men; but because the all-good and all-wise God, who knoweth all things, had thus purposely decreed it. Indeed, one passage of the Apostle Paul ought to suffice for the end of all controversy among those who have really a sound mind. He

says, "God hath not cast away His people, which He foreknew." And what that foreknowledge was he shortly after explains, where he says that a "remnant according to the election of grace" were saved. And again, that Israel did not obtain by works that which they sought after, but that "the election" did obtain it. Now that which in the former passage he called foreknowledge, he here afterwards defines to be election, and that gratuitous and free.

The fiction of Pighius is puerile and absurd, when he interprets grace to be God's goodness in inviting all men to salvation, though all were lost in Adam. For Paul most clearly separates the foreknown from those on whom God deigned not to look in mercy. And the same is expressed, without any obscurity, in the memorable words of Christ: "All that the Father giveth Me shall come unto Me; and him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out." Here we have three things, briefly indeed, but most perspicuously expressed. First, that all who come unto Christ were before given unto Him by the Father; secondly, that those who were thus given unto Him were delivered, as it were, from the hand of the Father into the hand of the Son, that they may be truly His; thirdly, that Christ is the sure keeper of all those whom the Father delivered over to His faithful custody and care, for the very end that He might not suffer one of them to perish. Now if a question be raised as to the beginning of faith, Christ here gives the answer, when He says that those who believe, therefore they were given unto Him by the Father.

The unbelief of the Scribes was a great obstacle to the ignorant multitude, because they always persuaded them that no doctrine was worthy of belief but that which was received under their sanction. On the other hand, Christ declares aloud that that light by which we are guided into the way of salvation is the gift of God. And if anyone be inclined to turn his back upon the truth that all those whom the

Father chose in Christ were given unto Him, it nevertheless remains fixed and a fact that that gift was not only antecedent to faith, but the cause and origin of it. Now in the remaining member of the sentence of Christ, "Shall come unto Me," there is a more marvellous weight still. For He not only declares that none ever come to Him, but those to whom the hand of God is stretched out; but He asserts that all who were given unto Him by the Father are, without exception, brought to believe in Him. And this He still more fully confirms in the context of His divine discourse "No one," says He, "can come unto Me except My Father draw him."

Pighius will himself confess that there is need of illumination to bring unto Christ those who were adversaries to God; but he, at the same time, holds fast the fiction that grace is offered equally to all, but that it is ultimately rendered effectual by the will of man, just as each one is willing to receive it. Christ, however, testifies that the meaning of His words is very different from this. For He adds immediately afterwards, "There are some among you who believe not. Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto Me except it were given unto him of My Father." You see here that Christ excludes those that "believe not" from the number of them who are "drawn." Now Christ would have uttered all this in vain, and out of place, if faith were not an especial gift of God. But that is the clearest of all which He conclusively adds in continuation of His discourse. After having cited the prophecy of Isaiah, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord;" He subjoins, by way of interpretation, "Every one therefore that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto Me." Herein He shews that the prophecy of Isaiah is then fulfilled when God, by His Spirit, speaks to His children and disciples within, in order that He may deliver them into the hands and possession of Christ. Isaiah defines this to be the manner in which God renews and increases His Church, by teaching His children from above: "And



they shall be all taught of God." The prophet, therefore, is recording a peculiar favour of God, of which none are deemed worthy but His own children. Christ also here declares, by this His doctrine, that those are effectually drawn to Him whose minds and hearts God "compels."

"Thus does God (saith Augustine) teach those within who are 'the called according to His purpose,' at the same time giving them to know what they ought to do, and giving them the power to do what they know. He, therefore, who knows what he ought to do, and does it not, has not yet learned of God according to grace, but according to the law only; not according to the spirit, but only according to the letter." And again a little afterwards, "If as 'the Truth' saith, 'Every one that hath learned cometh,' he that cometh not most certainly hath not learned." At length the holy father arrives at this conclusion: "It does not follow (saith he) that he who can come, therefore does come. The sacred matter is not perfected unless he is willing to come, and does come. Now every one that hath learned of the Father has not only the power to come, but does come." Here, therefore, we have the forward movement of the power, the affection of the will, and the effect of the act.

Nor do I thus adduce Augustine as a witness on this occasion, that I may fight my enemies under cover of his authority; but because I cannot find words more appropriate than his wherewith to express the mind of Christ in the Evangelist. If there be any not yet quieted, he discusses the matter more fully elsewhere thus: "What doth Christ mean (argues he) when He says, 'Every one that hath learned of the Father cometh unto Me'? (John vi. 45.) What is it, but as if He had said, 'There is no one who heareth and learneth of the Father that cometh not unto Me.' For if everyone who hath heard and learned of the Father cometh (unto Christ) most certainly whoso cometh not

unto Him hath never heard or learned. For if he had heard and learned he would certainly come. This school of God is very far removed from all carnal sense and understanding. In it the Father teaches, and is heard, that those who hear and learn may come to the Son."

A little farther on Augustine observes, "This grace, which is secretly communicated to the hearts of men, is received by no heart that is hardened. Indeed, it is given for the very end that the hardness of the heart may be first taken away. When, therefore, the Father is heard within, He takes away the 'stony heart' and gives 'a heart of flesh.' For it is thus that He makes His own the children of promise and vessels of mercy which He had before prepared unto glory. If it be asked, Why He does not thus teach all men, in order that they may come to Christ? the answer is, Because. those whom He does teach, He teaches in mercy; but those whom He does not teach, in judgment He teaches them not. For 'He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth.' (Rom. ix. 18)

The sum of this sacred matter, however, may be compressed into a smaller compass still. Christ does not say that those are drawn by the Father who have a flexible heart given them to render them able to come to Him; but that those who do come to Him are they whom God by His Spirit touches within, and who, under the efficacy of that touch, actually come. Now that this privilege is not given to all promiscuously is a fact which universal experience makes manifest, even to the blind.

And next, when Christ declares that He will by no means cast out one of those who do come unto Him; nay, that the life of all such is hidden and kept in security, in Himself, until He shall raise them up at the last day; who does not see here that the final perseverance of

the saints (as it is commonly termed) is in like manner ascribed to the election of God? It may be, and has been, that some fall from the faith; but those who are given to Christ by the Father are, as Christ Himself declares, placed beyond the peril of destruction. In the same manner also, when, in another place, Christ had said that some of the Jews did not believe "because they were not of His sheep," He places, as it were, the sheep themselves in a sure haven of safety. "They shall never perish (saith He), neither shall any one pluck them out of My hand. My Father who gave them Me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand." Now Pighius will not, surely, dare to rest the safe state of the salvation of these sheep on their present faith. Yet he would suspend it all upon the free will of man!

Nor are we to consider it a point for ambiguous discussion when Christ here sets Himself alone as a sufficient protection against all the machinations of Satan, and when He declares that we shall be safe even unto the end, because it is His will to save us. But that there might remain no doubt upon the subject in any one's mind as to the persons whom He does undertake in His faithfulness to protect and preserve, He calls our attention a second time to the gift of the Father, declaring both the gift of the Father and the teaching of the Father. Nor should we pass, without especial notice, Christ's making the Father greater than all adversaries that can possibly oppose His people. Our Lord does it, that our confidence in the security of our salvation might be as great as our reverence for the power of God. For our security and God's omnipotence are equal; the former not being less than the latter. Wherefore, amidst all the violent assaults, all the various dangers, all the mighty storms, and all the shakings, convulsions and agitations, with which we have to contend, the continuance and perpetuity of our standing lie in this: that God will constantly defend that which He hath decreed in Himself concerning

our salvation by the omnipotent power of His arm. If any one of us but look into himself, what can he do but tremble? For all things shake to their centre around us, and there is nothing more weak and tottering than ourselves. But since our heavenly Father suffers not one of those whom He gave to His Son to perish, as great as is His power, so certain is our confidence, and so great our glorying. And His omnipotence is such that He stands the invincible vindicator of His own gift.

Hence, Augustine advisedly observes, "If any one of these should perish God would be deceived. But no one of them ever does perish, because God never is, or can be, deceived. If any one of these should perish, God is overcome and outdone by the sin of man. But no one of them ever does perish, because God can be conquered or outdone by nothing. The elect of God are chosen that they may reign with Christ for ever. They are not like Judas, who was chosen to a temporary office only, for which he was naturally fitted." Again, "Of these not one perishes, because they are all chosen according to a purpose; not their own purpose but God's. Seeing that there is not conferred upon them such a gift of perseverance, by which they may persevere if they will; but a gift by which they cannot but persevere." Augustine then confirms this by the following excellent argument: "If, in the great weakness of this life (in the midst of which weakness there is nevertheless need of mighty power to keep down human vanity and pride), men were left to their own will, whether they would persevere or not, so that, under the helping power of God (without which they could not persevere at all), they might stand still if they pleased; and if God did not work in them that will, man's own will itself would, amid such and so great temptations, sink under its own infirmity. And thus men could not persevere at all, because, sinking under their own weaknesses, they would not be willing to persevere, or being willing, would not have the power. A remedy,

therefore, is provided for the infirmity of human will by its being caused to act, unceasingly and inseparably, under Divine grace. Thus, the human will, though infirm in itself, cannot fail, nor be overcome by any infirmity of its own."

Now let that memorable passage of Paul (Rom. ix. 10 - 13) come forth before us. This passage alone should abundantly suffice to put an end to all controversy among the sober-minded and obedient children of God. And although it is no wonder that that eyeless monster, Pighius, should mock with contempt the words of the apostle himself, yet I hope I shall bring all readers of a sound mind to abhor such barbarous audacity in profaning the Scripture as this monster evinces. As the Jews, priding themselves on the name of the Church, rejected under this pretext the Gospel of Christ, because it had been condemned by the consent of the (so-called) Church, the apostle, to prevent the majesty of the Gospel from being overshadowed by such shameless pride, tears from the faces of these enemies of Christ the mask, under cover of which they falsely boasted. It was, indeed, a very great difficulty and a formidable obstacle, in the way of the weak when they saw the doctrine of Christ rejected by nearly all these very persons whom God had appointed the heirs of His everlasting covenant. The apostles had all along preached that Jesus was the Messiah of God. But the whole of this nation, to whom the Messiah had been promised, opposed and rejected Him. And what wonder when at this very day we see thousands totter, fail and faint, frightened by this very Church mask which the Papists hold before their eyes, boasting themselves to be the Church!

The apostle, therefore, enters into the battle with the Jews in this manner: He by no means makes the fleshly seed the legitimate children of Abraham, but counts the children of promise alone for

the seed. Now he might have counted the seed according to their faith. And that indeed would have been consistent, when, in reference to the promise, he was stating the difference between the genuine and the spurious offspring; and that, indeed, he had before done. But now he ascends higher into the mind of God, and declares that those were the children of promise whom God chose before they were born. In proof of which he cites that promise which was given by the angel to Abraham, "At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son (as if the apostle had added, before Isaac was conceived in the womb, he was chosen of God). And not only this (saith the apostle), but when Rebecca also had conceived by one (embrace), even by our father Isaac (for the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth), it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (Rom. ix. 10).

Pighius would slide away under the excuse that this is one of the most difficult places of Scripture. And suppose I concede this; I do not thereby acknowledge that his impious barking is to be endured, when he boastingly asserts that it is a labyrinth in which no straight way can be found. What! are we to suppose that the Holy Spirit, speaking by the mouth of the apostle, went out of His way or lost Himself, so as to lead us aside and beyond what it is useful or proper for us to know? It would have been very easy (as I have just said) for the apostle to distinguish the true children of Abraham from the spurious ones by the mark of faith alone. But he on purpose introduces the question of election, far higher and much farther removed. And most certainly as, according to his own record of himself, he had been carried up into the third heaven, and those secrets of God had been revealed to him which it is not lawful for a man to utter, it must be evident that he well knew how far it was

expedient, and how far it was lawful, for him to go in publishing the secret things of the Most High. When, therefore, he purposely carries the question to so great a height, and brings it down to so important a point, when it might have been settled in so general, brief and compendious a manner, what godly person will hesitate to lend an attentive and teachable ear to what he testifies? Unless we are to entertain a supposition that this furious, blind monster would restrain, by his great moderation (!), the Spirit of God Himself, wantoning (in his own opinion) beyond due bounds! Our very modest (!) opponent adds, "This is one of the portions of Scripture which unlearned and unstable persons corrupt to their own destruction." Now this is the very fact which, by the plainest proof, he forces us to declare concerning himself, so lawlessly does he twist and pervert the whole context of the Apostle Paul. And when he exhorts his readers to hold themselves obedient to the Church, in the interpretation of all such difficult passages of Scripture, he should have me a seconder of his grave admonition, if he would shew to his readers, as the Church, a sheepfold of Christ, and not a stinking sty of swine! For which is Pighius' Church but that vortex, formed of the congregated mass of all iniquities, and ever filling, but not yet full, of every kind of error?

Pighius' last admonition is, that his readers would admit nothing that is inconsistent with the infinite goodness of God, nor anything by which they might be incited to hate God rather than to love Him. And yet he runs full sail directly against God, because He predestines some to destruction from their very creation. But suppose the whole of this doctrine were suppressed, the reprobate would ever find occasion for hating God, and for assailing Him with their impious reasonings and arguments. What real reason they have for their noisy opposition shall be duly considered, in its place, when we shall have fully explained the mind of the apostle. At the present moment,

let all those who are willing to be taught in the school of God hear what the apostle plainly, and without any ambiguity, really says and means.

The apostle places before us the two sons of Isaac, who, when begotten together in the secret and sacred womb of nature, as in a temple of God, as it were, were nevertheless, while in the womb together, separated by the oracular word of God to an entirely different destiny. Now the apostle assigns the cause of this difference (which otherwise might have been sought in the merits of the lives of these two children) to the hidden counsel of God: "That the counsel of God might stand." We here distinctly learn that it was determined of God to choose one only out of these two children. And yet Pighius, by a senseless cavil, as by a hog's snout, tries to root up these words of the apostle with all their positive plainness of meaning. He replies that the election of grace here means that Jacob had merited no such thing beforehand. But since the apostle commends this electing grace of God on the very ground that while the one was elected, the other was rejected, the vain fiction of Pighius concerning universal grace falls to the ground at once. The apostle does not here simply say that Jacob was appointed heir of life, that the election of God might stand, but that his brother being rejected, his brother's birthright was conferred on him. I am fully aware of what some other dogs here bark out, and what are the murmurings of many ignorant persons, that the testimonies of the apostle which we have cited do not treat of eternal life, nor of eternal destruction, at all. But if such objectors held the true principles of theology in any degree (which ought to be well known by all Christian men), they would express their sentiments with a little less confidence and insolence. For the answer of God to Rebecca's complaint was designed to shew her that the issue of the struggling which she felt in her womb would be that the blessing of God and the covenant of eternal life would rest with the



younger. And what did the struggling itself signify, but that both the children could not be heirs of the covenant at the same time, which covenant had already, by the secret council of God, been decreed for the one?

Objectors here allege that this covenant and its decree referred to Canaan, on which the Prophet Malachi dwells (Mal. i. 1--3). And, indeed, this objection might be worthy of notice if God had designed merely to fatten the Jews in Canaan as pigs in a sty. But the mind of the prophet is very different from this. God had promised that land to Abraham as an outward symbol or figure of a better inheritance, and had given it to Abraham's posterity for a possession, that He might there collect them together as a peculiar people unto Himself, and might there erect a sanctuary of His presence and grace. These great ends and objects are those which the prophet is revolving in his deep and reflective mind. In a word, the prophet is holding Canaan to be the sacred habitation of God. And as Esau was deprived of this habitation, the prophet sacredly gathers that he was hated of God, because he had been thus rejected from the holy and elect family. On which the love of God perpetually rests. We also, with the prophet, must carefully consider the particular nature of that land, and the peculiar quality which God assigns to it, that it might be a certain earnest or pledge of that spiritual covenant which God entered into with the seed of Abraham. It is in full sacred point, therefore, that the apostle records that the free election of God fell upon Jacob, because, being yet unborn, he was appointed to enjoy the inheritance, while his brother was, at the same time, rejected. But Paul is proceeding much farther still in his sacred argument, and maintaining that this inheritance was not obtained by works, nor conferred on Jacob from any respect to works which he should in his after life perform. Nor is even this all. The apostle expressly declares that the brothers were thus separated, and this difference made between them, before either

of them had done any one thing good or evil. From these facts the apostle solemnly settles it, that the difference made between the children was not from any works whatever, but from the will of Him that called.

Here Pighius thrusts upon us that rancid distinction of his: that works performed were not indeed taken into the Divine consideration (for no works as yet existed), but that the election of God was ratified in the person of Jacob, because God foresaw what his faith and obedience would be. And he philosophises, in a most ingenious way, on the name Israel--that Jacob was so named from seeing God, that we may know that those are true Israelites (not who are blind from their own malice and wickedness, but blind only with respect to God), and who, when God presents Himself to be seen by them, open their eyes. But is it not a most ridiculous circumstance that, while this being is anxious to make others so clear-sighted, he should himself be blinder than a mole? An utterly different etymology is that which is given us by Moses! He says the name Israel was given to Jacob by the angel with whom he wrestled, and came off victorious. For ISRAEL signifies "having power with God," or "prevailing over God."

But whose eyes, I pray you, will this mortal be able so to pierce or tear out as to prevent them from seeing his absurdities? Why does Paul so particularly say that the children had done neither good nor evil? but that he might do away with all respect of merit in them? Why? but that he might positively affirm that God drew His reasons from no other source than from His own mind and will when He pronounced so different a judgment on the twin brothers? I well know how common a scape-way this supposed respect of merit, present or future, in the mind of God is. But I would first of all ask this question, If Esau and Jacob had been left to the course of their

common nature, what greater amount of good works would God have found in the latter than in the former? Most decidedly the hardness of a stony heart in both would have rejected salvation when offered. "But (says Pighius) a flexible heart was given to both of them, that they might be able to embrace the offered grace; but the one was willing to do what, by his free will, he could do; the other refused to do it." As if the apostle were testifying that the unwillingness and refusal of Esau were also given of God . And as if God did not promise to cause His Israel to walk in His commandments

According to the judgment of Pighius, however, John loudly denies that God gives us the "power to become the sons of God." Now this crazy fellow is, first of all, utterly out in taking "power" to mean faculty or ability, whereas it rather signifies a worthiness of, or right or title to, honour. But he betrays a more than gross stupidity when he passes over, as with his eyes shut, the cause of this "power," so clearly described by the Evangelist, who declares that those become the sons of God who receive Christ; and he asserts, directly afterwards, "that these are born, not of flesh, nor of blood, but of God." God, therefore, deems those worthy the honour of adoption who believe in His Son, but whom He had before begotten by His Spirit; that is, those whom He had formed for Himself to be His sons, those He at length openly declares to be such. For if faith makes us the sons of God, the next step of consideration is, Where does faith come from? Who gives us that? It is the fruit of the seed of the Spirit, by which God begets again to a newness of life.

In a word, most true is that which Augustine testifies: "That the redeemed are distinguished from the children of perdition by grace alone, which redeemed ones that common mass of original corruption would have gathered to the same perdition but for the free grace of God. Whence it follows, that the grace of God to be

preached is that by which He makes men His elect, not that by which He finds them such." And this the same holy father continually inculcates. To this it may be added, If God foresees anything in His elect, for which He separates them from the reprobate, it would have been quite senseless in the apostle to have argued that it was "not of works, but of Him that calleth," because God had said, "The elder shall serve the younger," when the children were not yet born. Wherefore, this vain attempt to solve the difficulty of God's eternal predestination by introducing the idea of His foreseeing works and merits in the future lives of the elect is openly insulting to the Apostle Paul and to his divine testimony. Paul concludes that no respect of works existed in God's election of His people, because He preferred Jacob to his brother before they were born, and before they had done "either good or evil." But these opponents of election, to make good their doctrine, that those were chosen of God whom some mark of goodness distinguished from the reprobate, would make it appear that God foresaw what disposition there would be in each person to receive or to reject offered grace. And suppose the apostle's expression, "not having done either good or evil," be received by these men; yet God, by their doctrine, will still be electing according to works, because His election will depend on future works foreseen by Him. But since the apostle takes that for a confessed fact, which is wholly disbelieved by these excellent theologians, that all men are alike unworthy, and the nature of all equally corrupt, he securely concludes that God elected those whom He did elect from His own goodwill and purpose: not because He foresaw they would be obedient children to Him. The apostle, moreover, is deeply considering what the nature of men would be without the election of God. But these men are dreaming of what good God foresaw in man, which good never could have existed unless He Himself had wrought it.

Although these things are in themselves abundantly clear, yet the context of the apostle leads us much deeper still into this holy matter. It thus proceeds: "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?" Now, either this supposed objection is introduced without any reason whatever, or else the doctrine of Paul gives no place for works foreseen. For what suspicion of injustice can possibly be conceived where God offers grace equally to all, and permits those who become worthy of it to enjoy it? In a word, when these objectors place the cause of election or reprobation in the works of men's coming lives, they seem to escape and to solve, quite to their own satisfaction, this very question which Paul supposes them to put in objection. Whence it is fully evident that the apostle was not instructed in this new wisdom. For, be it so, that the apostle introduces these men quarrelling with the justice of God quite out of place, and without any colour of reason. Let us mark the manner in which he repels the objection he supposes to be made "God forbid! For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy; and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion."

Nothing, that I see, will be more appropriate than my using here the words of Augustine in explanation of this passage: "It is marvellous (saith he) to observe into what gulphs our adversaries precipitate themselves to avoid the nets of truth, when they find themselves hemmed in by these mighty straits. They say that God hated the one of these children and loved the other, when not yet born, because He foresaw what the works of their future lives would be. What a wonder is it that this acute view of the mind of God in the mighty matter should quite escape the apostle. He saw no such thing, no such easy solution of the difficulty as the view of his adversaries intended. His answer implies that the matter was not so brief, so plain, so evidently true, so absolutely clear, as these opponents imagined. For when he had put forth so stupendous a matter for our meditation as this, how

it could be rightly said concerning two children not yet born, nor having done either good or evil, that God loved the one and hated the other; he briefly and solemnly adds, 'What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God?' Now here was the place to introduce the interpretation invented by our adversaries: Because 'God foresaw their future works.' The apostle, however, does nothing of the kind. On the contrary, that no one might dare to boast of the merits of his works, he commends the grace of God alone by the introduction of that all-conclusive word of God to Moses: 'For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.' Where are merits now? Where are works either past or future, either fulfilled or to be fulfilled, as by the power or strength of free-will? Does not the apostle openly declare his mind in commendation of free grace only?" Thus far have I considered the words of Augustine.

But suppose for a moment that the apostle had introduced no such argument as that concerning the two sons of Isaac. (And, indeed, if the solution is so plain and satisfactory, that God made the difference between the two children from a respect to their future works, why should the apostle have entangled himself deeper and asserted that the cause of the difference made rested in the will of God alone?) Yet God had, at the first, in His conversation with Moses, claimed to Himself the free right of exercising His mercy as, and towards whom, He pleased. And this He did, that no one might dare to prescribe a law for His actions. He then openly declared that He would take out of the whole multitude of the people whom He would, and would deliver them; and all were alike covenant-breakers. He did not say that His choice of them should depend on themselves; that if He should find any worthy of pardon He would be merciful to such. But He positively declared that He would be the Master, Lord and Arbiter, of His own mercy; that He would spare whom He would

spare, as being bound by no necessity to choose either one or another. And the apostle next infers that which of necessity follows from the above declaration of God to Moses: that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy." For if the salvation of men depends on the mercy of God alone, and if God saves none but those whom He chose by His own secret good pleasure, there can absolutely be nothing left for men to do, will, or determine, in the matter of salvation.

Now Pighius explains the solemn case thus: that salvation is not due to any endeavour of ours, nor to any works of ours! for this reason, because God freely calls us to that salvation. He amuses himself with his opinions quite securely, imagining that he can by one word of his easily do away with the whole doctrine of the apostle at once. Whereas Paul's conclusion is derived thus: because God elects those whom He saves by His own absolute good pleasure, and not from any difference of works in their lives from the works and lives of others; therefore, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy;" thus making the whole turn on the mercy of God alone. But Pighius thinks that he has made a clean escape when he talks about grace being extended to all, whereas it is due to no one. And when he says that those become partakers of grace whom the Lord finds well disposed and obedient to Him, he is forced at last to fall back on this acknowledgment, that both the "willing" and the "running" do indeed avail something; but that since they are not sufficient of themselves, the palm must, indeed, be given to the mercy of God.

All these absurdities the same Augustine refutes most admirably: "If (says he) Moses therefore says, 'It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy,' because it proceeds from both -- that is, both from the will of man and the

mercy of God -- this is the same as saying, The will of man alone is not sufficient, unless the mercy of God be added to it; nor is the mercy of God alone sufficient without the addition of the will of man. Moreover, if no Christian man dares say, It is not of God that showeth mercy, but of man that willeth, it evidently follows that we must understand that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, in order that the whole glory may be ascribed to God, who prepares the will of man, when made good, to be aided by Him, and who aids it when thus prepared. More absurd still, therefore, is the cunning device of certain ones, who spin out of these important questions a conclusion that there is a kind of concurrence, or half-way meeting, between the mercy of God and the endeavours of man. As if Paul meant that men can do very little by running unless assisted by the grace of God! Whereas, the apostle reduces all things else to nothing that he may give empty and whole place to the mercy of God. For whence is the beginning of all right running? Can anyone, of himself, go to meet God? Can he do it, until led and directed by the Holy Spirit?"

Here, again, let me adopt the language of Augustine. "There are daily drawn unto Christ (says he) those who were His enemies. 'No one can come unto Me (says Christ), except My Father draw him.' He does not say 'lead him,' as if the will of man, in some way, preceded; for who is drawn that is already willing to go? But he that is chosen of God is drawn in a wonderful way by Him, who knoweth how to work in the hearts of men. Not that they may be made to believe against their wills, or unwillingly, but that they may be made willing who before were unwilling. Hence we see that a man's eternal election of God is proved by this subsequent 'running'; yet so proved, that God's mercy alone (which lifts up those that are down, and brings back the wandering into the way; nay, which raises the dead



to life, and calleth things to be which are not) hath the pre-eminence."

We have next to consider the remaining members of the apostle's sentence concerning the reprobate. Of these Paul brings before us Pharaoh as the most signal instance. For God Himself thus speaks of him, by Moses: "And in very deed, for this cause have I raised thee up, for to show in thee My power." This passage: the apostle has faithfully rendered, giving, as it were. word for word, thus: "Even for this same purpose, have I raised thee up, that I might show My power in thee." The verb used is HIPHIL, derived from the root AMAD, which signifies "to stand." Pharaoh, therefore is declared to be put forth openly and prominently as one whom God might make a memorable example of His power. Now whence (or from what state or condition) did God receive Pharaoh, in order that He might place him in that position? Pighius would have it that God sustained him by His power for a time when deserving of death. Suppose I should permit him to take refuge under such a cover of escape; he is still entangled and held fast in the fact that God, leaving Pharaoh to his own will and inclination, destined him to destruction.

If Pighius be anxious here to dwell upon the longsuffering of God, I fully agree with him; this fact, nevertheless, remains fixed and unaltered, that the reprobate are set apart, in the purpose of God, for the very end, that in them God might show forth His power. And that the longsuffering of God is, in the present instance, far removed from the apostle's mind and argument is evidenced from his immediate inference, when he observes "Whom He will He hardeneth." He would not have added this unless, under the expression "raised thee up," he had meant to comprehend that purpose of God by which Pharaoh was ordained to magnify by his obstinacy the redemption of God's people Israel. For if anyone should say that Pharaoh's being

"raised up" signified his being raised from above to the summit of kingly honour, that indeed is some part, but not the whole, of the matter. For the LXX. Greek interpreters have here used the same expression as that by which they render the verb HIPHIL, derived from the radical KUM, "to arise." Moreover, God is said to "raise up" that which He causes by an outstretched arm, as it were to accomplish the end He has ordained. The Scripture here principally looks at the beginning, or first-cause, of that which it is recording, that it may ascribe the whole to God alone. In this same manner God is also said to "raise up" prophets and ministers of salvation, that no man might claim any of these things to himself on the ground of his own industry. Therefore, the meaning of Moses has been faithfully expressed by the term, "raised up," if you will but so receive it; nor did Paul receive it otherwise. And most certainly the expression "raised up" comprehends, not less distinctly than summarily, what he had touched upon both concerning the elect and the reprobate, since he is claiming for God the right and the power to have mercy on whom He will, and to harden whom He will, according to His own pleasure and purpose. The apostle therefore maintains that the right of hardening and of showing mercy is in the power of God alone, and that no law can be imposed on Him as a rule for His works, because no law or rule can be thought of better, greater, or more just, than His own will!

But as some formerly would have it that the apostle is here introducing the wicked railing against God, Pighius also flees to this refuge. And suppose this be granted to him, the knot is by no means untied then. For, in the first place, the apostle does not move a question about nothing. And, in the next place, his answer is such that he admits the objection of the adversaries to be true. And what does Pighius act by such shuffling as this? He only proves by such quibbles that his cause is a bad one. But who will be found to cede to

him what he asks, when he thus violently sunders, on the one hand, things thus immediately connected together, and, on the other, binds into one bundle things manifestly separate and distinct? After the apostle had shown that God had made a distinction between the elect and the reprobate by His incomprehensible will, he draws in the same context this inference: "For He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy; and whom He will He hardeneth." To which he immediately subjoins, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth He yet find fault?" When Paul thus makes the persons speaking evidently plain and distinct, who would not rather attend to Paul's own words than to any extraneous comments upon them? Augustine here also, as in many other instances, most wisely observes, "It signifies but little in whose person you receive that to be spoken, which the apostle, by his answer, implies to be true. If the objection had been false, it is not very likely that the apostle would have been silent had the cause of the adversaries been so good, so clear, and so plausible. For if it be false that God hardens whom He will, this knot, so insolvable by all human intellect, might have been settled by the apostle in one word."

Pighius, under this view of the matter, pretends that the apostle declined to give a plain and pointed answer, because he did not deem impudent persons worthy of being conversed with; that they might rather learn to think humbly, than proudly to require a reason for the works of God. Just as we elsewhere read (says he) that the Jews, who asked Christ by what authority He did His works, were repelled by a like question only. But the words of Paul himself stand directly against such a supposition, for he afterwards curbs the insolence of all those who indulge an audacious curiosity in scrutinizing the secrets of God. He maintains, however, while so doing, the fact that the reprobate are vessels of the wrath of God, in whom He shows His power.

Augustine, therefore, reasons far differently from Pighius, and much more accurately, where he argues: "When Paul had supposed the question to be put, 'Why doth He yet find fault?' does he reply, That which thou hast said, O man, is false? No such thing. His answer is, 'Who art thou, O man, that replieth against God?'" What Augustine says elsewhere is worthy of notice. "Paul (observes he) does not break off the discourse of the adversaries by a severe reproof when they are contending against God with profane petulance, as if the justice of God required a solemn defence, but he expresses himself in the way which he thought most expedient. Certain foolish persons consider that the apostle failed in his reply on this occasion, and that having no reason to give, he merely repressed the audacity of the opponents. But the apostle's words have inconceivable weight. 'Who art thou, O man?' In such questions as these the apostle throws a man back into the consideration of what he is, and what in the capacity of his mind. This is a mighty reason rendered, in a few words indeed, but in great reality. For who that understands not this appeal of the apostle can reply to God? And who that understands it can find anything to reply?"

Wherefore (says Augustine elsewhere), "If these arguments of Paul have any weight with us as men, let us also gravely listen to the apostle when he appeals to us, directly afterwards, in those striking words, 'Who art thou, O man?' etc. For although God did not create the sins of men, who but God did create the natures of men themselves? which are, in themselves, undoubtedly good, but from which there were destined to proceed evils and sins, according to the pleasure of His will, and, in many, such sins as would be visited with eternal punishment. If it be asked, Why did God create such natures? The reply is, Because He willed to create them. Why did He so will? 'Who art thou, O man, that repliest against God?' If vain reasoners have anything more to say, behold! a reason is here rendered to man!

A reason sufficient for him, and all that is due to him, if indeed he will receive even this, who is disposed to contend for the liberty of his own will, while he is himself under the bondage of his own infirmity. But if a depraved desire to quarrel with God still frets anyone, let such an one (saith Augustine) speak and hear as becometh man: 'Who art thou, O man?' But let him hear and not despise. And if anyone be a despiser, let him believe himself to be 'hardened of God,' that he may despise. If anyone despise not, let him believe that he is gifted and aided of God that he might not despise. But let the one believe that he is hardened according to his desert; the other, that he is helped according to grace." And what the desert of man is Augustine had before shown in these words, "Every sinner is inexcusable, either on account of his original sin and sinful nature, or else from the additional act of his own will, whether he knew that he was sinning, or knew it not; whether he had a judgment of what is right, or had it not. For ignorance itself, in those who will not understand, is undoubtedly sin; and in those who cannot understand ignorance is the punishment of sin."

But let the testimony of Augustine now aid us no farther. Ponder with me, readers, this momentous matter itself by itself. Paul comparing, as he here does, man with God, shows that the counsel of God, in electing and reprobating men, is without doubt more profound and more deeply concealed than the human mind can penetrate. Wherefore, man, consider (as the apostle adviseth thee) who and what thou art, and concede more to God than the measure and compass of thine own nature. But suppose we give place, for a moment, to the philosophizing of Pighius: that the condition of all men is equal, except in those who deprive themselves of eternal life, who, nevertheless, were elected even as others. What would there be here obscure or difficult of solution? What would there be that common sense could not receive? What that natural judgment could

not make clear? But when you hear of a mystery surpassing all human understanding, you may at once conclude that all solutions of men, derived from common natural judgment and which might avail in a profane court of justice, are frivolous and vain. Here, however, Pighius attempts to meet us with the remark that those are never repulsed of God, nor sent away in doubt, who humbly keep their minds in subjection; that, therefore, those who thus contend against God are the refractory and haughty only; and that such contention is found in none others. To this assertion I will assent without difficulty, on condition that Pighius confess, on his part, that the apostle condemns of impious pride all who measure the justice of God by their own comprehension. But that God may obtain the praise of His justice, He must, according to the judgment of Pighius, render a plain reason for everything He does. Whereas, our rule of modesty ought to be, that where God's reason for His works lies hidden, we should nevertheless believe Him to be just.

Now the son of Sirach is not ashamed to extol God with the praise that, as a potter, He separates and distinguishes vessels according to His will; and that men are also as clay in the hands of God who forms them and who renders to them accordingly as He has decreed. For, in this passage, if you compare it with what has preceded, cannot signify anything else than the good pleasure of the workman, or potter. Nor do we want to seek an interpreter beyond the apostle himself, who, under the same figure, openly rebukes the audacity of all who require of God a reason for His works. "Shall the clay (demands the apostle) say unto the potter, Why hast thou made me thus?" He therefore, will truly confine himself to the moderation of the apostle, who, holding the will of God, though hidden, to be the highest justice, gives to Him the free power of destroying or saving whom He will. How much soever therefore Pighius may twist himself in twisting the words of the apostle, he cannot make this similitude

apply otherwise, in the present instance, than the apostle had applied it, who introduces it to show that God fashions and forms by His own right all men to whatever destiny He pleases and wills.

If this, at first appearance, should seem to anyone out of the way or unintelligible, let him hear a farther admonition of the admirable Augustine: "If (says he) beasts could speak, and should quarrel with their Maker because He had not made them men like us, there is not one of us who would not, in a moment, fly into a rage with them. What, then, do we think of ourselves? Who or what are we that we should contend with God for having made each of us what we are? That man is most certainly mad who will not ascribe to God a far greater and higher excellency than that which he and the human race possess above the beasts of the earth. What remains, then, but that the sheep of God's flock quietly and peacefully submit themselves unto Him?" This would be far more becoming than, after the example of Pighius, to make men the potters instead of God, and to leave each one to shape out his destiny by his own virtue.

But Pighius says, "What is here obscure is elsewhere made plain. As the furnace proves the vessels of the potter, so does temptation prove the just." This is true. But from this he concludes that, therefore, if a just man shall be constant in faith and piety, he will be a vessel unto honour; but if he fail, through want of courage and constancy, he will be a vessel unto dishonour. And since, according to his account, each one by his own will, assisted by Divine grace (which is common, he says, to all men, and prepared for all men), at length perseveres, he concludes that we are made vessels unto honour by our invincible fortitude. Now, I will not stop to observe how absurdly Pighius here confounds together two entirely different things--the forming of the vessel, and the proving of the vessel when formed--I would merely remark that God's proving His own people by various trials and

temptations does not at all alter, or interfere with, His predestination of them by His eternal will and counsel before they were born. Nor does it alter His forming them, from all eternity, such as He willed them to be afterwards in time. Nor does that passage of Paul in any way support these views of Pighius, where the apostle says, "If a man, therefore, shall purify himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour." Paul is not here strewing in what way men, extricated and cleansed from their filth, are made vessels unto honour; but how the faithful, who are already chosen and called, become adapted for the pure uses of God. And now, observe what an exact harmony there is between the mind of Pighius and the mind of the apostle! Pighius' words are: "What is here obscure in the apostle, he elsewhere renders quite plain--why and how it is that God makes some vessels to honour and not others. Thus, in order that Jacob might be a vessel of mercy, his soul had purified itself, on which account he was deservedly made a vessel unto honour; and it was thus that God, having a respect unto this self-purification, which He foreknew, loved and chose the patriarch before he was born."

So Pighius. Now hear Paul. He, on the contrary, when exhorting the faithful thus to purify themselves, in order to lay a "foundation" for this doctrine, prefaces it by saying, "The Lord knoweth them that are His." In the same way he elsewhere exhorts the people of God to holiness, by arguing: "For we are His workmanship, created unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Paul, therefore, who, with all soberness of mind, glories in being a wise master-builder, lays the foundation of all salvation in the free grace of God alone. Pighius, on the contrary, begins his building from the earth's plain surface, without any foundation at all. And, in the same way, when handling that passage of Jeremiah, (chap. xix. 11), he consumes a multitude of words to no purpose whatever. The prophet is not, in that passage, describing the origin of



our formation, but he is asserting and maintaining God's rightful power in breaking to pieces and destroying vessels already formed and finished. The mind and intent of the apostle, therefore, in his use of this similitude, are to be carefully observed and held fast--that God, the Maker of men, forms out of the same lump in His hands one vessel or man, to honour, and another to dishonour, according to His sovereign and absolute will. For He freely chooses some to life who are not yet born, leaving others to their own destruction, which destruction all men by nature equally deserve. And when Pighius holds that God's election of grace has no reference to, or connection with, His hatred of the reprobate, I maintain that reference and connection to be a truth. Inasmuch as the just severity of God answers, in equal and common cause, to that free love with which He embraces His elect.

The apostle then arrives at this conclusion "What if God, willing to shew His wrath and to make His power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory?" This forms no ground or reason (means the apostle) that anyone should question God, or contend with Him. Pighius here (as those like him are wont to do) seizes upon the word longsuffering. Nay, he dwells on that word with a lofty boast bordering on ferocity, as if God hardened not the elect otherwise than by parental indulgence, as it were. "God (says he) makes men vessels unto dishonour in no other way than by kindly enduring them while they are abusing His longsuffering, and treasuring up for themselves wrath against a day of wrath." What, then, becomes of the difference which God made between the two brothers before they were born? If we are to believe Pighius, this difference was made because God foresaw what the hardness of Esau's heart would be. How is it, then, that the election of grace is so

distinctly manifest in the case of Jacob, when Esau stood in the same grade and position with Jacob until he excluded himself from the number of the children and family of Isaac? But this shifting and shuffling of Pighius is so utterly refuted by one very short sentence of the apostle Paul, that it is quite needless to go any farther to fetch arguments for refutation. In what sense the Hebrews use the terms "vessels" and "instruments" everyone knows who has the least acquaintance with the Scripture. Wherever we hear of "instruments," we shall also find God concerned as the Author and Overruler of the whole that is done, while. His hand directs the whole. And why are men called "vessels" of wrath? but because God shews towards such His righteous severity which He abstains from shewing towards others? And why are they made "vessels of wrath?" Paul tells us: That God might, in them, "shew forth His wrath and make His power known." The apostle says that they were "fitted to destruction." When? and how? but from their first origin and primitive nature. For the nature of the whole human race was corrupted in the person of Adam. Not that the still higher and deeper purpose of God did not precede the whole. But it was from this fountain that the curse of God commenced its operation. From this source began, in effect, the destruction of the human race. Correspondently, the apostle testifies that God had "afore prepared" the "vessels of mercy" unto glory.

Now if this being "afore prepared unto glory" is peculiar and special to the elect, it evidently follows that the rest, the non-elect, were equally "fitted to destruction," because, being left to their own nature, they were thereby devoted already to certain destruction. That they were "fitted to destruction" by their own wickedness is an idea so silly that it needs no notice. It is indeed true that the reprobate procure to themselves the wrath of God, and that they daily hasten on the falling of its weight upon their own heads. But it must be confessed by all that the apostle is here treating of that

difference made between the elect and the reprobate, which proceeds from the alone secret will and purpose of God. Paul says also, that the "riches" of God's "grace" are made known on the "vessels of mercy"; while, on the contrary, the "vessels of wrath" rush on to destruction. Most certainly nothing is here heard of Pighius' absurd prating--that grace is the same towards all, but that the goodness of God is the more brightly illustrated by His enduring the vessels of wrath while He suffers them to come to their own end. But with respect to God's longsuffering, the solution of its operation is perfectly plain. It is immediately connected with His power. God does not only permit a thing to be done, or to continue, by His longsuffering, but He rules and overrules what is done by His almighty power.

Nor on any other grounds than these can that inviolable engagement of God stand, where He says, "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God; merciful to a thousand generations, but a severe avenger unto the third and fourth generation." This compact, I say, cannot stand, unless the Lord by His own will decree to whom He will show the mercy, and whom He will suffer to remain devoted to eternal death. He extends His grace (He declares) even unto a thousand generations. Now I would ask, Does God regard the children of the godly according to their own merits when He continues the grace that was shown to their fathers themselves, upon no other grounds than because He had promised that He would do so? To Abraham, who had deserved no such favour, God freely binds Himself in faithfulness that He (God), for the patriarch's sake, will be a God to his posterity. Hence that solemn appeal to God after the patriarch's death: "Remember, Lord, Thy servant Abraham" (Deut. ix. 27). Here most certainly is made a choice of men, and a distinction between them; and that, not according to the merits of each, but according to the covenant made with their fathers. Not that all the posterity of

Abraham, which descends from him according to the flesh, possess this privilege; but the faith and salvation of all those only who out of the seed of Abraham are chosen unto eternal life ought to be referred to this promise.

Exactly the same is the nature of that vengeance which God takes even upon the third and fourth generation. As to what some allege, that all who sin are punished from age to age, each one in his day and order, that is a more than frivolous subterfuge. In this manner the Pelagians of old, finding that they could not disentangle themselves from the nets of those testimonies of Scripture which make it evident that all men sinned in Adam, fell a cavilling at the truth, and hatched the doctrine that all the posterity of Adam sinned by imitation of him, not through a total corruption of nature derived from him. And as godly teachers then attacked them, truly maintaining that all were actually condemned on account of the sin and guilt of Adam, from which, sin and guilt the grace of Christ alone frees them; so, in the present case, that the antithesis and parallels may agree with, and respond to, each other, it of necessity follows that God avenges in the persons of the children the sins which He condemned in their fathers. Nor can many other passages of the Scripture be otherwise explained, where God declares that He "recompenses the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them." In vain do the opponents bring against us that passage of Ezekiel, "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father: the soul that sinneth, it shall die;" because it forms one particular part of God's vengeance on sin, when He leaves men void and destitute of His Spirit. For being thus left destitute, each one bears the consequences of his own sin. Wherefore, the children are said to bear the sins of their forefathers, and not "undeservedly" (as the profane poet would intimate), because they are guilty on the very ground that, being (as the apostle says) the children of wrath, being thus left to their own natural will

and inclination and being from their origin the heirs of eternal death, they can do nothing but augment, in a perpetual and uninterrupted course, their own destruction.

We may here most opportunely explain that passage of Isaiah, which the Holy Ghost has been pleased to repeat with a particular application six times over in the New Testament. The Prophet Isaiah is sent forth with a commission of prodigious awfulness, as it at first appears: "Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed." The prophet being here represented as the minister of blindness arises confessedly from the nature of the office he had to execute and from the effects by which, it was certain, it would be followed. Our great question lies in the cause of that blindness. It will be also confessed to be a deserved punishment, inflicted on that ungrateful and rebellious people, that light to them should become darkness. And there had, moreover, preceded in them a malicious and obstinate unbelief, which fully deserved to be visited with such a recompense. But as the prophet testifies that there was a certain select number on whom salvation shone from the preaching of the Word of God, the question to be solved is, Did those favoured ones escape the horrible judgment which lay upon the rest by any virtue of their own, or were they held safe and secure in the hand of God?

And a weightier question still presses itself upon us: How it came to pass that, out of that great multitude, some repented, while the disease of others remained incurable?

If anyone should weigh this in the balance of human judgment, he would decide that the cause of the difference was in the men themselves. But God will not suffer us to stop here. He declares that all those who do not follow the stream of the common ruin are saved by His grace. Whether or not repentance is His own work ought not to be brought into controversy. So evidently true is that which Augustine says: "Those whom the Lord wills to be converted, He converts Himself; who not only makes willing ones out of them who were unwilling, but makes also sheep out of wolves and martyrs out of persecutors, transforming them by His all-powerful grace." If the wickedness of man be still urged as the cause of the difference between the elect and the non-elect, this wickedness might indeed be made to appear more powerful than that grace of God which He shows towards His elect, if that solemn truth did not stand in the way of such an argument: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." But Paul's interpretation of the passage of Isaiah before us leaves no doubt whatever remaining. For after he had said that the election of God was determined and fixed, he adds, "But the rest were blinded, that that might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet," etc.

I grant that this blindness in the Jews was voluntary, and I freely acknowledge their sin therein. But I perceive who they are whom Paul excepts from this blindness; they are those whom it pleased God to choose out of the rest. But why did He choose some rather than others? Let no one be offended, then, that He still chooses, from time to time, some and not others; and let us, like Paul, except these chosen ones from the general mass of those who are blinded. Nor let us ask the reason why God makes the difference. For, as Paul says, it is not becoming man to contend with God. The same apostle, when speaking elsewhere to the Jews, from whose virulent malice he had so severely suffered, says: "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say,

Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive" (Acts xxviii. 25, 26). He charges their sin home upon them, accordingly as they fully deserved. Some persons will here erroneously and ignorantly conclude that the cause and beginning of this obduracy in the Jews was their malicious wickedness. Just as if there were no deeper and more occult cause of the wickedness itself, namely, the original corruption of nature! And as if they did not remain sunk in this corruption because, being reprobated by the secret counsel of God before they were born, they were left undelivered .

Now let us listen to the Evangelist John. He will be no ambiguous interpreter of this same passage of the prophet Isaiah. "But though (says John) Jesus had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him, that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart," etc. Now, most certainly John does not here give us to understand that the Jews were prevented from believing by their sinfulness. For though this be quite true in one sense. yet the cause of their not believing must be traced to a far higher source. The secret and eternal purpose and counsel of God must be viewed as the original cause of their blindness and unbelief. It perplexed, in no small degree, the ignorant and the weak, when they heard that there was no place for Christ among the people of God (for the Jews were such). John explains the reason by showing that none believe save those to whom it is given, and that there are few to whom God reveals His arm. This other prophecy concerning "the arm of the Lord," the Evangelist weaves into his argument to prove the same great truth. And his words have a momentous weight. He says, "Therefore, they could not believe." Wherefore, let men

torture themselves as long as they will with reasoning, the cause of the difference made--why God does not reveal His arm equally to all--lies hidden in His own eternal decree. The whole of the Evangelist's argument amounts evidently to this: that faith is a special gift, and that the wisdom of Christ is too high and too deep to come within the compass of man's understanding. The unbelief of the world, therefore, ought not to astonish us, if even the wisest and most acute of men fail to believe. Hence, unless we would elude the plain and confessed meaning of the Evangelist, that few receive the Gospel, we must fully conclude that the cause is the will of God; and that the outward sound of that Gospel strikes the ear in vain until God is pleased to touch by it the heart within.

A different occasion for citing this passage of Isaiah presents itself to the other three evangelists while they are each recording the life and ministry of our Lord. In Matthew, our Saviour separates and distinguishes His disciples from the common mass of men. He declares that it was given to them (His disciples) to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but that He spoke to others in parables, that hearing, they might hear and not understand, that the saying of Isaiah might be fulfilled. Now I am willing to confess that those to whom Christ spoke parabolically were unworthy, in themselves, of greater light. But, on the other hand, I would wish to ask, what greater merit, in themselves, had the apostles to be freely admitted into familiarity with Christ? into which familiarity Christ did freely admit them. Here the antithesis is clearly established, that grace was freely conferred on few, when it might have been with justice denied equally to all. For shall we say that the apostles procured for themselves, by their own merits, that which the Lord declares was freely "given" to them? Nor are we to pass by without particular remark that the Saviour terms the things which He taught them "mysteries." And most certainly there is nothing in the whole



circle of spiritual doctrine which does not far surpass the capacity of man and confound its utmost reach. No explanation by words, therefore, however lucid, will suffice to make the mysteries of the kingdom of God understood, unless the Holy Spirit, at the same time, teach within. But Christ would have His disciples to magnify it, as a precious pledge of the favour of God toward them, that He honoured them above the common mass of men in blessing them with the external means of teaching. Though He was, all the while, gradually leading them to that high and singular privilege which distinguishes "friends" from "servants," as John hath it (John xv. 15): "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you." These friends are thus taught from above to the very end, that they might understand those things which are beyond all natural comprehension. Hence it was that Christ, on such occasions as these, so frequently uttered that loud appeal, "He that hath ears to hear let him hear." By which expression Christ not only distinguished attentive from inattentive hearers, but He implied also that all are deaf save those whose ears God is pleased to bore that they may hear, which divine blessing David magnifies in the name of the whole Church of God (Psalm xl. 6): "Sacrifice and offering Thou didst not desire; mine ears hast Thou opened."

But I will proceed no farther with discussing the several portions of God's Word relative to this divine and deep matter. Let this summary suffice: if we admit the same Spirit of God, who spoke by the apostles, to be an interpreter of the prophet Isaiah, we must also acknowledge that that secret and incomprehensible judgment of God which blinds the greater part of mankind. "that seeing, they may see and not perceive," etc., is to be adored while it does so. Here let human reasonings of every kind that can possibly present themselves

to our minds cease for ever. For if we confine our reflections to men, apart from the grace and eternal purpose of God, the first thing that will strike us is that God gives freely to those that ask Him, and that others sink and die under their need, for which they do not seek a remedy. But if we have not in our mind and understanding that which Augustine saith, "That the nature of the Divine goodness is not only to open to those that knock, but also to cause them to knock and ask;" unless, I say, we understand this, we shall never know the real need under which we labour.

If we come to the help, universal experience proves that all do not comprehend that power of the Holy Spirit, by which everything is done that ought to be done. Let no one deceive himself by vain self-flattery. Those who come to Christ were before sons of God in His divine heart, while they were, in themselves, His enemies. And because they were pre-ordained unto eternal life, they were therefore given unto Christ. Hence the faithful admonition of Augustine: "Let those who thus come to Christ remember that they are 'vessels' of grace, not of merit. For grace is to them all merit! Nor let us delight in any other knowledge than that which begins and ends in admiration! Let those deride us who will, if God but give His nod of assent from heaven to our stupidity (as men think), and if angels do but applaud it!"

We will now, in a summary way, collect those OBJECTIONS of Pighius, which seem to carry with them any kind of colour, that our readers may understand that the weapons with which our antagonist fights are quite as bad as the cause which he alleges for kindling the flame of so mighty a contest. He asserts that the whole question turns on this, to what end man was created. And, in the first place, he holds it as a great absurdity to suppose that God expected any return

from the creation of man, since, being content in Himself alone, He could want no one else, nor anything else.

I also confess that God has no need of any external aid, prop, or addition; but I deny the justness of the conclusion that, therefore, He had no respect or consideration of Himself when He created man for His own glory. For what meaneth that word of Solomon, "The Lord hath made all things for Himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil"? (Prov. xvi. 4.) Wherefore we evince no absurdity when we say that God, though needing nothing to be added to Himself, yet created the race of men for His own glory. And this ought to be considered, and most deservedly so, the great and essential end of man's creation. The sophism of Pighius, therefore, is the more ridiculous when he reasons that God could have no respect of Himself in the creation of man because He is, in Himself, infinitely perfect. It is quite curious to observe how our opponent wriggles himself out of the net in which the above word of Solomon entangles him. "God (he says) did indeed make all things for Himself; not, however, with any reference to His own glory, but because of the infiniteness of His goodness." And that this absurd interpretation may not want abundance of weight, he asserts that no commentators agree with me, except a few detestable heretics (as he terms them). Now why should I waste time on the refutation of such futile absurdities as these? The Hebrew word LAMAAUIHU, which Solomon uses, has the same meaning as our expression, "for His own sake." One person, inflated with his half-Latin gabble, is anxious to explain to us the meaning of the adverb propter; whereas, if he had but one spark of a sound mind, the context itself would clearly demonstrate to him that "the wicked were made for the day of evil" only because it was God's will to shew forth in them His glory; just as, elsewhere, God declares that He raised up Pharaoh for the very cause that, in him, He might show forth His power and name to all the nations of the earth.

To give some colour to his absurd error Pighius introduces the testimony of Moses, where he appeals to the Jews in those words, "And now, O Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to love Him, and to worship Him?" What one of my readers is so senseless as not to see at once that we have here a man, destitute of a sound mind, blattering without the least modesty? I am sure there is not such a reader of these pages. What! does God desire to be worshipped by us more for our sakes than for His own? Is His regard for His own glory so buried out of His sight that He regards us alone? What, then, is to become of all those testimonies of the Scripture which make the glory of God to be the highest object and ultimate end of man's salvation? Wherefore, let us hold fast this glorious truth--that the mind of God, in our salvation was such as not to forget Himself, but to set His own glory in the first and highest place; and that He made the whole world for the very end that it might be a stupendous theatre whereon to manifest His own glory. Not that He was not content in Himself, nor that He had any need to borrow addition from any other sources; but it was His good pleasure so highly to honour His creatures, as to impress on them the bright marks of His great glory.

After commencing with so much success (!), Pighius subjoins another end which God had in the creation of man. Having a respect (he says) to the nature of His own goodness, God wished to create a rational creature, capable of receiving that goodness which (he adds) could not be done without His bestowing on that creature freedom of will. This being admitted, he considers all my teaching to fall to the ground at once, when I maintain that God decreed a difference between the elect and the reprobate. Because man (he argues), being thus made by his free will the arbiter of his future state, had either event, the good or the evil (to be saved or to be lost), in his own hand.

Now, in the first place, readers are here to be admonished and exhorted ever to hold God, their Maker and Creator, in that highest of all honour which is due to Him, and never to exercise an insolent or forward eye when considering His purpose in the creation of the human race, but to view Him with reverence and soberness, and with the pure eye of faith. I know full well that no mention whatever can be made of God's eternal predestination, but, in a moment, numberless unholy and absurd thoughts rush into the mind. Hence it is that many over-modest persons are found, who wish that the glorious doctrine of predestination were never named at all, lest occasion should thereby be given to wanton minds to exalt themselves against God. I, however, passing by all such over-careful speculations and leaving them to others, consider it unjustifiable in a Christian man thus cautiously to keep back the genuine confession of the truth, lest it should be exposed to the grin of the profane. For in the first place there is nothing more precious to God than His truth. In the next place, He will not have His justice to be protected by our dissimulation. And finally, it needs no such protection. On these points, however, we shall dwell more fully hereafter. I will now briefly reply to Pighius on the point more particularly in question.

Pighius contends that men were so immediately created unto salvation that no counsel of God concerning the contrary event, namely, his destruction, preceded his creation. As if the Lord did not foresee before man was created what his future condition would be! And as if He did not afore determine what it was His will should be done! Man, that he might be the image of God, was adorned from the first with the light of reason and with rectitude of nature. Therefore (as our opponent would reason), God being (to speak reverently) blind, foresaw not all events, but waited in doubt and suspense for the issue of those events! Such is Pighius' theological reasoning! Such are the antecedents and consequents of his logic! Hence he boldly

concludes, from his view of the end of man's creation, that God so disposed the creation of all men that they should all, at their creation, be made (without distinction, difference, or discrimination) partakers of His goodness and blessedness. But godly minds can by no means whatever be brought to reconcile God's election and reprobation of men thus. They cannot harmonise by such carnal reasoning the voluntary sin of man and the eternal purpose of God. They cannot see, with these human eyes, how it was that man should be placed in that condition when first created, that he himself, falling by his own will, should be the cause of his own destruction; and yet that it was so ordained by the secret and eternal purpose of God that this voluntary destruction to the human race, and to all the posterity of Adam, should be a cause for the saints humbling themselves before God, and worshipping His eternal purpose in the whole. For, although it pleased God thus to ordain the whole, yet man did not the less willingly, on his part, hurl himself into this headlong ruin, who, nevertheless, had been endued with an upright nature, and had been made in the image of God. But I would repeat my being perfectly aware how much absurdity and irreconcilable contradiction these deep things seem to profane persons to carry with them. Nevertheless, let one conscience suffice us in the place of a thousand such witnesses. To which conscience, if we duly listen, we shall be ashamed not to confess that man perished justly, seeing that he chose rather to follow Satan than God!

But let us now hear Pighius' PROOFS of his above views, arguments and conclusions. In these he labours to shew that salvation was ordained for all men without distinction or difference. "If it were not so (he says), the Holy Spirit speaks falsely when He declares that God is the Father of all men" (Mal. ii. 10). The prophet is there treating of marriage, the faith of which many husbands, at that time, violated. Malachi is reminding such violators that God is the avenger of

conjugal infidelity. Let our readers hence gather how much religion and conscience Pighius has in dealing with the holy Scripture! He then adds, from the Psalm, "The Lord is good to all" (cxlv. 9), from which he concludes that, therefore, all were ordained unto eternal life. Now, if this be true, the kingdom of heaven is open for dogs and asses! For the Psalmist is not magnifying that goodness of God only which He shews to man, but that also which He extends to all His works. But why should not Pighius thus fight for his brethren?

Then follows a third proof, that, according to Paul, "There is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile" (Rom. x. 12). Now all this I receive most fully, provided there be but added what the same apostle teaches, that the Gentiles were called to a participation of the Gospel because they were ordained thereto by the eternal counsel of God (Rom. xvi. 26).

He cites also that passage in Ecclesiasticus, "God hateth nothing that He hath made." As if we had not always maintained that God hateth nothing in us that is His own, save that fallen nature only, which may be justly called a deformity of the first creation. The great question of reprobation, however, by no means turns on this hinge, whether or not God hateth anything that He hath made. For although long before the Fall of Adam God had, for secret reasons of His own, decreed what He would do, yet we read in the Scripture that nothing was, or is, condemned by Him but sin.

There flows from these premises, therefore, the plain and solid conclusion that God had just causes for reprobating a part of mankind--causes, however, hidden from us--but that He hates and condemns nothing in man, except that which is contrary to His justice. The next Scripture which he tacks on to his argument is that of Paul, who declares (he says) that God "included all under sin, that

He might have mercy upon all" (Rom. xi. 32). As if Paul in this passage were disputing about the number of men! Whereas he is abstractedly lauding the grace of God towards all of us who attain unto salvation. Most certainly nothing was less in the mind of the apostle than an extension of the mercy of God to all men. His sole object was to prostrate all glorying of the flesh, that we may clearly understand that no man will ever be saved but he whom God saves by grace alone. Behold, then, with what glorious arguments our opponent demonstrates that none are chosen unto salvation from above in preference to others! And yet this ape of Euclid puffs himself off in the titles of all his chapters as a first-rate reasoner.

The third end of man's creation which is so clearly and powerfully expressed by Solomon, "The Lord hath made all things for Himself, even the wicked for the day of evil" (Prov. xvi. 4), Pighius attacks in this way. With reference to God's condemnation of the reprobate and His punishment of sin, he argues, "If we say that God in His eternal decrees had any respect to what would happen to each person after his creation, we must necessarily confess that the discrimination between the elect and the reprobate was, in the Divine mind, antecedent to the Fall of man. Whence it will follow that the reprobate are not condemned because they were ruined in Adam, but because they were already devoted to destruction even before the Fall of Adam." To this witless argument I reply, What wonder is it that Pighius should thus (to use his own expression) indiscriminately confound all things in reference to the deep judgments of God, when he knows not how to make the least distinction between remote and proximate CAUSES! After men have looked this way and that way, they can never, by so doing, fix upon the cause of their destruction, nor upon the fault that produced it. And why? because the proximate fault rests with themselves. And should they complain that the wound is inflicted on them from some other quarter, the internal



sense of their mind will bind them fast to the conclusion that the evil arose from the voluntary defections and fall of the first man. I know full well that the insolence of the carnal mind cannot be prevented from immediately bawling, "If God foreknew the Fall of Adam, and yet was unwilling to apply a remedy, we are rather perishing in our innocence by His bare external decree than suffering the just punishment of our sin." And suppose we grant that nothing was in this way foreseen of God, or thus viewed by Him, the old complaint concerning original sin will still be made, and as loud as ever: "Why was not Adam left to sin for himself as a private individual, so as to bear the consequences alone? Why was he made to involve us, who deserved no such calamity, in a participation of the same ruin? Nay, under what colour of justice does God visit on us the punishment of another's fault?" But, after all has been said that can be said on the subject, the internal feeling of every man's heart continues to urge its conviction, nor will it suffer any child of Adam to absolve himself (even himself being his own judge) from the sin, the guilt, or the punishment consequent on the original transgression of Adam! Nor can anyone, in truth, raise a controversy on the matter. For as on account of the sin of one man a deadly wound was inflicted on all men, all men at once acknowledge the judgment of God thereon to be righteous!

If, then, nothing can prevent a man from acknowledging that the first origin of his ruin was from Adam, and if each man finds the proximate cause of his ruin in himself, what can prevent our faith from acknowledging afar off, with all sobriety, and adoring, with all humility, that remote secret counsel of God by which the Fall of man was thus pre-ordained? And what should prevent the same faith from beholding, at the same time, the proximate cause within; that the whole human race is individually bound by the guilt and desert of eternal death, as derived from the person of Adam; and that all are in

themselves, therefore, subject to death, and to death eternal? Pighius, therefore, has not sundered, shaken, or altered (as he thought he had done) that pre-eminent and most beautiful symmetry, with which these proximate and remote causes divinely harmonise!

Now, our readers must bear in mind that both of the following propositions are equally condemned by Pighius. He denies either that God from the beginning, before man had yet fallen, decreed what should take place after his Fall, or (in other words) that He chooses out of the fallen mass those whom He willed so to choose. He laughs at Augustine and all like him; that is, at all the godly who imagine (as he terms it) that, after God foreknew the universal ruin of the human race in the person of Adam, He ordained some to eternal life and others to eternal destruction. For since he takes it as an acknowledged fact that the counsel of God concerning the creation of all men to salvation was antecedent to the Fall of Adam, he maintains without a doubt that that purpose of God still remains fixed and unaltered. Otherwise (argues he) God would not be consistent with Himself, and His immutable purpose would be subverted by the sin of man. He severely attacks that appearance of direct contradiction (as they term it) in our doctrine. He maintains that since God (as we teach) decreed, before Adam was created, what should happen to himself and to his posterity, the destruction of the reprobate ought not to be imputed to sin now, after the Fall, committed, because, he says, it would be absurd to make the effect antecedent to its cause. Now I maintain that both these propositions which Pighius combats are true. And, as to his holding before our eyes a pretended disagreement between the two sentiments, there is no such discordance at all.

What we maintain is this. that man was so created, and placed in such a condition, that he could have no cause whatever of complaint against his Maker. God foresaw the Fall of Adam, and most certainly His suffering him to fall was not contrary to, but according to, His divine will. What room is there for quibbling or shuffling here? And what does such quibbling profit or effect? Yet Pighius denies the truth of this position, because (he argues) the before conceived counsel of God concerning the salvation of all men still stands unaltered. As if no solution of his pretended difficulty could be found. The truth of the matter is, that salvation was not offered to all men on any other ground than on the condition of their remaining in their original innocence. For, that the decree of God concerning the salvation of all men was decisive and absolute, no one of a sound mind will hold or concede. For when man was placed in a way of salvation, his having willingly fallen therefrom was a sufficient ground for his just condemnation. But it could not be otherwise. Adam could not but fall, according to the foreknowledge and will of God. What then? Is Adam on that account freed from fault? Certainly not. He fell by his own full free will, and by his own willing act.

Now, if Augustine had said that it was once (or on one occasion) purposed of God to save all men, the wily argument of Pighius might have some weight in refutation of such an opinion. But when he declares his mind to be that Adam was so constituted, at his first creation, that his proximate, or his own, rejection of life was well known to God; nay, that his rejection of it was, as it were, already included in the secret counsel of God; Augustine truly and justly concludes from such grounds that the reprobate are so involved and bound up in the universal original guilt that, being left thus in death, they righteously suffer that judgment of God. The same I also hold. And I maintain that, as all men are lost in Adam, those who perish, perish by the just judgment of God; and yet I, at the same time,

witness as my solemn confession that whatever happened to, or befel, Adam was so ordained of God.

And now, as I proceed, it will be my object, not so much to consider what Pighius says, nor in what order he says it, as to take care that this worthless fellow be prostrated and buried under the ruins of his own desperate impudence. And my great concern shall be to satisfy godly consciences, which we very frequently find to be disturbed by such fellows by reason of their simplicity and inexperience. To accomplish these ends I will select, out of the flowing stream of our opponent's interminable loquacity, those parts of it which appear to be the most taking and prominent, or the most specious and plausible, that all may witness how much such a fellow can "say, without saying anything"! One reason (he says) why he cannot believe in particular and special election is because Christ, the Redeemer of the whole world, commanded the Gospel to be preached to all men, promiscuously, generally, and without distinction. But the Gospel is an embassy of peace, by which the world is reconciled to God, as Paul teaches. And, according to the same holy witness, it is preached that those who hear it might be saved. To this pretended difficulty of Pighius, therefore, I would briefly reply that Christ was so ordained the Saviour of the whole world, as that He might save those that were given unto Him by the Father out of the whole world, that He might be the eternal life of them of whom He is the Head; that He might receive into a participation of all the "blessings in Him" all those whom God adopted to Himself by His own unmerited good pleasure to be His heirs. Now which one of these solemn things can our opponent deny?

Hence, the Apostle Paul declares this prophecy of Isaiah to be fulfilled in Christ: "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given Me," etc. Accordingly, Christ Himself declares aloud, "All that

the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out" (John vi. 37). And again, "Those that Thou gavest Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition" (John xvii. 12). Hence we read everywhere that Christ diffuses life into none but the members of His own body. And he that will not confess that it is a special gift and a special mercy to be engrafted into the body of Christ, has never read with spiritual attention Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians. Hereupon follows also a third important fact, that the virtue and benefits of Christ are extended unto, and belong to, none but the children of God. Now, that the universality of the grace of Christ cannot be better judged of than from the nature of the preaching of the Gospel there is no one who will not immediately grant. Yet, on this hinge the whole question turns. If we see and acknowledge, therefore, the principle on which the doctrine of the Gospel offers salvation to all, the whole sacred matter is settled at once. That the Gospel is, in its nature, able to save all I by no means deny. But the great question lies here: Did the Lord by His eternal counsel ordain salvation for all men? It is quite manifest that all men, without difference or distinction, are outwardly called or invited to repentance and faith. It is equally evident that the same Mediator is set forth before all, as He who alone can reconcile them to the Father. But it is as fully well known that none of these things can be understood or perceived but by faith, in fulfilment of the apostle Paul's declaration that "the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth;" then what can it be to others but the "savour of death unto death?" as the same apostle elsewhere powerfully expresses himself.

And farther, as it is undeniably manifest that out of the multitudes whom God calls by His outward voice in the Gospel very few believe, if I prove that the greater part of these multitudes remain unbelieving (for God deems none worthy His illumination but whom

He will), I obtain thereby the next conclusion, that the mercy of God is offered equally to those who believe and to those who believe not, so that those who are not divinely taught within are only rendered inexcusable, not saved. Some make a distinction here, holding that the Gospel is saving to all as it regards its power to save, but not in its effect of saving. But they by no means untie the knot by this half-way argument. We are still rolled back to the same great question point, whether the same power to believe is conferred upon all men! Now Paul assigns the reason why all do not obey the Gospel. He refers us to the prophet Isaiah: "Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" (Rom. x. 16.) The prophet here, astonished at the fewness of those who believe, seems to cry aloud, 'That it was a thing of the highest shame and reproach that, while the Word of God was sounding in the ears of all men, there were scarcely any hearts inwardly touched by it!' But that so awful a depravity in man might not terrify the contemplators of it, the apostle Paul afterwards intimates that it is not given to all thus to believe, but to those only to whom God manifests Himself (verse 20). In a word the apostle in this chapter intimates that any effort or sound of the human voice will be ineffectual, unless the secret power of God work in the hearts of the hearers. Of this fact Luke places before our eyes a memorable proof, who, after he had recorded the sermon preached by Paul (Acts xiii. 48), says, "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Now, why was not this same doctrine of Paul received with the same mind and heart by all who heard it? Luke assigns the reason and defines the number of the receivers: "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed." The rest did not believe because they were not "ordained to eternal life." And who is the giver of this disposition of heart but God alone?

As to those who absurdly argue that these characters were ordained to believe by the natural impulse of their own hearts, such silly

persons are no more worthy of refutation than those would be who should affirm that the world was made by itself. The secret of the whole lies in the hidden wisdom of the Gospel, which is deeper than can be penetrated by any acuteness of human intellect. "The natural man (saith the apostle) receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." Is it because he will not? That indeed is quite true; for all are rebellious against God who are not subdued and humbled by His Spirit. But the apostle carries the matter much deeper and higher than this, both as to man and as to God, showing that there is that "foolishness" and "ignorance" in man that he cannot understand the things of the Spirit, and that the wisdom and counsel of God decreed the whole. For (saith the apostle), "Who hath known the mind of the Lord, and who hath been His counsellor?" No one (argues he) can know the secrets of God, but by His Spirit only. Whence, he fully concludes, that those alone are the scholars of God who are gifted, not with the spirit of this world, but with His own heavenly Spirit, "that they may know the things that are freely given them of God" (1 Cor. ii. 12).

Now, what does the apostle mean by drawing this comparison between "the spirit of the world" and "the Spirit which is of God" but this, that men while unregenerate can only be wise in their own way, and can only cleave unto the earth, but that God as a heavenly Father illuminates His own children in an especial manner? And yet, Pighius would here thrust upon us the absurd notion that where it pleases God, each one may prepare himself by his own voluntary will and endeavour. As if Paul were not speaking to the Corinthians, whom he shortly afterwards describes as having been thieves, drunkards, slanderers, dissolute, and laden with every monstrous iniquity, until they were cleansed by the Sanctification of the Spirit. Now what could there be in these characters whom God had dragged out of hell itself? what could there be in these awful sinners, I say,

that could help them to meet God halfway, as it were, or to deserve the illumination of His Spirit? But why should I employ a wide circle of words? The Spirit of God, who reveals to us the "mysteries of the kingdom of heaven," is the Spirit of adoption; and divine adoption is wholly gratuitous, the free gift of God. Therefore, the Spirit Himself is freely given on whomsoever He is bestowed. Now, that the Spirit is not thus freely bestowed on all men universal experience undeniably proves. Wherefore, faith is the special gift of God, and by that gift election is manifested to, and ratified in, the soul that receives it.

This is what Paul means when he says that Christ, who is a "stumbling-block to the Jews" and "foolishness to the Greeks," is "to them that are called, the wisdom of God and the power of God." But the next question is, where does calling come from? Whence but from God, who calleth "according to His purpose" those whom He hath chosen? From this state of things flows the conclusion (and this we hold fast) that the Gospel, which is, in its essential nature, "a savour of life unto life," and ought to be so to all that hear it, becomes "a savour of death unto death in them that perish," who thus remain in their darkness and unbelief because "the arm of the Lord" is not revealed to them. If, then, amidst so universal a corruption and depravity of our nature some few do believe the Gospel, to ascribe the faith of such to their own goodness would be perfectly impious. No! Let thanks, on the contrary, be given to God continually (according to the admonition of the apostle), "because He hath from the beginning chosen such believers unto salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth," in which words the apostle traces faith and sanctification to the eternal election of God as its source and cause. What shall we say then? Were these chosen because they had sanctified themselves and rendered themselves meet or worthy to be chosen? The apostle asserts most expressly that this sanctification was the work of the Spirit of God.



And as the nature of faith is the same, and equally the gift of God and the work of His Spirit, it incontrovertibly follows that those who are illuminated unto faith are thus illuminated and gifted with faith, that their election of God may be manifested and ratified by these its very effects. And most certainly, when we hear that no one cometh unto Christ but he that is drawn by the Father, we may safely adopt the language and argument of Augustine: "Who can be said to be drawn who is already willing to go? And yet no one comes to Christ but he who is willing. Wherefore, every comer to Christ is drawn in a wonderful way, that he may be willing, by Him who knows how to work inwardly on the very hearts of men; and so to work in them, not that they may believe against their wills (which would be impossible), but that they may be made willing to believe who were before unwilling to believe."

All this Pighius loudly denies, adducing that passage of the apostle (1 Tim. ii. 4): "Who will have all men to be saved;" and, referring also to Ezek. xvii. 23, he argues thus, "That God willeth not the death of a sinner," may be taken upon His own oath, where He says by that prophet, "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the wicked that dieth; but rather that he should return from his ways and live." Now we reply, that as the language of the prophet here is an exhortation to repentance, it is not at all marvellous in him to declare that God willeth all men to be saved. For the mutual relation between threats and promises shows that such forms of speaking are conditional. In this same manner God declared to the Ninevites, and to the kings of Gerar and Egypt, that He would do that which, in reality, He did not intend to do, for their repentance averted the punishment which He had threatened to inflict upon them. Whence it is evident that the punishment was denounced on condition of their remaining obstinate and impenitent. And yet, the denunciation of the punishment was positive, as if it had been an irrevocable

decree. But after God had terrified them with the apprehension of His wrath, and had duly humbled them as not being utterly desperate, He encourages them with the hope of pardon, that they might feel that there was yet left open a space for remedy. Just so it is with respect to the conditional promises of God, which invite all men to salvation. They do not positively prove that which God has decreed in His secret counsel, but declare only what God is ready to do to all those who are brought to faith and repentance.

But men untaught of God, not understanding these things, allege that we hereby attribute to God a twofold or double will. Whereas God is so far from being variable, that no shadow of such variableness appertains to Him, even in the most remote degree. Hence Pighius, ignorant of the Divine nature of these deep things, thus argues: "What else is this but making God a mocker of men, if God is represented as really not willing that which He professes to will, and as not having pleasure in that in which He in reality has pleasure?" But if these two members of the sentence be read in conjunction, as they ever ought to be-- "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked;" and, "But that the wicked turn from his way and live"-- read these two propositions in connection with each other, and the calumny is washed off at once. God requires of us this conversion, or "turning away from our iniquity," and in whomsoever He finds it He disappoints not such an one of the promised reward of eternal life. Wherefore, God is as much said to have pleasure in, and to will, this eternal life, as to have pleasure in the repentance; and He has pleasure in the latter, because He invites all men to it by His Word. Now all this is in perfect harmony with His secret and eternal counsel, by which He decreed to convert none but His own elect. None but God's elect, therefore, ever do turn from their wickedness. And yet, the adorable God is not, on these accounts, to be considered variable or capable of change, because, as a Law-giver, He enlightens

all men with the external doctrine of conditional life. In this primary manner He calls, or invites, all men unto eternal life. But, in the latter case, He brings unto eternal life those whom He willed according to His eternal purpose, regenerating by His Spirit, as an eternal Father, His own children only.

It is quite certain that men do not "turn from their evil ways" to the Lord of their own accord, nor by any instinct of nature. Equally certain is it that the gift of conversion is not common to all men; because this is that one of the two covenants which God promises that He will not make with any but with His own children and His own elect people, concerning whom He has recorded His promise that "He will write His law in their hearts" (Jer. xxxi. 33). Now, a man must be utterly beside himself to assert that this promise is made to all men generally and indiscriminately. God says expressly by Paul, who refers to the prophet Jeremiah, "For this is the covenant that I will make with them. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers: but I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts" (Heb. viii. 9, 10). Surely, to apply this promise to those who were worthy of this new covenant, or to such as had prepared themselves by their own merits or endeavours to receive it must be worse than the grossest ignorance and folly; and the more so, as the Lord is speaking by the prophet to those who had before "stony hearts." All this is plainly stated also, and fully explained, by the prophet Ezekiel (chap. xxxvi. 26).

That obstinacy and enmity are common to all men I fully admit, and I also maintain that the heart of no man is softened and made flexible and obedient to the will of God until God gives him the will and power to do what He commands. For why are we called "new creatures," but because "we are His workmanship created unto good works"? But, I pray you, what kind of a division, and how iniquitous

a division, of all praise and glory would it be to make God the Creator of us mortal men, and yet to make each one of us hits own creator unto righteousness and eternal life? In this way God would only have for Himself the praise of ineffectual and failing grace. That portion of the glory which is the far more excellent would fall to our lot. But the Scripture positively affirms that to circumcise the hearts of men is the work of God alone, nor is regeneration ascribed to any other than God Himself. Hence it is that whatever in man is created anew, in the image of God, is called "spirit." "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John iii. 6). God does, indeed, frequently invite us to repentance, but He Himself is everywhere declared to be the Author of conversion; His "law" is said "to convert souls." The intermediate agency of this conversion, however, is frequently transferred to the ministers of the Word. But as, while they labour by praying, by sowing, by watering, it is God alone that "giveth the increase," it is not at all to be wondered at that it should be declared to be His work alone to Open the heart of His own to "attend to the things spoken" by His ministers.

Hence it is that Augustine, after having treated of the elect, and having shown that their salvation is safely secured under the faithful custody of God, so that no one of them can perish, makes these solemn and blessed observations: "All the rest of mankind, who are not of this number (says he), but are of the same fallen mass, being ordained vessels of wrath, are born for the use and service of these elect ones. For God created no one, even of them, at random, or by chance, or for nought. Nor does He work ignorantly whatever of good He works in, or by, them. For His creating in them a human nature is itself a good thing. And His adorning by them the order of this present life is a good thing. But God brings no one of these to spiritual repentance and to reconciliation with Himself! Although, therefore, these are born out of the same lump of perdition as the

elect of God, yet by their hardness and impenitency of heart they all, as far as in them lies, 'treasure up unto themselves wrath against the day of wrath.' While out of this same fallen mass God calls some to repentance by His goodness and mercy, leaving these, the rest, in just judgment, to their own destruction." Thus, Augustine.

But that no one might imagine that there is here any discrepancy, variance, or conflict between divine grace and our industry, these sentiments of the holy father everywhere meet us in his works. "Men toil (says he) to find in our own free will what good thing there is that is our own, and which we have not received from God. I, for my part, know not what good things of the kind can be discovered in us at all." In another place, arguing on the same deep subject, he draws this conclusion: "Wherefore, unless we hold fast these two positions, not only that that power of will which is free to turn this way and that, and which is one of those natural good things which a bad man may badly use, is the gift of God; but that that good will which is one of those spiritual good things of which there cannot be made a bad use, is of God also; unless, I say, we hold fast these two propositions, I know not on what grounds we are to defend the sacred position of the apostle, involved in his memorable question, 'What hast thou that thou didst not receive?' But if there be in us a certain kind of free will, received from God, which may yet be either good or evil; and if there be in us also a good will, rendered so by ourselves; that which proceeds from ourselves is better than that which we receive from God." Augustine arrives at this final inference from the above premises: "Where God (says he) is pleased to give this will to obey Him and to come unto Christ, it is an act of His free mercy, not according to the merits of those on whom He bestows the gift and to whom He shows the mercy. Where God is not willing to bestow the gift, nor to show the mercy, it is a display of His truth which declares that none can come to Christ to whom the will to come is not given.

And though He has the power to draw them, He draws them not; but they are left to perish, and thus to manifest the truth of His Word, that 'no one can come unto Christ, except the Father draw him.'"

The difficulty which, according to Pighius, lies in that other place of Paul, where the apostle affirms that God will have all men to be saved, and come unto the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. ii. 4), is solved in one moment, and by one question, namely, How does God wish all men to come to the knowledge of the truth? For Paul couples this salvation and this coming to the knowledge of the truth together. Now, I would ask, did the same will of God stand the same from the beginning of the world or not? For if God willed, or wished, that His truth should be known unto all men, how was it that He did not proclaim and make known His law to the Gentiles also? Why did He confine the light of life within the narrow limits of Judea? And what does Moses mean when he says, "For what nation is there so great who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon Him for? And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?" (Deut. iv. 7, 8.) The Divine lawgiver surely here means that there was no other nation which had statutes and laws, by which it was ruled, like unto that nation. And what does Moses here but extol the peculiar privilege of the race of Abraham? To this responds the high encomium of David, pronounced on the same nation, "He hath not dealt so with any nation: and as for His judgments, they have not known them" (Ps. cxlvii. 20). Nor must we disregard the express reason assigned by the Psalmist, "Because the Lord loved thy fathers, therefore He chose their seed after them" (Deut. iv. 37). And why did God thus choose them? Not because they were, in themselves, more excellent than others, but because it pleased God to choose them "for His peculiar people." What? Are we to suppose that the apostle did not know that he himself was

prohibited by the Holy Spirit from "preaching the word" in Asia, and from passing over into Bithynia? But as the continuance of this argument would render us too prolix, we will be content with taking one position more: that God, after having thus lighted the candle of eternal life to the Jews alone, suffered the Gentiles to wander for many ages in the darkness of ignorance; and that, at length, this special gift and blessing were promised to the Church: "But the Lord shall arise upon thee; and His glory shall be seen upon thee" (Isa. lx. 2). Now let Pighius boast, if he can, that God willeth all men to be saved! The above arguments, founded on the Scriptures, prove that even the external preaching of the doctrine of salvation, which is very far inferior to the illumination of the Spirit, was not made of God common to all men.

This passage of the apostle (1 Tim. ii. 4) was long ago brought forward by the Pelagians, and handled against us with all their might. What Augustine advanced in reply to them in many parts of his works, I think it unnecessary to bring forward on the present occasion. I will only adduce one passage, which clearly and briefly proves how unconcernedly he despised their objection now in question. "When our Lord complains (says he) that though He wished to gather the children of Jerusalem as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but she would not, are we to consider that the will of God was overpowered by a number of weak men, so that He who was Almighty God could not do what He wished or willed to do? If so, what is to become of that omnipotence by which He did 'whatsoever pleased Him in heaven and in earth'? Moreover, who will be found so profanely mad as to say that God cannot convert the evil wills of men, which He pleases, when He pleases, and as He pleases, to good? Now, when He does this, He does it in mercy; and when He doeth it not, in judgment He doeth it not."

The knot immediately before us, however, is not yet, I confess, untied. I have nevertheless extorted from Pighius thus much: that no one but a man deprived of his common sense and common judgment can believe that salvation was ordained by the secret counsel of God equally and indiscriminately for all men. The true meaning of Paul, however, in the passage now under consideration is perfectly clear and intelligible to every one who is not determined on contention. The apostle is exhorting that all solemn "supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: for kings and for all that are in authority." And because there were, in that age, so many and such wrathful and bitter enemies of the Church, Paul, to prevent despair from hindering the prayers of the faithful, hastens to meet their distresses by earnestly entreating them to be instant in prayer "for all men," and especially "for all those in authority." "For (saith the apostle) God will have all men to be saved." Who does not see that the apostle is here speaking of orders of men rather than of individuals? Indeed, that distinction which commentators here make is not without great reason and point; that nations of individuals, not individuals of nations, are here intended by Paul. At any rate, that no other "will" of God is here to be understood than that which is revealed by the external preaching of the Gospel is undeniably evident from the context. The plain meaning of the apostle therefore is, that God "willeth" the salvation of all men considered generally, whom He therefore mercifully calls, or invites, unto Christ by the open preaching of the Word.

But Pighius renews the battle with me on the field of "respect of persons." And because it is written that there is "no respect of persons with God," he at once concludes therefrom that all men are equally loved of God. I did, indeed, answer him, arguing that by the term "persons," in the Scripture, is signified all those external circumstances attached to men, which external circumstances



involve not the great cause of all, but which procure favour to some men and load others with hatred and contempt. Pighius, however, thunders out that this explanation of the term is absurd beyond all expression or conception. But if the matter were put to the vote, I am quite satisfied that I should have many men of the highest estimation in the Church, both as companions and as leaders, in my interpretation of the term in question. Let one ground on which my explanation rests suffice for the present occasion. There is in the Hebrew language the noun PANIM, which is of the same signification as the plural Latin noun Facies, which signifies "faces" or "appearances." The Hebrew noun PANIM is used when judges are forbidden to "accept persons in judgment." The same term is used when Moses testifies that "the Lord regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward" (Deut. i. 17; x. 17). This same noun is also frequently used in the history of Job. Now I would ask, What else can be understood by this term than all kinds of external appearances (as we generally term them) by which we are often drawn aside from the reality, with which they stand connected?

In the same manner, the apostles, when speaking of servants and masters, Jews and Gentiles, nobles and obscure, high and low, use the Greek term, to denote that external appearance of excellency which some have above others, and which often prevents what is just and right in, or towards, such persons from being dearly seen. Hence it is also that Christ opposes the judging according to *o;yi;n* (that is, "aspect") to just judgment. As if He had said, Wherever the favour or hatred of men rules, it cannot be but that such prejudice must pervert all equity and righteousness.

Everyone, therefore, will immediately see that Pighius, carried away by the maddened insolence of hatred against the truth, cared not what he said. But now let us listen to this admonitor's correction of

our interpretation. He pronounces "respect of persons" to be a vice that has place in the administration of justice. Whence he concludes that God is no respecter of persons, because He is impartial to all men, and because, as is becoming in a dispenser of the public justice and of the public good, He shews Himself, as a matter of course, impartially liberal and beneficent. Thus prates Pighius, putting an extinguisher upon the light of the Scripture, and babbling just what first comes into his own truthless head. For the whole Scripture confirms my interpretation and view; nor does my opponent produce one passage to prove his absurd figment. And what wonder, when he can bring forth his mad dreams with so much confidence and security, when he has not even weighed the meaning of the very term itself upon which he is uttering so much vain talk. And I suppose his thus pouring out words, in contempt of all grammar and sense, is to shew himself off as a great theologian! With him "person" (persona) signifies nothing more or less than "man." Whereas it is all the while more than evident that by "person" is signified an external quality, assuming which, or clothed with which, men are considered worthy of favour and respect or justly subjected to contempt. But whether God be an equal and impartial dispenser or not, the testimony of Christ, we think, is much more worthy of credit than that of Pighius. Our Lord then introduces the blessed God, under the person or character of the master of a household, speaking thus, "Is it not lawful for Me to do what I will with Mine own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?" According to which reasoning of our Lord, Paul, that he might set forth the adorable God, bound and responsible to no one, nor hindered by any person or thing from dispensing His grace, "according to His own will," closes his argument with this interrogation: "Or, who hath first given to Him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?"

Now, in the first place, if there had been one grain of the fear of God in this man Pighius, could he ever have dared thus insolently to call God to order? For he absolutely prescribes it as a rule to the Most High, that He ought to extend His bounty to all equally, as from a public treasury. Thus leaving nothing to God by which to exercise His free beneficence. God judges of every individual (Pighius says) according to the dignity, merit and works of each individual, and not according to His own good pleasure. For what merit in them, then, did God choose the family of Abraham? What dignity did He find in that race which moved Him to prefer them to all the rest of the world? God Himself assigns no other reason than because "He loved their fathers." This He declares more expressly elsewhere: "Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the Lord's thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is. Only the Lord had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and He chose their seed after them, even you, above all people" (Deut. x. 14, 15). In another place, God reduces all their merits to nothing by declaring Abraham and all his family to have been idolaters: "And Joshua said unto the people, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the Flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nachor: and they served other gods. And I took your father Abraham from the other side of the Flood, and led him throughout all the land of Canaan, and multiplied his seed and gave him Isaac" (Jos. xxiv. 2, 3). From the above passages, at any rate, I obtain that which Pighius denies: that the sovereign pleasure of God was clearly preached by Moses. But our opponent denies that it depends on the sovereign decree of God that one is chosen and another left, asserting that it depends on the affections of men. What then meaneth this, "That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of Him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger"? (Rom. ix. 11, 12.) But the blasphemy which Pighius afterwards vomits out is execrable: "God (he asserts) is made

not only unjust, but cruel, if He be represented as ordaining any human being whatever to destruction." Pighius, however, will one day stand before the tribunal of that God of whom Paul declares, "That He will manifest His power upon the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." Nay, our opponent even now feels, under the sense of the eternal destruction which awaits him, that God is not a being fabricated out of the opinions or thoughts of men, but that He was, is, and will be, the eternal Judge of the whole world. This miserable mortal (I say) is even now experiencing how true that word is, "That God overcometh when He is judged" (Ps. lit 4) .

I am willing to confess, however, that a godly and upright life is sometimes contrasted with "person" (persona), as when Peter says, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him" (Acts x. 34, 35). But the answer to those who would bring this Scripture against us is, that what gifts soever God bestows on His own children He approves and delights in, while in the whole moral nature of man He finds nothing but what deserves His righteous hatred. Wherefore, in order that God may have worshippers whom He may love, He must, while they are yet devoid of all good, first bestow upon them in the midst of their unworthiness of it His free love, and thus freely give them that which He may afterwards love Himself. "But this first (or preventing) grace He bestows on whom He will (saith Augustine), because He is merciful, which grace, if He does not give, He is just. And where He giveth it not, it is because He willeth not to give it, 'that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy.' And when Peter says that God is 'no respecter of persons,' he shows, at the close of the chapter, what he means by it, namely, that God sometimes, passing by the children of those who do worship Him, delivers from destruction the children of the reprobate." And what

Augustine farther says on this mighty subject is well worthy of being borne in memory: "No more glorious glass, in which to behold predestination, exists (says he) than the blessed Mediator Himself, who, according to His human nature, considered as such, attained to the honour of becoming the 'only begotten Son of God' by no merit of His own." But this good pleasure of God, which God Himself sets before us for our admiration in Christ, the Head of the Church, Pighius will not admit or suffer even in the individual members of His body. Nay, he contends that the blessed mother of Christ was chosen on account of her own merit, as is proved (he says) from her own song, "Who hath regarded the lowliness of His handmaiden." Such are Pighius' PROOFS that the election of God is founded on the merits of men, and that it is not sovereign and free, because He chose, in the case of Mary, that which was mean and contemptible!

On this same Divine principle is dissipated also another objection adduced by Pighius: "When Christ (he says) calls the blessed of His Father to inherit the kingdom, He does not state their being elected to be the cause of their right to that inheritance, but because they had done works of charity" (Matt. xxv. 34--36). Now I would by no means hurry away men to the secret election of God, that they may with open mouth expect salvation from thence; but I would exhort them to flee directly to Christ, in whom salvation is set forth before our eyes, which salvation, had it not been revealed in Christ, would have for ever remained "hidden in God." For whosoever walketh not in the plain way of faith, to him the election of God can be nothing but a labyrinth of destruction. Wherefore, if we would enjoy the certain remission of our sins, if our consciences would rest in a sure confidence of eternal life, if we would call upon God as our heavenly Father without fear, we must by no means make our beginning with the investigation of what God decreed concerning us before the world began. Our contemplation must be what God, of His Fatherly

love, has revealed to us in Christ, and what Christ Himself daily preaches to us through His everlasting Gospel. Our deepest search and highest aim must be to become the sons of God, and to know that we are such. But the mirror of free adoption, in which alone we can behold so high and unspeakable a blessing, is Christ the Son, who came down to us from the Father, for the very end that, by engrafting us into His body, He might make us heirs of the kingdom of heaven, of which kingdom He is Himself the earnest and the pledge. And as, moreover, this inheritance was once obtained for us by the blood of Christ, and remains consigned to us on the sacred pages of the everlasting Gospel; so the knowledge and possession of it can be attained in no other way than by faith.

In a word, I not only now freely confess, but everywhere inculcate, in all my writings both that the salvation of men is inseparably connected with their faith, and that Christ is the only door by which any man can enter the kingdom of heaven, and also that tranquil peace can be found nowhere but in the Gospel. I have, moreover, ever taught that whosoever shall turn aside even the shortest step from the Gospel of Christ, and from faith therein, can do nothing but lose himself in doubts, ambiguities and perplexities; and that the more confidently anyone attempts to break in upon and penetrate those profound mysteries of God's secret counsel, without the Gospel and faith therein, will ever, in so doing, get so much the farther and farther from God. Wherefore, that the children of God, notwithstanding their election of God before all worlds, are to walk by faith, I deny not, but constantly affirm.

Hence, on these principles another argument set against us by our opponent is done away with, when he alleges "that God will crown at the last day those gifts of His Spirit which He may have bestowed on His elect in this present life." But this does not alter the truth and fact that God engrafts, by faith and by the sanctification of His Spirit, those whom He hath chosen in Christ into His body. Nor does it alter the truth that He calls and justifies, in His own time, those whom He predestinated to these blessings before the foundation of the world. Wherefore, Paul connects both these works of God most beautifully, where he says, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God;" to which he immediately adds, "to them who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. viii. 28). This, then, is the way in which God governs His own. This is the manner in which He completes the work of His grace in them. But why He thus takes them by the hand at all there is another and far higher cause, namely, His eternal purpose, by which He ordained them unto eternal life. Wherefore, the impudence of Pighius is the more ridiculous; for he hesitates not to grasp most insolently, for his own purpose, a testimony of the Scripture which thus stands directly against him. For in the first place, he would absurdly remind us that it is not said that all things "work together for good" to the elect or the beloved. But he asserts that a different cause is assigned, namely, that it was because they loved God. Whereas the apostle purposely adds the correction of all possible error upon the point by subjoining "who are the called according to His purpose," that no one might attribute "the working of all things for his good" to his own merit.

In fact, the mind of the apostle in this passage is first to show how the faithful, for whom God causes "all things to work together for good," ought to be affected towards Him--that they ought to "love God." And love to God is indeed, a peculiar first-fruit of being

"called" of God. But that those who are thus "called" might not cleave to themselves and their own merits, Paul moreover teaches them that the real source of their salvation and of "all things working together for their good" is seated much higher than themselves-- in heaven itself and in the eternal purpose of God, even because they were first chosen of God, and were therefore "the called according to His purpose." This knot also Pighius thinks he can loosen and settle by a single sentence, which is positively a solemn joke. He says that God "calls" all men to holiness. Whereas the apostle most plainly sets forth "calling" as being effectual only by the absolute "purpose" of God-- "Who are the called (saith the apostle) according to His purpose." Over these truths, so prominently and striking plain, Pighius would spread a darkness so thick that their transparent clearness should scarcely be seen. What, for instance, can be more perspicuously clear than this passage of Scripture? "Moreover, whom He did predestinate, them He also called; and whom He called, them He also justified, and, whom He justified, them He also glorified" (Rom. viii. 30). Now, to what extent soever our opponent may mangle and lacerate this sentence of the Apostle Paul, he can never so stretch it out as to make it reach to all mankind. Hence is evident the extreme folly of the arguments of all those who labour to subvert the election of God by substituting for it faith and good works. This is making, or attempting to make, "the daughter swallow up the mother" (as the old proverb hath it).

The last subterfuge of Pighius in reference to the scripture before us is this: that God predestinated none unto salvation, but they were those whom He foreknew. But this way of escape I have already blocked up against these opponents; where I have shown that God could have foreseen nothing in man but what was worthy of eternal destruction, until He Himself should have created him anew by His Spirit. If, then, no one man has anything good which he hath not



received from God, what can one man bring into God's sight more than another in which he can excel his fellow man? God therefore foreknew His own, not as foreseeing their merits--for they had none--but because He cast upon them an eye of mercy and favour, thus distinguishing them from others, and numbering them among His children, notwithstanding all their sin and unworthiness, according to that word of Paul, "Who maketh thee to differ?" But Pighius' free foreknowledge, which he calls naked (that is, naked of all preference in the mind of God), is no foreknowledge at all. With what feathers of merit or acceptableness, then, will Pighius adorn his foreseen and predestined man, so as to prevent him from coming before God naked and deformed in every part? For the Scripture declares aloud, that whatever there is in fallen and corrupt man by nature is hateful in the sight of God. And it pronounces, with a voice equally loud, that nothing is acceptable to God but His own image in those who are created anew in Christ.

Pighius next proceeds thus: When we are anxiously inquiring the reason why the wicked are eternally condemned, the Scripture does not cast in our teeth such tyrannical sentences as these in reply: Because they were distinguished from the elect by the eternal counsel of God, because it pleased God to ordain them to eternal destruction. We do not, I say, find in the Scripture such shocking and hard answers to our inquiries as these. These are merely the reasons assigned by men in order to make such sentences as these appear to be true--I will it so; I command it to be so; My will is an all-sufficient reason. No The reasons which we hear from the mouth of Christ Himself are these: "I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink," etc., etc. Similar to this argument is that also which Pighius advances in another place. Christ (says he) will not in the last day say to the wicked that they were eternally condemned, "because they were born of the corrupt

seed of Adam, because they inherited the desert of eternal death from his sin, and because it was just and righteous that they should perish for his fault." No, says Pighius, the reasons that Christ Himself will assign before assembled worlds in that day will be these: because they did not give bread to the hungry, because they did not clothe the naked, nor perform other kindred works of charity.

But if original sin and guilt are not, in the estimation of Pighius, sufficient to condemn men eternally, and if the secret judgment of God can have no place with him, what will he make of the case of infant children who are taken out of this life before they could possibly have performed any of the works of charity above alluded to? Now there was the same natural condition of birth and of death both in those infants who died in Sodom and in those who died in Jerusalem, and their works, or rather no works, were precisely the same. How is it, then, that Christ will separate in the last day the one from the other, placing the one on His right hand and the other on His left? Who does not here adore the glorious judgment of God, who ordained that the one part of these children should be born at Jerusalem, whence, through the knowledge of the truth they might afterwards be translated to a better life, while the others should be born in that wide entrance into hell, Sodom? As therefore I hold, in truth, that Christ will in the last day recompense unto the elect the reward of righteousness, so I by no means speak falsely when I assert that the reprobate will in that day pay the punishment of their unrighteousness and of all their iniquities. And though I firmly maintain that God, in His eternal counsel, chose those whom He pleased unto life eternal, and left those whom He pleased to eternal destruction; yet there will not be found in the whole of my doctrine an assertion, either that there are no punishments ordained for evil works, or that there is no reward ordained for good works. No! "We must all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, that every one may

receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. v. 10). But the great question is, whence come that righteousness and holiness which will then be thus crowned? Whence but from God Himself, who begat these rewarded ones unto newness of life by His own Spirit? And whence is this gift of regeneration, but from God's free adoption?

Pighius' argument is just like the reasoning of a man who should maintain that the day WAS not originally made of created light, because it IS the shining of the sun that now makes the day. This comparison is not, however, I confess, strictly true in all its parts. For the light that was created "in the beginning" has properly God as its author. Whereas our eternal condemnation so wholly rests in ourselves, that it is not lawful for us to fetch from afar any foreign or representative colours which may tend in any way to lessen our sight of its mighty reality. My only object in adopting this comparison was to shew, in a concise manner, how preposterously Pighius withdraws from our view the great remote cause by setting immediately before our eyes the proximate cause in the consideration of these momentous matters. He contends that the wicked will be eternally condemned because they have brought upon themselves the wrath of God by their own evil doings. And on this ground he concludes that their eternal condemnation does not proceed from the decree of God. Whereas I maintain that they have heaped evil deeds upon evil deeds throughout their lives, because, being essentially depraved by their birth in sin, they could do nothing else but sin. Nevertheless, they sinned thus, not from any outward impulse or constraint, but knowingly and willingly from the spontaneous motion of the heart. Nay, that the corruption and depravity of nature are the source and fountain from which all sins of every kind flow can be denied by no one who would not root out the very rudiments of all godliness. But if you ask me the reason why God corrects sin in His own elect, and

does not deem the reprobate worthy the same remedy; I reply, the reason lies hidden in Himself.

It is in this way that the apostle Paul reasons in the 9th chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. After he had proved God to be the great disposer and ordainer of eternal life and eternal death, and had strewn that those will at length be saved whom He rescues from eternal destruction; and after He had loudly declared that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy on whom He will show mercy," and that "whom He will, He hardeneth"; after these declarations, the apostle brings forth copious and, as it were, palpable causes of the blindness of his own nation, namely, because the greatest part of them rejected Christ, and because they obstinately resisted God, "stretching out His hands unto them (as the prophet expresses it) all the day long." Wherefore, these two solemn principles divinely harmonise with each other, that every man is, in himself, the cause of his own eternal condemnation, and that, nevertheless, all those who are destitute of the Spirit of God rush blindly against Christ. Agreeably to these Divine principles, Paul, bringing in the Jews guilty, because, "going about to establish their own righteousness, they did not submit themselves to the righteousness of God," and were, on that account, cast out of the Church of Christ; Paul, I repeat, having thus enforced these Divine principles, yet plainly teaches that it was entirely of grace that the rest stood in the truth and faith, and did not thus fall, according to that remarkable declaration of God Himself: "Yet have I left Me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him" (1 Kings xix. 18). For, as Augustine is careful to remark, "These seven thousand did not stand by their own strength. It was God who reserved them to Himself, that they might be a remnant. But Paul still more expressly declares that the remnant gathered by the coming of Christ in His

day was a 'remnant saved according to the free election of grace.' Hearest thou the term 'remnant'? By this expression is signified that a small number was separated from the general mass of mankind. And the apostle affirms that these were saved, not by their own will or strength, but by the free grace and mercy of God. He traces their salvation to God's free election, by which he plainly means that the sole cause of their not perishing with the rest of mankind was because they were freely elected of God. Whence follows the plain conclusion, that if all men were elected, no man would perish."

Now if a mortal man should pronounce his "I will" and his "I command," and should say that HIS will ought to be deemed a sufficient reason for HIS actions, I confess that such an "I will" would be tyrannical indeed! But to call God's "I will" and God's "I command" tyrannical is profanity, blasphemy and madness! For no mortal dares impute to God anything unequal or excessive, so as to imply that there can be in Him any inordinate will, wish, or desire, as in men. On the contrary, such honour and reverence are ever due to His will, that it is worthy of being considered as containing in itself all the validity of a just reason, because the will of God is the source and rule of all righteousness. For as to that distinction commonly held in the schools concerning the twofold will of God, such distinction is by no means admitted by us. The sophists of Sorbon prate about an ordinate will of God and an absolute will of God. But this is a blasphemy deservedly abhorred in its sound to all godly ears, but plausible and pleasant to the ears of Pighius and of all his fellows. I, however, on the contrary, contend that so far from there being anything inordinate in God, whatever there is of order, in heaven or in earth, flows from Him alone and from His will. Whenever, therefore, we carry the will of God to its utmost height, and show that it is higher than all reason, far be it from us to imagine that He ever wills anything but with the highest reason. We also

deeply feel that He so possesses, as His own right, the sum of all power, that our sacred duty is to be content with the nod of His will alone in all things. For if that be true which the Psalmist saith, "Thy judgments, O Lord, are a great deep" (Ps. xxxvi. 6), when the mind of a man launches forth into that height of pride that it cannot rest in the alone good pleasure and will of God, let him take solemn heed that that "great deep" swallow him not up! Indeed, it must be so, it cannot be otherwise, and such vengeance is gloriously just!

Wherefore, let that noble and solemn appeal of Augustine never fall from our memory: "Listen to what God is and what thou art. He is God! Thou art man! If thou seem to thyself to be speaking of justice in the works and ways of God, is the Fountain of all justice; thinkest thou, dried up? Thou, as a man, expectest an answer from me, who also am a man. Therefore, let us both hear the apostle saying, with reference to all questioning of God, 'Nay, but who art thou, O man?' Better is believing ignorance than daring knowledge! Search for merit, and you will find nothing but punishment! 'O the depth!' etc. Peter denies; a robber believes!--'O the depth!' etc. Askest thou the reason? --I tremble before 'the depth!' etc. Reason thou--I will wonder and admire! Dispute thou--I will believe! I see the height; I will not rush into the 'depth!' Paul quietly rested, because he found reason for wonder and admiration. He calls the judgments of God 'unsearchable'; and comest thou on purpose 'to search into them'? Paul says, 'His ways are past finding out;' and comest thou on purpose 'to find them out?'" Akin to these holy sentiments is that also where Augustine saith in another place: "Wilt thou join me in dispute? Nay, rather join with me in admiration and wonder! Rather join me in exclaiming, 'O the depth!' etc. Let us agree to tremble together, that we perish not in presumption together!"

Pighius displays, in his own estimation, great acuteness when he argues thus: "There would be no deep abyss at all if the will of God were to be considered as the highest of all reason, because nothing would be more easy than to say that all things were done because God so pleased, where His will ruled absolutely and alone." But by babbling thus sophistically, he ridiculously passes over that very point which forms the great question at issue. It is quite plain that all things are done because it so pleased God. But the great question is: Why did it please God that one thing should be done in one way, and another thing in a way quite the contrary? Pighius then proceeds with the same line of silly argumentation. And in order that he might show that God had a reason and a cause in all His counsels, he adduces, as a proof, the answer which Christ gave to His disciples in the case of a blind man: "That he was born blind, that the works of God should be made manifest in him." Thus does Pighius make a shadow battle, and then fight it out, imagining that he has gained the victory. But when, and where, did the monstrous idea enter my mind that any counsel of God was without God's reason for it? As I constantly make God the RULE of the whole world, who by His incomprehensible and wonderful counsel governs and directs all things, will any man say that he can gather from my words that I make God to be carried this way and that way at random, or to do what He does with blindfold temerity?

Now, it is singular that Pighius quotes some words of mine by which, if I mistake not, he is himself most evidently refuted. The words to which I allude are those wherein I assert that God has a purpose in all His ways and works, how hidden soever they may be, which purpose is that He may spread the glory of His Name. But my opponent would set before the eyes of his readers a colour of contradiction in my sentiments, because I hold that no reason for the goodwill of God in any of His works is to be required or investigated;

and yet that I, at the same time show what that reason is. But it is useless to waste time in exposing such cold and self-evident absurdities. The Lord has as a reason for all His works His own great glory. This is His ultimate object in them all. Hence on the testimony of Paul, God raised up Pharaoh, "that He might show His power in him; and that His name might be declared throughout all the earth" (Rom. ix. 17). Now does the apostle Paul, I pray, contradict himself when he exclaims immediately afterwards that the judgments of God are "past finding out?" The same apostle declares also that the vessels of wrath "appointed" by the Lord "unto destruction" were "endured" by Him "with much longsuffering," in order that "He might show His wrath, and make His power known in them" (Rom. ix. 22). Now, is the wondering admiration of Paul which immediately follows, "O the depth!" contrary, I pray you, to this his sentiment? Tell me, I repeat, does the apostle here contradict himself? If he does not, neither do I in my like solemn argument contradict myself!

But Pighius goes farther still into error, absurdity and confusion, in his way of arguing. He spreads a false colour over the very term cause by introducing the final cause in the place of the former cause. For although the end to which God looks in His works be not obscure, namely, His own great and wide glory, yet the reason WHY it pleaseth Him so to work by no means appears so wholly and immediately plain. The pith, however, and sum of the present point of the whole great question is this: although God does not demonstrate to us by plain and satisfactory arguments His own righteousness in all His works, yet our bounden duty is to be assured that whatever He doeth, He doeth righteously. It is therefore our duty to rest in His will alone. So that our knowledge of His will and pleasure in whatsoever ever He doeth, though the cause of His doing it should surpass our comprehension, ought to suffice us more than a thousand reasons. Hence the folly of Pighius in quarrelling with me



and accusing me of inconsistency, because, while I maintain that no reason for the Divine will should be inquired into, I yet loudly affirm that God willeth nothing but what He judgeth just and right to be done. For he asserts that this latter member of my argument is really rendering a reason for the will of God as the cause of all; the rendering of which reason (he says) I elsewhere declare to be inconsistent in myself or in anyone else. But what knowledge of the cause can I be said to profess if I only believe that God does what He does with a great design and what He judges right to be done, and especially if I profess myself to be all the while unable to comprehend the certain and special reason of the Divine work and counsel? Added to all this, my opponent, considering the mighty difference between the reverence of faith and the audacity of inquiry into God's will a matter, of no moment at all, seizes hold of that which I teach to be a matter of faith, and preposterously hurls it into the circle of that common knowledge which is of human conception.

Upon this absurd principle, if anyone should affirm that God hath a glorious object in His every act, and should shortly after exclaim, with the apostle, that God's "judgments are unsearchable" and "His ways past finding out," he must, at the moment of such exclamation, be set down as a man contradicting himself. Pighius, however, is mistaken altogether. For he calls upon me to acknowledge my very own words, when the passage to which he refers is absolutely one which I had cited from Augustine. It is this: "When men ask us (says that holy man) why God did this or that, our answer is to be, 'Because it was His will.' If they go on to inquire, Why did He so will it? our reply should be, 'Now thou askest that which is greater and higher than the will of God itself I Thou askest that which none can find out!' Let human rashness, then, keep itself within bounds. Let it never seek after that which is not, lest it should not find that which is." Most truly does Augustine speak in these words, and he has my

fullest assent. Nor do my above sentiments contain anything which does not perfectly harmonise with these words of the holy father. My sentiments and arguments are, that the will of God is the best and most rightful adjustment of all the things that He hath made and done.

There is another objection of the same chaff which Pighius raises against my following published sentiments: "I deny that the reprobate are distinguished and separated from the elect by any respect of God to the merits of the latter; because the grace of God makes them worthy of His adoption of them, it does not find them worthy" (as Augustine frequently remarks). In another place I thus express myself: "I deny that any injury is done to the reprobate by their reprobation, because they deserve eternal destruction." Here Pighius spreads out his wings in tumultuous exultation, noisily exclaiming that I neither understand myself nor my own sentiments, nor at all remember what I have myself before said. But so far am I from thinking it necessary to spend many words in my defence, that I can hardly bring myself to employ even a few words for that object. I will observe, then, that when God prefers some to others, when He chooses some and passes by others, the difference is not made on the ground of worthiness or unworthiness, either in the one or in the other. Therefore, it is false to say that the reprobate are worthy [of] eternal destruction. If, therefore, in the former case, there is no comparison of men with each other, nor any connection of worthiness with the reward of eternal life; in the latter case, there is certainly no proof that the condition of all men is equal with reference to the election of God. Add to this, that Augustine, having asserted in one part of his writings that no man ever failed of salvation who was worthy of it, qualifies this expression in his subsequent recapitulations, carefully excluding all idea of works and referring all acceptable worthiness to the free grace calling of God.

Pighius, however, still pushes on his violent opposition, alleging that if what I teach be true, that those who perish were ordained unto everlasting death by the eternal will of God, of which the reason is imperceptible to us, the persons so ordained are made worthy of everlasting death, not found so. I reply that three things are here to be considered: 1. That the eternal predestination of God, by which He decreed, before the Fall of Adam, what should take place in the whole human race and in every individual thereof, was unalterably fixed and determined. 2. That Adam himself, on account of his departure from God, was deservedly appointed to eternal death. 3. And lastly, that in the person of Adam, thus fallen and lost, his whole future offspring were also eternally condemned; but so eternally condemned that God deems worthy the honour of His adoption all those whom He freely chose out of that future offspring. Of these mighty things I have neither dreamed any part, nor fabricated any part. Nor am I called upon, in the present instance, to prove each particular, for I consider that I have most effectually done that already. All I shall do is to wash off from myself the calumny with which my opponent has soiled me, when he says that these things can in no way be made to harmonise or consist with each other. Whereas, what I have ever invariably taught, and still teach at this day, is, that whenever election is the subject of discussion, the great point to be maintained, from first to last, is that all the reprobate are justly left under eternal death, because they died and were eternally condemned in Adam; also, that those perish justly who are by nature the children of wrath; and finally, that, therefore, no one can have cause to complain of the too great severity of God, seeing that all men bear, in themselves and in their individual persons, the guilt and desert of death eternal.

When we come to speak of the first man in our discussion of the doctrine of predestination, my teaching is that we ought ever to

consider the solemn case to be this: that he, having been created perfectly righteous, fell of his own accord and willingly, and that, by that fall he brought destruction eternal on himself and his whole future race. And though Adam fell not, nor destroyed himself and his posterity, either without the knowledge or without the ordaining will of God, yet that neither lessens his own fault, nor implicates God in any blame whatever. For we must ever carefully bear in mind that Adam, of his own will and accord, deprived himself of that perfect righteousness which he had received from God; and that, of his own accord and will, he gave himself up to the service of sin and Satan, and thus precipitated himself into destruction eternal. Here, however, men will continually offer one uniform excuse for Adam--that it was not possible for him to help or avoid that which God Himself had decreed. But to establish the guilt of Adam for ever, his own voluntary transgression is enough, and more than sufficient. Nor, indeed, is the secret counsel of God the real and virtual cause of sin, but manifestly the will and inclination of man.

The folly of the complaint of Medea is justly derided even by the ancient poet, when he represents her as uttering the well-known lamentation, "O that the ship, made of planks cut down by axes from the Pelian grove, had never sailed from Egina to Colchis, my native land!" Medea had betrayed her country, carried away by the passion of a desperate love which she had conceived for a foreigner, and an entire stranger. And when her conscience smites her for her perfidy and barbarous cruelty, when the shame of unlawful indulgence overwhelms her, she absurdly turns her thoughts of regret to various remote circumstances as the causes of her misery. But since every human being can always find the cause of his evils in himself, of what avail is it to look about him on every side, or to seek that cause in heaven? Thus Medea's fault plainly appears in that she had sinned voluntarily and willingly. Why, then, does she plunge herself into a

labyrinth of lost thought by rushing into the mysteries of heaven? For, although mortal men may employ their thoughts in circuitous reasonings, ever so long and deep, they never can so far delude or stupefy themselves as not to find and feel that they carry the originating cause of all their sins deeply seated in their own hearts. Impious reasoning, therefore, will attempt in vain to absolve from the guilt of sin that man who stands condemned by his own conscience. And as to God's having knowingly and willingly permitted man to fall, His reason for so doing, may be hidden! UNJUST, it cannot be! And this, moreover, should ever be held fast without controversy, that sin was ever hateful to God. For that praise which David loudly bestows on the Most High strictly applies to His adorable Majesty in every respect: "Thou hatest all workers of iniquity" (Ps. v. 5). Wherefore, in ordaining the Fall of man especially, God had an end most glorious and most just; an end, into our contemplation of which the mention or idea of sin on the part of God can never enter; the very thought of its entrance strikes us with horror!

Although, therefore, I thus affirm that God did ordain the Fall of Adam, I so assert it as by no means to concede that God was therein properly and really the author of that Fall. That I may not, however, dwell extensively on this great point now, I will only express it as my view, belief and sentiment, that what Augustine so deeply teaches on this matter was fulfilled in God's ordaining the Fall of Adam: "In a wonderful and unutterable way that was not done without the will of God (says he), which was even done contrary to His will; because it could not have been done at all, if His will had not permitted it to be done. And yet He did not permit it unwillingly, but willingly." The great and grand principle, therefore, on which Augustine argues cannot be denied: "That both man and apostate angels, as far as they were themselves concerned, did that which God willed not, or which

was contrary to His WILL; but that, as far as God's overruling omnipotence is concerned, they could not, in any manner, have done it without His will." To these sentiments of the holy man I subscribe with all my heart. I solemnly hold that man and apostate angels did, by their sin, that which was contrary to the will of God, to the end that God, by means of their evil will, might effect that which was according to His decreeing will. If anyone should reply that this is above the capability of his mind to comprehend, I also acknowledge and confess the same. But why should we wonder that the infinite and incomprehensible majesty of God should surpass the narrow limits of our finite intellect? So far, however, am I from undertaking to explain this sublime and hidden mystery by any powers of human reason, that I would ever retain in my own memory that which I declared at the commencement of this discussion -- that those who seek to know more than God has revealed are madmen! Wherefore, let us delight ourselves more in wise ignorance than in an immoderate and intoxicated curiosity to know more than God permits. Let all the powers of our mind restrain themselves within the bounds of this reverential assurance, that God willed nothing by the sin of man, but what became of His infinite justice!

Pighius thus continues: "If the apostasy of man be the work of God, that which the Scripture declares is not true when it saith, 'That all things which God doeth are very good.'" Now I can sacredly testify, and with all candour confess, that this comment of my adversary never entered my mind. I have everywhere asserted that man was created in the beginning perfectly upright. I have constantly asserted this, I say, for the very purpose of preventing the depravity which he contracted by his Fall from being attributed to God. I have, with equal constancy, asserted that the eternal death to which man rendered himself subject so proceeded from his own fault that God cannot, in any way, be considered the author of it. Now, if I had ever

asserted that the departure of the first man from God proceeded in any way from the inspiration or motion of the Spirit of God; if I had not, on the contrary, uniformly contended that Adam fell by the instigation of the devil and by the impulse of his own heart; then, indeed, Pighius might justly have made his furious attack upon me. But now, removing as I do from God all the proximate cause of the act in the Fall of man, I thereby remove from Him also all the blame of the act, leaving man alone under the sin and the guilt. While I thus teach, then, why does my opponent calumniously and wickedly slander me by asserting that I make the Fall of man "one of the works of God"? But how it was that God, by His foreknowledge and decree, ordained what should take place in Adam, and yet so ordained it without His being Himself in the least a participator of the fault, or being at all the author or the approver of the transgression; how this was, I repeat, is a secret manifestly far too deep to be penetrated by any stretch of human intellect. Herein, therefore, I am not ashamed to confess my utter ignorance. And far be it from anyone of the faithful to be ashamed to confess his ignorance of that which the Lord God has wholly enveloped in the blaze of His own inaccessible light!

And here, let my readers be assured that I offer no counsel to others which I do not follow myself with my whole heart. For the Lord is my witness, my conscience also bearing the same witness in the Holy Ghost, that I so meditate upon these His stupendous judgments of God daily, as not to feel the least curiosity or desire to know anything beyond that which I now know and have testified. Nor does any misgiving suspicion of God's all-surpassing justice ever steal into my mind Nor does any inclination to murmur ever entice my spirit. In a word, I fully rest, not less calmly than willingly, in the following sentiments of Augustine: "God (says he), who created all things very good, foreknew that evil would arise out of that good; and He also

knew that His glorious and omnipotent goodness would be the more highly exalted by His producing good out of evil, than by His not permitting evil to be at all. He ordained the life of angels and of men, that He might first of all make it manifest by that life what free will could do, and then afterwards show what the blessing of His grace and the judgment of His justice could do." To these Divine sentiments I would merely add (repeating my heartfelt assent to them), that if the ears of any persons so continually itch that they cannot let any one of the mysteries of God remain hidden and closed, that teacher would be worse than insane who should attempt to satisfy such disciples by his instructions.

No! Let us rather hear, and tremble at, that which happened to David when he was inclined to inquire into certain unusual judgments of God, which appeared in the external circumstances of persons and of this present life: "So foolish was I (says he), and ignorant; I was as a beast before Thee" (Ps. [xxiii. 22). An exalted prophet like David (we see) could not attempt to be wise beyond what is lawful without being confounded and made to feel himself to be, as it were, a brute beast. Is it to be supposed, then, that we can indulge with impunity a preposterous wantonness of mind in attempting to comprehend the counsel of God, the deepest of all things in heaven or earth? After Paul had testified that God chose whom He would out of the lost mass of mankind, and had reprobated whom He would, the apostle was so far from attempting to explain how or why God did so, that, overwhelmed with wonder, admiration and awe, he burst forth into the exclamation, "O the depth!" etc. Shall we, then, unawed by that "depth" and destitute of all reverence, dare to search into the "depth" of the Fall, and to inquire how it was that God suffered the whole human race to fall in Adam? I have already observed that the Fall of Adam is a standing lesson of humility to all his posterity; a lesson from which they may learn that they are nothing in themselves, and



can do nothing to regain eternal life; that Adam was perfect, and could do perfectly, and yet he fell! "O the depth!" Now, the one and only right rule of being wise is for the mind of man to restrain itself by that bridle of wonder-- "O the depth!" etc.

We have not, however, touched upon this mighty question even thus lightly, merely because it was abstruse and hidden in the inmost recess of the sanctuary of God, but because an idle curiosity is not to be indulged, of which curiosity, high-minded speculation is the foster-mother and the nurse. And although I greatly approve all that Augustine says in his "Commentary on Genesis" (chap. xi. 4--8), where he is bringing all things down to form a lesson in the fear and reverence of God; yet that other part, where he shows that God chose out of the condemned race of Adam those whom He pleased, and reprobated those whom He pleased, appears to me to be far more calculated to inspire and exercise faith and his treatment of that subject is likely to produce more abundant fruits. I, therefore, for my part, find more freedom and happiness in enforcing that doctrine which contains in its teaching the corruption, sin and guilt of human nature. This substance of doctrine appears to me, not only to be more conducive to instruction in all fundamental godliness, but to be more theological. Let us remember, however, that in this latter substance of doctrine, concerning the depravity and corruption of human nature, we must reason soberly and humbly. The greatest care must be taken that we go no farther than the Lord leads us by His Word. For we know too well how captivating the allurements of the reasonings and penetrations of human wit are. Wherefore, the greater caution is to be exercised that the simplicity of faith bind fast all our senses by her golden chain.

Now, that God draws men unto Himself by the secret inspiration and influence of His Holy Spirit even our daily prayers bear witness. For

when we pray for our persecutors, what else do we petition for them than that they may become willing to obey God who were before unwilling; that they may, with us, receive the truth who before resisted it; that they may love God who before fought against Him? But it is openly manifest that it is not given to all men indiscriminately; that God should, on a sudden, deem those worthy eternal life who had deserved eternal destruction a hundred times over. "But how it is (saith Augustine) that God bestows this grace, making some, according to their just desert, vessels of wrath, and making others, according to His grace, vessels of mercy; if we ask how this is, no other reply can be given than this, 'Who hath known the mind of the Lord?' And though the pride and insolence of the world kick violently at such a comparison, though made by the Holy Spirit Himself, yet it is by no means to be borne that the condition of God should be worse than that of man! For what creditor among men has not the privilege of demanding payment from one debtor, and of forgiving the debts of another?" This similitude is very frequently, and most appropriately, used by Augustine. "It cannot indeed be (says he) but that the natural mind of man must, in a moment, become ruffled when he hears that the same grace of God is denied to some who are indeed unworthy, and freely given to others who are manifestly equally unworthy. Let us, however, well consider that after all were equally under eternal condemnation, it is by no means lawful or right in us to impose on God a restraint that should prevent Him from 'having mercy on whom He will.'" Most rightly, however, does Augustine contend that the justice of God is by no means to be measured by the short rule of human justice. "After all has been said that can be said (observes he) upon this stupendous subject, let the short but awe-filled exclamation of the apostle terminate all our disputations. Let us with him stand in awe of the unsearchable mind of God and breathe, 'O the depth!' etc. If impudent tongues make a noise, contending or demanding more, let

us never be ashamed nor grieved to utter the apostle's loud rebuke, 'Nay, but who art thou, O man, that replies against God?'"

Now, though I believe I have, in my "Institutes," already refuted with clearness and brevity the various absurdities of opposition which my adversaries heap upon my doctrine from all quarters, that they may calumniate and defame it; and though I think I have effectually met and exposed many of those figments by which ignorant persons delude and bewilder themselves; yet, as Pighius has found much delight in nibbling at my testimonies and my replies to opponents, I will not object to wash off from myself, as I proceed, his virulent soil.

Some of our adversaries have preposterously asked, How can men be certain of their salvation if it lies in the secret counsel of God? I have replied in these statements, which are the truth. Since the certainty of salvation is "set forth" unto us in Christ, it is useless, and not without dishonour to Christ Himself, to pass over this fountain of life, which is thrown open that men may draw out of it, and to labour and toil in vain to draw the water of eternal life out of the hidden abysses of the mind and counsel of God! Paul testifies, indeed, that we were "chosen before the foundation of the world," but it was "in Christ." Let no one, then, seek confidence in his own election of God anywhere else than "in Christ," unless, indeed, he would blot out, and do away with the 'book of life' in which his name is written. God's adoption of us "in Christ" is for no other end than that we should be considered His children. Now the Scripture declares that all those who believe in the only-begotten Son of God are the children and heirs of God. Christ, therefore, is the clear glass in which we are called upon to behold the eternal and hidden election of God; and of that election He is also the earnest. But the eye, by which we behold that eternal life which God sets before us in this glass, is faith.

And the hand by which we lay hold of this earnest and pledge is faith. If any will have the matter more plainly stated, let them take it thus: election precedes faith as to its Divine order, but it is seen and understood by faith. What I here just touch upon, however, readers will find more fully explained in my "Institutes." Hence Christ, when dwelling on the eternal election of His own in the counsel of the Father, points out, at the same time, the ground on which their confidence may safely rest; where He says, "I have manifested Thy name unto the men which Thou gavest Me out of the world: Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me; and they have kept Thy word" (John xvii. 6). We see here that God begins with Himself, when He condescends to choose us and give us to Christ. But He will have us begin with Christ, if we would know that we are numbered among His "peculiar people." God the Father is said to have given us to His Son, to the end that each one of His chosen might enjoy the knowledge that he is an heir of His heavenly kingdom as long as he abides in Christ, out of whom death and destruction beset us on every side. Christ is therefore said to "manifest the name" of the Father unto us, because He seals on our hearts by His Spirit, the knowledge of our election by the Father, which is openly declared unto us by the voice of the Gospel of the Son.

Now, if we would believe what my friend, Pighius, says, he would make it appear that I so labour and sweat, and so turn things upside-down, so confound and transfound everything, as to make it perfectly evident that I am condemned by my own conscience in all I write or say. Pighius, indeed, can pour out the flood of his characteristic loquacity with all the ease in the world, and without one drop of sweat at all. But that his tongue might have full play, he seems always to take care to wet himself well with wine, that he may be able to blow forth at random, and without any check of shame whatever, those blasts of abuse that first fill his two swollen cheeks. Another

objection is, "that if the predestination of God be the immutable and inevitable cause of salvation, all faith and confidence in us, and the need of them, are at once taken out of our hands." Without offering a word of my own argument in reply to a statement so preposterously absurd, I will merely observe, that when Paul testifies that we are made partakers of Divine adoption, because we were chosen before the foundation of the world; what is there, I pray, inexplicable or perplexed in this doctrine and its connection? For when the apostle teaches, in the same context, that those who were thus chosen of God first, were afterwards called according to His purpose, he beautifully harmonises, if I mistake not, the sure confidence of our faith with the immutable decree of the election of God.

Pighius farther reasons thus: "If all those who are members of the body of Christ are 'written in the book of life,' then drunkards, adulterers, thieves, perjured persons, murderers, etc., etc., will inherit the kingdom of God. All this, however, is flatly contrary to the plain testimony of the Apostle Paul, for multitudes of these have been 'engrafted into Christ' by baptism, and have 'put on Christ.'" Now, in the first place, I would entreat my readers to direct their thoughts for a minute to this loose-reined profanation of the Scripture, in which Pighius so much delights to revel; and next, that they would mark the just judgment of God in avenging that profanation, which judgment Pighius so evidently exemplifies in himself. For, with him, to trample under foot the whole of Scripture together is nothing! Provided that he can deceive the eyes of his readers by false colours of the Word of God, and make himself great in the estimation of the inexperienced, he will snap his finger at uprooting the very first principles of all godliness. The Lord, however, deprives him of his common senses, and exposes him to the ridicule even of children.

Now circumcision is represented by the Apostle Paul as being twofold: the circumcision of "the letter" and the circumcision of "the Spirit." In the same manner also, we are ever to think and speak of baptism. Many bear in their bodies the sign only, but are far from the possession of the reality. Thus Peter also, after having said that we are saved by baptism, immediately declares, by way of an additional correction and caution, that the bare external washing of the flesh is not sufficient, unless there be also the answer of a good conscience. "Not the putting away of the filth of the flesh (saith he), but the answer of a good conscience towards God" (1 Peter iii. 21). Wherefore the Scripture, when setting forth the Sacraments, ever speaks of them in a twofold sense. When it is dealing with hypocrites who, glorying in the empty sign, disregard the reality, in order to prostrate the vain confidence of such, it carefully distinguishes the reality from the sign, by which distinction the perverseness of their minds is at once exposed and defeated. It is in this manner that Paul reminds the Corinthians (1 Cor. x. 5) that it was of no profit to the ancient people that they were all baptised in their passage through the Red Sea, and "did all eat the same spiritual food" with us, and "did all drink the same spiritual drink" with us; that is (Paul means), did all partake of the same outward signs of spiritual gifts with us. But when the apostle is addressing believers, he speaks of the Sacraments in their legitimate and efficacious use as answering the ends of their Divine institution. When, therefore, Paul is thus speaking of the Sacraments, he uses the phrases, who have "put on Christ," who have been "engrafted into His body," who have been "buried together with Him," who have been "baptised in His Name," etc., in their essential meanings. But Pighius absurdly concludes, from Paul's use of these expressions, that all those who have been sprinkled with the visible element of water are really regenerated by the Spirit and are really incorporated into the body of Christ, so as to live unto God and in His righteousness. Nor is he ashamed to fill page after page of his

writings with such absurdities as these. Whereas, when I am speaking in my writings of men generally, I call all those "members of Christ" in an external sense who have been sprinkled with the water of external baptism. Shortly afterwards, however, Pighius draws in a little his expanded wings, and remarks that many fall away from Christ who had been really engrafted into His body; and he makes it out that those whom Christ received from the Father, as committed to His faithfulness and care, are so saved by Him as to have their salvation still dependent on their own free-will. "There are many (says he) who want not the protection of the grace of Christ, but who are wanting to themselves."

Most certainly the indolence and ingratitude of those can never be condemned with sufficient severity who willingly withdraw themselves from the protection of God. But it is an insult to Christ, by no means to be endured, for a man to say that the elect of God are saved by Him provided they take diligent care of themselves. In this manner that protection of Christ is rendered wholly precarious and doubtful, against which, however, Christ Himself declares that the devil and all the machinations of hell shall never prevail. Christ Himself promised that He would give eternal life unto all those that were given unto Him of the Father. And He testified that He had been a safe keeper of them all up to the day on which He thus promised, and that "none of them was lost, but the son of perdition; that the Scripture might be fulfilled" (John xvii. 2, 12). In another place He declares that the elect of God are in His hands, and that no one shall pluck them out, because God is mightier than the whole world. If, then, eternal life is certain to all the elect; if no one can be plucked from the hand of Christ; if they can be torn away from Him by no violence, no desperateness of assault; if their salvation stands in the invincible might of God; what a brazen and audacious brow must Pighius possess to attempt to shake such a certainty and

security as this? But this is not all. He goes on to say, "Though Christ casts no one out, indeed; yet many of their own will depart from Him. And those who were the children of God for a time do not continue such." Pighius here betrays his wickedness and perverseness as an interpreter by his refusing to acknowledge that all those whom the Father gave unto Christ are safely preserved in His hands unto the end, that they might be saved. Because, all those who fall away are declared by John not to have been of Christ's flock at all. "They went out from us (says the evangelist), 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" (1 John xvii. 19).

If your doctrine and argument be true, says Pighius, that all the elect are thus secure in the hand of Christ "unto the end," the condition of salvation on which Christ Himself lays down is proposed in vain, where He says, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Matt. x. 22). Here, everyone must confess, that my opponent prevaricates. He had undertaken to prove that our confidence of our salvation could not consistently stand with our election of God. But now his reasoning draws us away from that point, and leads us to prove that the former necessarily stands on the latter. I thus find myself so perpetually tossed to and fro by the billows of this man's violent attacks, that scarcely a moment passes in which I am not in danger of being drowned. But, as God ever upholds His elect to prevent them from sinking, I feel quite confident that I shall stand against all my adversary's incessant storms. When Pighius asks me how I know that I am elected, my answer is, "Christ is, to me, more than a thousand witnesses." For when I find myself engrafted into His body, my salvation rests in a place so safe, secure, and tranquil, that it is as if I already realised it in heaven. If Pighius say, in reply, that the eternal election of God cannot be judged of by present grace, I will not



attempt, on my part, to bring forward as proofs. those feelings which believers experience in this matter, because it is not given unto "strangers" even to taste that bread on which the "children" of God feed. But when Pighius dares to prate that it is nowhere found in the Scripture that the children of God know their eternal election by their present grace, a falsehood so bare and base is disproved by the Word of God in a moment. After Paul had testified that those who were elected are called and justified, and at length attain unto a blessed immortality, fortified, as it were, by a strong bulwark on every side, he thus exults and triumphs, "Who shall stand against God's elect?" etc. And that no one might suppose this doctrine of security to apply to all men generally, he directly afterwards applies it to the peculiar use of each believer: "For I am persuaded (says he), 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" (Rom. viii. 33, 38, 39). Now, whereas Pighius will have it that the believer's confidence of eternal salvation may be broken short at any moment, Paul extends it into futurity and into an eternity beyond the limit of this present life, and demonstrates that such a confidence proceeds from no other source than from God's election! Pighius, on the contrary, so represents the believer's confidence and his election as opposite and contradictory, that he makes them destroy each other.

"What, then, does Ezekiel mean (inquires Pighius) when he denounces destruction on the righteous man, if he shall turn aside from the right way?" (Ezek. xviii. 26.) Now we deny not that there are sometimes in the reprobate many things which are found also in the children of God; but how brightly soever they may shine with the appearance of righteousness, it is quite certain that they never proceeded from the spirit of adoption. Such reprobate persons, thus

apparently righteous, could never truly call upon God as their Father. For Paul testifies that none are ever "led" by that spirit of adoption but the sons of God, whom he also pronounces to be "heirs" of eternal life. Were it otherwise, that which the same apostle testifies in another place would not stand good, where he says, "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we may know the things that are freely given to us of God." And again, "But we have the mind of Christ" (1 Cor. ii. 12, 16). Were it otherwise (we repeat), the apostle Paul would have in vain called that Spirit, by which the faithful are sealed, "the earnest of their future inheritance." But, that the right knowledge of our election of God strengthens our faith in our final perseverance, that one prayer of Christ ought to furnish an abundant proof, in which He commends all the elect to His heavenly Father, separating them by name from the world, and praying that when this world should be no more, they might remain saved from all its evil, being made "perfect" and "one" with Himself and the Father in glory (John xvii.) .

Then follows another objection of Pighius: "It is not without purpose (says he) that Paul warns all the faithful to take heed that they 'receive not the grace of God in vain.' Nor is it without a purpose, that Christ exhorts all His disciples to 'watch and pray.'" But if we understand and hold fast the important difference between the unconcerned security of the flesh and that tranquil staidness of mind which faith produces, the knot of this objection is untied at once. Believers ought to rest in the certainty of their salvation. But for what end? That they might lie still in sleepy quiet? That they might throw themselves down in cowardly indolence? Oh, no! But rather that, as they thus enjoy a quiet rest in God, they might give themselves the more unto prayer. Paul exhorts such to "work out their salvation with fear (timore) and trembling" (tremore) (Phil. ii. 12). Why is this exhortation? Is it that they might live in fear and uncertainty as to

the issue? By no means. But that, nestling under the shadow of the wings of God, they might continually commit themselves unto His care, depending on Him alone, and so resting in His almighty power, as not to doubt of their being victorious unto the end. For Paul immediately subjoins the reason why the faithful should be thus anxious to shelter under the wings and omnipotent power of God: "For it is God (saith he) that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil. ii. 13). Moreover, that the faithful might not remain in hesitation and suspense, he had already relieved them from all possible doubt. "Being confident (saith he) of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. i. 6). The Holy Spirit, therefore, nowhere exhorts us to the care and exercise of prayer under any idea that our salvation fluctuates in a state of uncertainty or doubt, for it rests safely in the hand of God. He nowhere imposes upon us a fear which might tend in any way to shake our confidence in the free love of God. No! The blessed Spirit, by such exhortations as these, designs only to quicken our natural slothfulness and unconcern.

It is to carry out, and enforce, this last objection of his also that Pighius calumniously twists and perverts the words of the apostle in the eleventh chapter of his Epistle to the Romans: "And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakes of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, 'The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in' Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: for if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest He also spare not thee. Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but towards thee, goodness, if thou continue in His goodness: otherwise

thou also shalt be cut off" (Rom. xi. 17--22). But the real meaning of this passage is as follows: After the apostle had, in this chapter, spoken of the twofold election of his nation (the national and the eternal), and had shown that by the falling away of many of them, it had come to pass that those who before had been the legitimate and proper heirs of life, by means of the covenant which God had established with their fathers, were "broken off" and cast out, as banished from His kingdom; after speaking thus of his own nation, Paul directs his word to the Gentiles, warning them not to triumph over the Jews, nor to offer them any insult, because God had taken them into their place. Now we are here carefully to observe that, as the universal rejection of the Jews did not at all alter or shake the fixed election of God, so as to prevent Him from saving some "remnant" of them, so the universal election of the Gentiles did not embrace every individual of the Gentiles, so as to make them all sharers of eternal life. Paul, I repeat, is here speaking of God's twofold election of the Jewish nation. For the whole family of Abraham had been, in a certain sense, elected of God. But as many of them were not ordained unto eternal life by God's secret judgment and counsel, the greater number perished, though the election of God still rested on the "remnant." Now, however, that the covenant of life is transferred to the Gentiles, that general adoption of the family of Abraham belongs to us. But this does not prevent those few of the family of Abraham from still enjoying their adoption, who were ordained thereunto by the secret good pleasure and decree of God.

Paul, therefore, when thus contrasting the Gentiles with the Jews, calls the former "wild olive trees" engrafted on the original sacred root after its natural branches had been broken off. Nor is the apostle here speaking of individuals in a private sense, nor is he treating of the secret election of God abstractedly. He is showing what a mighty

change of things was made when the legitimate children were rejected and strangers substituted in their place. The whole of this exhortation of Paul is not so much addressed to those believers who had truly and in heart received the grace of God, as to the whole body of the Gentiles, which was promiscuously composed of various members, believers and unbelievers. And yet, there is nothing singular in God's restraining the pride and insolence of the flesh in His own Gentile children, seeing that they all labour under this corrupt infirmity. But Pighius most ridiculously concludes from the above exhortation of the apostle that the certainty of God's election and its final accomplishment depend upon the perseverance of men. This conclusion of Pighius is, we repeat, most absurd, because, in the falling away of all men generally from God, His eternal election must nevertheless stand and prevail.

As to the profane who stigmatize the judgment of God, representing it under an utterly false colour, and saying, "It is in vain for the reprobate to strive after righteousness and holiness, because, according to the doctrine of election, they must ultimately and inevitably perish." Such a calumny, as it is the offspring of the grossest ignorance, may be shaken off from us by a very brief reply, thus: There can be no real desire of doing good in men which does not proceed from God's election of them. The reprobate, however, made, as they are, vessels unto dishonour, never cease to provoke the vengeance of God upon themselves; thereby manifestly proving, as in written characters, that they are ordained to destruction. To Pighius, however, such a doctrine is the very climax of absurdity. So much so, that he declares there is no monstrosity equal to it to be found in all the discussions of this subject put together. But by this one declaration it is manifest that he is so carried away by a rabid lust of reviling all that is good, that abuses boil over, out of his breast, without any real occasion whatever. The Scripture plainly teaches

that none but the elect of God are ever ruled or "led" by His Spirit. What rectitude or right-doing then can there be in man without the "leading" of the Holy Spirit? Hence it is that Paul saith, "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like" (Gal. v. 19-21). And he elsewhere declares that all the thoughts of the carnal mind are "enmity against God" (Rom. viii. 7).

What inconsistency, then, is there in my affirming that all those who are not regenerated by the Spirit of God are the slaves of sin, and carried headlong at the will of the flesh? Those whom God chooses, He justifies by His own righteousness. What marvel, then, if the reprobate, who are destitute of the righteousness of God, should do nothing, nor know how to do anything, but sin? But God has chosen His own for the very end that they might be "holy and without blame." If, then, holiness be the fruit of free-election, who can but confess that all the rest of men remain sunk in the filth and profanity of nature? Christ declares that none can hear His voice but His own sheep. And He asserts, on the other hand, that all those who will not hear the voice of the Father sounding in His mouth, "are of their father the devil" (John viii. 43, 44). When Pighius wants to show that reprobates study to do good works, he must, to be consistent, also show that their obstinacy is pleasing to God. But Pighius, in support of his doctrine, that the reprobate really do devote themselves to good works, argues that Saul excelled in many virtues. Nay, that he pleased God. That the virtues which shine in the reprobate are laudable in themselves I by no means deny. And this is what the Scripture means when it says that Saul, and Others of the same character, "did what was right." But as God looks at the heart, the fountain from which all works flow, a work which is, in a general

sense, good in itself, may nevertheless be an "abomination in the sight of God." In fact, this first principle of all godliness is wholly unknown to Pighius: "that there is nothing so pure that the uncleanness of man will not defile." It is no wonder, therefore, that our opponent, looking at the works of Saul, while wearing his external mask, lauds his innocence and virtues. When Pighius contends that Saul did in one instance please God, I grant it, and I make this case an exception to my general remark. God did, indeed, so honour him in his office as king, that the house of Israel, as we find in the Scripture, never once censured him, as Ezekiel also testifies. So Judas was chosen to the apostolic office. Will Pighius conclude that Judas was therefore numbered among the children of God? But my opponent calumniates all this my testimony, making me to be speaking all the time of the single actions of life abstractedly considered; whereas I am speaking of the continuous course and tenor of life. In a word, if we make not all the goodness and righteousness that can be found in man to proceed from the Spirit of sanctification, the whole testimony of the Scriptures must be shaken.

It is useless to spend farther time and trouble in replying to the other cavils of our adversary. His next objection is in every enemy's mouth: "All teaching is vain, and all exhortation worthless, if strength and power to obey wholly depend on the election of God." And this farther cavil is akin to it: "Men will, as an inevitable consequence, give themselves up to indolence and unconcern when they are thus taught to rest in the eternal counsel of God." The replies to these objections, already given by me in my "Answers," are so attacked by Pighius with his usual abuse, that I will allow them to remain quiet, and will not repeat them here to be defiled again by his hands.

But if there be any ultramorose ones who are not yet satisfied, and who consider that there is more weight in the testimony of Augustine

(which acknowledgment I have often and willingly made myself), I will produce his sentiments on this subject in his own words, thereby testifying my own assent to their truth. His words, as found in his book entitled, "On the Blessing of Perseverance," are these: "Men say that the doctrine of predestination stands adverse to all preaching, rendering it altogether useless. According to this, the preaching of Paul himself was altogether useless, which was full of this doctrine. Did not this great teacher of the Gentiles preach the doctrine of predestination continually? But did we ever hear of his ceasing to preach the Word of God because he found his preaching useless? Paul preached 'It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure.' But do we ever find that, on that account, he ceased to exhort us 'to will' and wish those things which please God, and 'to work' ourselves with all our power? Paul preached, 'He that hath begun the good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.' But did he ever cease to persuade men to begin themselves, and to persevere unto the end? Nay, the Lord Himself called upon men to believe in Him. And yet His declaration is eternally true, and His description not without its solemn purpose, when He testifies, 'No man can come unto (that is, no one can believe in) Me, unless it were given him of My Father' (John vi. 65). Nor, on the other hand, is the exhortation of the Lord to believe vain because His description of those who alone do believe is true. How can it be said that the doctrine of predestination stands against preaching, and exhortation, and correction, and renders them useless (which are all so frequently used in Scripture), when the same Scripture speaks so much of predestination also?"

Shortly afterwards the holy father remarks, "Those hear these things, and do them, to whom it is given; but those to whom it is not given, do them not, whether they hear them not, or hear them. Neither, therefore, is the preaching of fruitful and persevering faith to be



withheld because of the necessity of preaching predestination, in order that men, by the preaching of the former, might hear those things which they ought to do, and that they to whom it is given might do them. 'But how shall they hear (as the apostle argues) without a preacher?' Nor, on the other hand, is the preaching of predestination to be withheld because of the necessity of preaching that faith which is fruitful, and which persevereth unto the end, in order that he who lives in faith and obedience may not glory in his obedience as being his own, but the gift of God, as it is written, 'He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.'" "And again (continues Augustine), as he that hath received the gift so to do rightly exhorteth and preacheth, so he that hath received the gift so to do heareth and obeyeth. Hence it is that the Lord so frequently saith, 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.' And from whom those who have the gift receive it the Lord Himself shows us: 'I will give them (saith He) a heart to know Me, and ears to hear Me.' Ears to hear, therefore, are the gift itself of all obedience, with which all those who are endowed come to Christ. Wherefore, we both PREACH and EXHORT. Those who have ears to hear, hear us and obey; but in those who have not, that solemn scripture is fulfilled: 'That hearing they might hear and not understand;' hearing, indeed, with the outward ear of the body, but not with the inward ear of the heart. But why it is given to one to hear, and not to another; why it is given of the Father to some to come unto the Son, and not to others--do we ask this question? The reply is, 'Who. hath known the mind of the Lord?' Are we, then, therefore, to deny what is manifest because we cannot comprehend what is hidden?"

"From this is plainly seen (continues the holy man) how preposterous the extreme caution of those is who, through fear of some supposed absurdity or contradiction in it, would hide or altogether suppress a doctrine most necessary to be known. But

suppose that some upon hearing the doctrine of predestination, give themselves up to indolence and unconcern, and rush headlong from diligence and labour into concupiscence, following their own lusts, is all that is said in the Scripture concerning the foreknowledge of God therefore to be considered untrue? Would not those have been if God had foreknown that they would be good, although they are now revelling in wickedness? And if God foreknew that they would be evil, evil they will be, in whatever goodness they may now appear to shine. Are, then, all those things which the Scripture saith in truth concerning the prescience of God to be denied or held in silence because such cases as these are found among men? And that, too, when it is certain, that if these truths were not declared, men would nevertheless rush into other errors of some kind?

"A reason for not declaring the truth (continues Augustine) is one thing; the necessity of declaring the truth is another. To enumerate the various reasons assigned for the propriety of not declaring the truth would exceed both our limits and our purpose. One reason assigned is: Lest those who do not understand should be made worse, while we are wishing that those who do understand may be made wiser and better. But those who are not made wiser and better by any certain doctrine of truth which we teach are assuredly not made worse. But where the reality of the case is, that when we are declaring a doctrine of truth, he who cannot understand it is rendered worse by our declaration of it, while he who can understand it is rendered worse by our keeping silence,--What is to be done (it is asked) in such a case as this? Why, is it not much better that the truth should be declared, in order that he who can receive it may receive it, than that it should be kept back in silence, that neither may receive it? For by this silence both are rendered worse--he that does, and he that does not, understand. Whereas, he that does understand might, by hearing the truth and receiving it, teach others

also. Hence, some of us are unwilling to declare and teach that which, according to the testimony of Scripture, we ought to declare and teach. And the cause of this our fear is, lest, by our speaking out, he should be offended who cannot understand us. Whereas we ought also to fear, lest, by our silence, he who would have understood us, had we spoken, should be left to be carried away perhaps by the false teaching of others."

This sentiment, thus briefly expressed, Augustine afterwards expands and confirms in the following manner: "Wherefore, if the apostles and those teachers of the Church who followed them, performed the twofold service, solemnly holding forth the doctrine of God's eternal election, and also retaining the faithful under the discipline of a godly life, why should these men of our day think they act rightly in the matter of their teaching by keeping themselves shut up in silence within the strong tower of invincible truth, holding, as they do, that though what is said concerning election be eternally true, yet that it ought not to be preached openly to the people? On the contrary, however, the doctrine of election ought to be preached constantly and thoroughly, that he that hath 'ears to hear' might hear. And who hath these 'ears' but he who hath received them from Him who hath promised to give them? Wherefore let him that receiveth not the truth reject it; but let him that heareth and understandeth the truth, receive it and drink it, and drink and live! As therefore godliness is to be preached, that God may be rightly obeyed and worshipped; so is predestination to be preached also, that he who 'hath ears to hear' the free grace of God might glory in God, and not in himself."

Hence, though there was in this holy man Augustine a singular devotedness to the edifying of the Church, yet he so wisely tempers the system of preaching the truth, that he would have offence

guarded against (where it can be done lawfully) with all prudence. His admonition is, that whatsoever truths are preached should be preached at the same time consistently. He remarks: "If any one should address the people and say, If ye believe not, it is because ye are predestinated of God to eternal destruction; such an one would not only foster his own indolence, but would indulge malice towards his hearers. If a preacher should extend his sentiments into the future, and should say that those who heard him never would believe because they were reprobates, such preaching would be IMPRECATION, not DOCTRINE!" Teachers of this description Augustine would have expelled from the Church at once (and most deservedly) as foolish or designing prophets, from whom no good can be expected. And the holy father elsewhere truly contends that a preacher then profits others when he pities them and helps them forward, and who invites those whom he wishes to benefit to proceed in the right way, without any appeal to them in the form of taunting rebuke. But why some profit by the preaching of the Word and some profit not, far be it from us to say that this is according to the judgment or wisdom of the 'clay,' when it is all according to the will and wisdom of the "potter"!

When men do come into the way of righteousness, or return into it, by means of holy correction or rebuke, who is it that works salvation in their hearts but He who 'giveth the increase,' whoever soweth, or whoever watereth? No free will of man can resist Him that willeth to save. Wherefore, we are to rest assured that no human wills can resist the will of God, who doeth according to His will all things in heaven and in earth, and who has already done by His will the things that shall be done. No will of men, we repeat, can resist the will of God, so as to prevent Him from doing what He willeth, seeing that He doeth what He will with the wills themselves of all mankind. And when it is His will to bring men by any certain way that He may

please, does He bind their bodies, I pray you, with chains? O, no! He works within; He takes hold of their hearts within; He moves their hearts within; and draws them by those, now, new wills of their own which He has Himself wrought in them. But that which Augustine adds in continuation must by no means be omitted. "Since we know not (says he) who belongeth to the number of the predestinated, and who doth not, we ought so to feel as to wish all to be saved. From this it will come to pass that whosoever shall come in our way, we shall desire to make him a partaker of the peace which we ourselves enjoy. 'Our peace,' however, will nevertheless 'rest upon the sons of peace.' Wherefore, as far as we ourselves are concerned, wholesome and even severe correction will ever be made use of by us as a medicine towards all men, both to save them from perishing themselves, and to prevent them from causing others to perish. But it will be of God alone to make that medicine beneficial to those whom He foreknew and predestinated." If, then, these things be true and if they be thus testified by a witness so eminent as the chief of the holy fathers, let them not be vomited forth from the mouths of hatred upon the head of Calvin by his ignorant and evilly disposed persecutors. I would, however, that these insipid cautious ones, who so much desire to please by their teary moderation, would just consider that Augustine, to whom they so willingly yield the palm of knowledge in Divine things, surpasses them just as far in modesty also. This conviction would tend to prevent them from puffing off their soured timidity for real modesty.

But now let me deal a little farther with Pighius. My readers must bear in mind three special and summary particulars. First, that whatever mountain of absurdities he heaps up to launch at my doctrine, with a design to its suppression, is hurled not so much at me as at God Himself! Secondly, in order that he may wrest out of my hands those passages of the Scripture which make for me, he

shews himself so ignorant a trifler as to make it manifest that he cannot support his own cause in any other way than by corrupting and subverting the Bible altogether. And lastly, that he rushes headlong into such an extreme of impudence, as to appeal, without hesitation, to Augustine himself as an authority for his absurdities. "If God (argues this worthless and daring mortal) created any men for destruction, He is not worthy of being loved. Those poor creatures, who were deprived of eternal life before they were born, are more deserving of pity than of punishment." Now, if the testimonies which this aweless being attempts to shake were mine, he would be fighting against a mortal man. But since it is God Himself whom he thus insults and reproaches, I shall feel no shame in applying to him a hundred times over the solemn appeal of the apostle, "Nay, but who art thou, O man, that contendest against thy Maker?" This miserable mortal feels now, and all his fellows will hereafter feel, the effects of those reproaches which, they hurl at God from their foul and profane mouths.

Such reproaches fail and fall by the weight of their own wickedness long before they reach heaven. Their only certain course is to fall back, with all their weight, upon the heads of those who utter them. Let me be permitted just to produce one specimen of this rebel's foul madness in adulterating the Scripture. The ninth chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Romans is both confounded and dismembered in the following manner:--

At his commencement, to save all labour and trouble in untying the Gordian knot, he cuts it right in halves (as he thinks) by this one word. He says that Israel was chosen of God, but not all Israelites, because (he says) the descendants of Israel did not all truly represent their father Israel, who received that name from "seeing." And from this he concludes that God's election becomes not real and ratified in

any but in those who "open their eyes." But this pre-eminent teacher of clear-sightedness, in interpreting the name Israel, is most ridiculously stone-blind himself, while thus vainly attempting to make a sharp point out of a blunt log. Meantime, this blind instructor never thinks of the fact that Israel (the "open-eyed" one, according to his lucid interpretation) was made "open-eyed" by the peculiar grace of God, for he had been chosen of God even in the womb of his mother. Nor do any others ever possess "eyes" to see God, or His truth, but those whose minds God Himself enlightens by His Spirit. And those only are deemed worthy the light of His Spirit whom He adopted for Himself even while still in their blindness, and whom He makes His children. After this, Pighius, like a wild beast escaped from his cage, rushes forth, bounding over all fences in his way, uttering such sentiments as these "The mercy of God is extended to every one, for God wishes all men to be saved; and for that end He stands and knocks at the door of our heart, desiring to enter. Therefore, those were elected before the foundation of the world, by whom He foreknew He should be received But God hardens no one, excepting by His forbearance, in the same manner as too fond parents ruin their children by excessive indulgence." Just as if anyone, by such puerile dreams as these, could escape the force of all those things which the apostle plainly declares in direct contradiction to such sentiments! And just as if it were nothing at all to his readers, when Paul positively asserts that, out of the twins, while they were yet in the womb of their mother the one was chosen and the other rejected! and that, too, without any respect to the works of either, present or future (of the former of which there could be none), but solely by the good pleasure of God that calleth! As if it were nothing, when the apostle testifies that "it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy," who hardeneth whom He will, and hath mercy on whom He will! As if it were nothing when the same apostle avers, "that God sheweth

forth His power in the vessels of wrath," in order "that He might make known the riches of His grace on the vessels of mercy"! Paul undeniably here testifies that all those of Israel who were saved were saved according to God's free election; and that, therefore, "the election obtained it, and the rest were blinded" (Rom. xi. 7). All these solemn particulars, however, we have more fully discussed in their order in our preceding pages.

If our opponent were a hundredfold more acute, and clever than he is, all the cavils he could muster would never prevent even the deaf from hearing the loud thunder of the above declarations of the apostle. And yet, after having heaped up words, mountain on mountain, he leaves this feeble mountain of his own standing at last: "God did not create those reprobates whom He foresaw would be such, but He knew that some whom He should create would be reprobates." But what is all this folly, more or less, than bedaubing the eyes of the Potter, and His hands also, in order that we might not be able to discern His real form and features, nor to see His work? And it is just the same when he attempts to disentangle himself from the Divine net of the apostle which lies hidden in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians. He so sports and flourishes his bombast, as if, by his loud, empty noise, he could strike even the apostle himself dumb, and force him to be silent. "God (says this vain mortal) chose us in Christ, because He foreknew that His grace, which otherwise was free to all, would find a place in us only, and that we alone should receive it. He chose us out of all men, because He foresaw that that which was set before all men for their reception would become peculiar to us, who alone would receive it. It was thus that He chose us 'to the glory of His grace,' which sanctifies us; just in the same manner as the praise of all belongs to the preceptor, while doctrine and its benefit belong to the scholar." As if that eternal purpose, which Paul elsewhere sets forth in opposition to all



human works, were not the purpose of God alone! As if the glory of free grace were not, in this passage, more strikingly exhibited under the expression, the "good pleasure of God," than by any other terms! Why! God is said to have saved us "according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself" for this very reason, because, finding no cause in us, He made Himself the cause of our salvation. Is it for nothing, think ye, that the apostle repeats five times over that the whole of our salvation is the effect of, and dependent upon, that eternal decree, purpose and good pleasure of God? Is it with no intent whatever that the apostle declares that we were "blessed" in Christ because we were "chosen" in Christ? Does not the apostle refer all sanctification and every good work to the election of God, as waters are traced to their originating source? Does not Paul attribute it to the same grace that we are the "workmanship of God, created unto good works, which He hath before ordained that we should walk in them"? Why did God choose us out, and separate us from the rest, but that we might know that we are what we are, and that we are blessed above all others by the free favour of God alone? Behold, then, readers, how sweetly (!) God's foreknowledge of good works in us, according to the doctrine of Pighius, harmonises (!) with the apostle's context in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians! How much better would it have been, in our opponent, to have retained the character of an admirer of the apostle, which, for a moment, he was compelled to assume, than to have turned thus aside on a sudden to haughty speculations, and to have thrown off the mask of the admirer altogether to his own exposure. These great subjects, however, which I had more fully digested in the former part of this work, I have now only cursorily touched with the lip.

This worthless being, Pighius, indeed, flogs Augustine severely for being a man (as he says) who, in the discussion of this great subject, betrays more violent impetuosity than calm reason; one who dashes

up against this thing and that person in his way, and who brings forth those things which seem to be utterly at variance with the goodness of God. And yet, this same vain mortal, devoid of every feeling of modesty, appeals to this same holy father's authority, in confirmation of his own absurdities. And with what impudence he does this, I will demonstrate in a few short words. He lauds the industry of the holy man for his having so carefully winnowed this important question in his book written to Simplicianus, Bishop of Mediola. But did this fellow really ever open that book? I doubt it; because he makes it to be one book instead of two! And it is something rather marvellous that this very eminent interpreter should have singled out this production of Augustine from all his other works, which work the holy father himself acknowledges that he wrote at the commencement of his episcopate. For although Augustine wrote that book against Pelagius, he does not hesitate candidly to confess that he afterwards wrote much more fully and solidly on that subject. His own words are these: "The predestination of the saints is, indeed, set forth by me in that book. But necessity afterwards compelled me to defend that doctrine with greater industry and labour when I was contending for the truth against the Pelagians. For I always found that each heresy, as it arose, brought its own questions into the Church, against which the Divine Scripture required defence with greater diligence than if no such necessity had arisen."

But let us now see what that authority is which this impudent person adduces from the works of Augustine. "My author (says he) stands in the opinion that the rejection or contempt of vocation is the cause of reprobation, and this opinion he fully affirms." Now the fact is that the mind of Augustine is directly the contrary. For in his book, entitled, "Recollections," he says "I once laboured hard for the free will of man, until the grace of God at length overcame me." But I will

omit to notice here what he farther says in the book now in question, and in other places before cited by me, wherein he is explaining his mind, which is of more value to the faithful, at least, than a thousand opinions of Pighius, or of any others like him. How then does Pighius dare, with something more than impudence, to refer to Augustine as an authority for those sentiments which, throughout his whole work, he rejects with a determination quite as great as the candour with which he condemns them? But that I may not pursue these observations too far, I only observe that those authorities which Pighius adduces are indeed extant in the work of Augustine in question; but the fact is, that they are refuted in the same page on which they are found. "If (argues Augustine) the Scripture saith, 'It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy;' because the will of man alone is not sufficient to enable him to live justly and righteously, unless it be aided by the mercy of God; if this be the case, we might just as well argue, and the Scripture might just as well say, 'It is not of God that showeth mercy, but of man that willeth.' For, according to this, the mercy of God is not sufficient, unless it be aided by the consent of our will. But the truth and the fact are, that our willing is vain unless God have mercy. But how shall it be said (I know not) that God's having mercy is vain unless we also will? For where God hath mercy we are sure to have will, because the very nature of that mercy, when shown, is to make us willing, according to that word of the apostle, 'For it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do.' For if it be inquired whether or not a good will be the gift of God, who will be found so daring as to deny it?"

Shortly afterwards Augustine draws this conclusion: "Wherefore, the truth is that 'it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy,' because, although God calleth many, yet He hath mercy on those only whom He so calleth, as to make that

call effectual in them that they may follow it. Hence, it would be utterly false if anyone were to say, 'It is not of God that showeth mercy, but of man that willeth;' because God hath mercy on no one ineffectually or in vain. On whomsoever God hath mercy, him He so calleth as to make the manner of his calling effectual, so that he shall not refuse Him that calleth." Wherefore, Pighius spoke with the greatest truth when he said, in his prefatory remarks, that this great question of predestination had been industriously winnowed by Augustine in his book addressed to Simplicianus, But he himself most grievously transgresses in the matter. For while he is catching at the chaff blown about in the air, he disregards altogether the wheat that is evidently left upon the floor.

But some small space must now be found for dealing with Georgius of Sicily. All things connected with this miserable creature are so insipid, vain and disgusting, that I really feel ashamed to spend any time or labour in his refutation. Nor would I condescend to enter the field with this shadow, if the silly consternation of many at his pretensions did not compel me to do so. And I doubt not that there will be many who, from their considering the easy victory which I must of necessity gain over his trifling puerilities will quite deride my needless attempt. Indeed, if he were not a mischievous person, I should consider him much more worthy of being trampled under foot in contempt, than of being refuted by the use of words. But as his books, flying throughout Italy, drive many mad on every side, I had rather, in such a kind of necessity, act a little of the madman myself with such a mad fellow, than suffer by silence so much mischief to be done in the Church by his madness. When of old the prophet Ezekiel saw that certain old prophetesses were blinding the eyes of the people, he felt no shame in entering into the battle with women (Ezek. xiii. 17). Let us, therefore, if we would be the true servants of Christ, not feel aggrieved at being compelled to take up

arms for the purpose of driving away those, whosoever they may be, who are labouring with all their might to throw their chaff into the granary of the Lord.

When we testify that men are predestinated either to salvation or to destruction by the eternal counsel of God, Georgius considers that we hallucinate and are deceived in that matter on three accounts in particular. The first of which, he says, is that we are ignorant that the word election is received in different senses in the Scripture. For God, he observes, is sometimes said to elect or choose certain persons to a certain temporal office, where no mention whatever is made of eternal life, nor any consideration of it entertained. But by what kind of arguments will this stupid trifler attempt to persuade us that we are so inexperienced in the Scriptures as not yet to know that Saul, who was really a reprobate, was yet chosen or elected to be king? and that Judas, who was one of the twelve, whom Christ declares that He Himself had chosen, was called by Christ a devil? Why does not this vain fellow point out some passages of the Scripture as having been evilly and impiously brought forward by us in support of our testimony which will make our errors manifest? The fact is, that this dreamer fabricates dreams of his own which are the children of his own brain, and against these he wages war as if they really were our dreams. And yet it is marvellous, meanwhile, how utterly he forgets himself and his own precept concerning the different meanings of the word election, when he attacks us and applies to us the words of the apostle: "Lest, after I have preached the Gospel to others, I myself should become a reprobate" (or a castaway). For he concludes from this passage that Paul (according to the doctrine of election) positively uttered a falsehood when he expressed his fear lest the immutable election of God should fail in his case; and that he really knew not, or was not certain of, his own election. Now this miserable being does not see that "reprobate" (or

"disapproved") is, in this passage, opposed to "approved"; and "approved" would signify that such an "approved" one had given sure evidences and proofs of his godliness. How was it that the different meanings of the term "reprobate" did not come into the mind of our silly opponent? For when "reprobate silver" is spoken of by the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. vi. 30), and "reprobate earth" in Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews (Heb. vi. 8), it does not mean that such "reprobate silver" or "reprobate earth" was ordained of God to eternal destruction; but that it was silver and earth that had become alloyed, adulterated, unfruitful and worthless. And that the term "reprobate" applies to men in this passage of the apostle, as it doth also in another epistle, is at once manifest in each place from the context. And yet, the election to any temporal office is so plainly distinct from that eternal election by which God chooses and adopts us unto everlasting life, that the Scripture sometimes joins them together in the same person, on account of their immediate affinity.

Thus, when Paul glories that God "separated" him from his "mother's womb," he is speaking of his apostolic office. But the same apostle, ascending yet higher, glories at the same time in the grace of God also, by which he had been called unto the hope of salvation. In like manner, Christ, although He declares that one of those whom He had chosen to the apostolic office was a devil, yet elsewhere joins the grace of adoption with the apostolic honour, saying, "Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you; that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." For He declares that His own were given to Him of the Father, for the very end that He should not suffer anyone of them to perish, save him who was already "the son of perdition." Although, therefore, we everywhere read in the Scriptures that God chose these or those to this or that kind of life, or to this or that temporal office, such facts do not at all alter the greater fact that God chose unto salvation those whom He was

pleased to save. Nor did the one election militate against, contradict, contravene, or impede the other.

The second account on which Georgius declares we are in error and delusion is, because we do not hold that all the believers (as he calls them) of the New Testament were chosen unto salvation, as those were of whom the apostle speaks in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians. But we have already more than fully shown that Paul in that chapter traces the faith by which the children of God enter upon the possession of their salvation unto eternal election as its true and only source; and most certainly faith is especially to be reckoned among those spiritual riches which are freely given to us in Christ. And from whence does Paul testify that all and every one of our spiritual blessings flow but from that eternal and hidden fountain -- the free adoption of God? Again, the apostle uses these words, "Wherein He hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence." How did God thus abound? And from what source did this abundance flow? The apostle tells us immediately afterwards, "According to His good pleasure, which He hath purposed in Himself" (vers. 8, 9).

Wherefore, if faith be the fruit of Divine election, it is at once evident that all are not enlightened unto faith. Hence, it is also an indubitable fact that those on whom God determined in Himself to bestow faith were chosen of Him from everlasting for that end. Consequently the sentiments of Augustine are truth, where he thus writes: "The elect of God are chosen by Him to be His children, in order that they might be made to believe, not because He foresaw that they would believe." I forbear to cite here other passages of the apostle similar to the above, because they will have to be considered very shortly in their proper place, But as there is one passage in the evangelist Matthew, where the elect of God seem to be spoken of as

an infinite number, where Christ Himself says that "there shall be such great signs and wonders shown by false christs false prophets that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect;" Georgius explains "the elect" in this place as signifying all those who persevere in faith and righteousness. And this interpretation is perfectly right, provided that he at the same time confess that this perseverance depends on election alone. But Georgius, to shut out all idea of special or particular election, makes each individual among men the author of his own election.

The third account or cause why we are in error, according to our worthy friend Georgius, is because, though the Scripture does indeed make mention of men being "blinded" and "hardened," yet we do not bear in mind that such greater punishments are inflicted on sins of greater magnitude. We, however, on our part, do not deny that which is clearly confirmed by numberless testimonies of the Scripture, that God punishes with blindness, and with many other modes of judgment, contempt of His grace, pride, obstinacy, and many other kindred sins. And, indeed, all those conspicuous punishments, of which mention is made throughout the Scriptures, ought to be referred to that general view of the righteous judgment of God in the display of which we ever see, that those who have not duly feared God, after they had known Him, nor have revered Him as they ought, have been "given over to a reprobate mind," and left to wallow in every kind of uncleanness and lust. But on this deep subject we shall dwell more fully hereafter.

Although, therefore, the Lord doth thus strike the wicked with vindictive madness and consternation, and doth thus repay them with the punishment they deserve; yet this does not at all alter the fact that there is, in all the reprobate generally, a blindness and an obstinate hardness of heart. So, when Pharaoh is said to have been



"hardened" of God, he was already, in himself, worthy of being delivered over unto Satan by the Most High. Moses, however, also testifies that Pharaoh had been before blinded of God "for this very purpose" (Exod. ix. 16). Nor does Paul add any other cause for this, than that Pharaoh was one of the reprobate (Rom. ix. 17). In this same manner also does the apostle demonstrate that the Jews, when God had deprived them of the light of understanding, and had permitted them to fall into horrible darkness, suffered thereby the righteous punishments of their wicked contempt of the grace of God. And yet the apostle plainly intimates that this same blindness is justly inflicted of God upon all reprobates generally. For he testifies that the "remnant" were saved "according to the election of grace," but that all "the rest were blinded." If, then, all "the rest," in the salvation of whom the election of God does not reign, are "blinded," it is doubtlessly and undeniably manifest that those same persons who, by their rebellion and provocation of the wrath of God, procured to themselves this additional blindness, were themselves from the beginning ordained to blindness. Hence the words of Paul are manifestly true, where he says that the vessels of wrath were "afore prepared unto destruction"; namely, all those who, being destitute of the Spirit of adoption, precipitated themselves into eternal destruction by their own sin and fault. Wherefore, I hesitate not to confess that in the secret judgments of God something always precedes, but "hidden." For how God condemns the wicked, and yet justifies the wicked, is a mystery that is shut up in that secret mind of God, which is inaccessible to all human understanding. Wherefore, there remains nothing better, nothing more becoming us, than to stand in awe with the apostle, and exclaim, "How unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33.) For God's judgments are a profound abyss.

Georgius then goes on to say "that no one syllable can be found in the whole Scripture from which it can be lawfully concluded that those who were reprobated by the eternal judgment of God were 'blinded,' and that all which we testify concerning predestination rests on the mere craft of philosophic invention; for that God could not be ignorant of any of those things which should come to pass, and that whatsoever things He did foresee, could not but come to pass according to that foreknowledge." To this lying misrepresentation of our doctrine I give no answer. My books are its standing refutation. The fact is, that as the unbounded favour of the reverend abbot gave this conceited fellow the license of saying what he pleased among his silly brethren, and as he had the audacity to puff off among them all the dreams that entered his brain as the oracles of God, he really promised himself the same credit outside the monastery. But what is the benefit of my now using many words to prove that which I have proved a thousand times over? -- that we do not gather that difference between the elect and the reprobate (against which Georgius so violently but vainly wars) from the bare foreknowledge of God (according to this fellow's stupid perversion of our testimony), but that we prove it to be taught in numberless manifest and solid passages of the Holy Scripture. And yet, this fellow imagines, and would make it appear, that we war with the prescience of God alone. Readers, however, will find above twenty plain passages already cited by me which prove the contrary to this vain imagination. He boasts that special and particular election is a fiction of our own; for that God chooses no special or particular persons. Christ Himself, however, declares aloud on the contrary, "That He knows whom He has chosen" (John xiii. 18).

Behold, then, readers, with what mighty war-engines of his own fabrication Georgius labours to shake that eternal counsel of God, by which some are chosen to salvation and others ordained unto

destruction! Paul does indeed make the righteousness of God common to all by faith, nor does he admit any distinction what. ever, testifying that "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." I also confess with my whole heart, according to Paul, that the righteousness of God is freely extended to all through faith. But whence cometh faith unto men? Only from the free illumination of the Spirit. And whom does Paul consider to be those who believe in Christ? Those only whom His heavenly Father has drawn. And most certainly Christ on His part reckons no one among His own but him who was given to Him by His Father. He accordingly declares that those who were given to Him were before His Father's. Georgius, we well know, will here thrust in our faces his mad dream about natural faith, which absurdity it does not belong to my present purpose to stop to refute. I shall only say that the righteousness of God is "unto all, and upon all, them that believe" in Christ. But on the testimony of the same apostle, I assert that where one believeth and another doth not believe, it is God alone that makes the difference; that it is of God alone that some have the advantage of others in obtaining the blessing, that no one might glory. I affirm that, in order that we might know the things which are freely given to us of God, our eternal inheritance is sealed upon our hearts by the earnest and seal of the Spirit. I also affirm that our ability to believe in Christ is given to us of God. I moreover maintain that "the eyes of our understanding are enlightened" of God, that we might know "what is the hope of His calling." And finally, I testify that faith is a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Paul does indeed declare that "there is no difference." But his meaning is that there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for that God invites both, equally, unto salvation. Now Georgius here affirms that these two races of men comprehend all mankind. Be it so, he cannot by that argument prove that

righteousness is promised severally and separately to each individual of mankind. And suppose we were to grant this last point, we must come after all to the original proposition and fact, that no one can become a partaker of the good offered him, but by faith. By this argument, then, the monk must be driven to the necessity of making faith common to all men. And this, as we have before abundantly proved, is directly contrary to the mind of the apostle Paul. Our monk will follow up his argument by saying, that according to our doctrine the elect alone have "come short of the glory of God." And how does he arrive at this conclusion? Because (says he) the grace of Christ is poured out on all who have sinned. But I so hold the grace of God to be universal, as to make the great difference consist in this: that all are not called "according to God's purpose."

Georgius imagines himself to argue very cleverly when he says, "Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world. Therefore, those who would exclude the reprobate from a participation in the benefits of Christ, must, of necessity, place them somewhere out of the world." Now we will not permit the common solution of this question to avail on the present occasion, which would have it that Christ suffered sufficiently for all men, but effectually for His elect alone. This great absurdity, by which our monk has procured for himself so much applause amongst his own fraternity, has no weight whatever with me. John does indeed extend the benefits of the atonement of Christ, which was completed by His death, to all the elect of God throughout what climes of the world soever they may be scattered. But though the case be so, it by no means alters the fact that the reprobate are mingled with the elect in the world. It is also a fact, without controversy, that Christ came to atone for the sins "of the whole world." But the solution of all difficulty is immediately at hand, in the truth and fact, that it is "whosoever believeth in Him" that "shall not perish, but shall have eternal life." For our present

question is, not what the power or virtue of Christ is, nor what efficacy it has in itself, but who those are to whom He gives Himself to be enjoyed. Now if the possession of Christ stands in faith, and if faith flows from the Spirit of adoption, it follows that he alone is numbered of God among His children who is designed of God to be a partaker of Christ. Indeed, the evangelist John sets forth the office of Christ to be none other than that of "gathering together all the children of God" in one by His death. From all which we conclude that although reconciliation is offered unto all men through Him, yet, that the great benefit belongs peculiarly to the elect, that they might be "gathered together" and be made "together" partakers of eternal life.

Be it observed, however, that when I speak of reconciliation through Christ being offered to all, I do not mean that that message or embassy, by which Paul says God "reconciles the world unto Himself," really comes or reaches unto all men; but that it is not sealed indiscriminately on the hearts of all those to whom it does come, so as to be effectual in them. And as to our present opponent's prating about there being "no acceptance of persons with God," he must first "go and learn" what the word "person" meaneth agreeably to our preceding explanations of it; and then we shall have no more trouble with him on that score.

"But Paul teaches us (continues Georgius) that God 'would have all men to be saved.'" It follows, therefore, according to his understanding of that passage, either that God is disappointed in His wishes, or that all men without exception must be saved. If he should reply that God wills all men to be saved on His part, or as far as He is concerned, seeing that salvation is, nevertheless, left to the free will of each individual; I, in return, ask him why, if such be the case, God did not command the Gospel to be preached to all men,

indiscriminately from the beginning of the world ? why He suffered so many generations of men to wander for so many ages in all the darkness of death ? Now it follows, in the apostle's context, that God "would have all men come to the knowledge of the truth." But the sense of the whole passage is perfectly plain, and contains no ambiguity to any reader of candour and of sound judgment. We have fully explained the whole passage in former pages. The apostle had just before exhorted that solemn and general prayers should be offered up in the Church "for kings and princes," etc., that no one might have cause to deplore those kings and magistrates whom God might be pleased to set over them; because, at that time, rulers were the most violent enemies of the faith. Paul, therefore, makes Divine provision for this state of things by the prayers of the Church, and by affirming that the grace of Christ could reach to this order of men also, even to kings, princes and rulers of every description.

But it is no matter of wonder that the more audacity this worthless fellow betrays in wresting the Scriptures, the more profuse he should be in heaping passages on passages to suit his purpose, seeing that he does not possess one particle of religion or of shame which might restrain his headlong impudence. But the more diffuse he is in his wild discussions, the more brief I shall study to be in my answers, by which I hope to curb his pretensions. He cites that passage of Isaiah lvi. 3: "Neither let the son of the stranger speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from His people." And he takes it for granted that that text can never be applied to the reprobate. For he judges it absurd to suppose that the elect are ever called "the sons of the stranger." To this I reply that it is by no means unusual to find in the Scriptures those who were elected before the foundation of the world considered, nevertheless, "strangers," or "the sons of the stranger," until they are gathered into the family and among the children of God by faith. The words of Peter, borrowed from the

prophet Isaiah, are: "Which in time past were not a people; but now are the people of God" (1 Pet. ii. 10). Now to whom is Peter here speaking? Is it not to those of whom he had testified in the beginning of the epistle, that they were "elect according to the foreknowledge of God"? Paul sets this matter forth in a still more open light in his Epistle to the Ephesians. After he had therein dwelt very largely on their eternal election of God, he subsequently reminds them that, "At that time they were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph. ii. 12). And is it any cause of wonder if Isaiah, building thus, under the inspiration of the Spirit, the temple of God out of profane stones, should declare that there would be a new consecration of it! For as the calling of the Gentiles lay hidden all along in the heart of God, what else appeared in them outwardly than all damnable uncleanness? All those among them who were at length incorporated in the spiritual body of Christ by faith were, indeed, all that time really the sheep of God, as Christ Himself testifies (John x. 16). But they were sheep as yet shut out of the fold, and "wandering upon the dark mountains." And though they themselves all the while knew it not, yet the Shepherd knew them, according to that eternal predestination by which He chose His own unto Himself before the foundation of the world. Augustine sets this forth very soundly and beautifully.

"Now if that word of the prophet Ezekiel be true (continues Georgius), 'The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father,' no part of mankind are left in original sin." But I really will have nothing to do with this unclean beast at all (Deut. xiv. 7). My purpose is to come to the help of the ignorant only, that they may not be taken and carried away with such worthless cavillings as these. No one thing is more certain, than that all those remain under the general destruction who are not engrafted into the body of Christ. This good

brother monk, prodigal of dealing with strangers, huddles all together and presses into the household even those against whom God has shut and barred the door. But that man is wilfully mad, whoever he may be, who does not confess that no one of those who died naturally in Adam can be restored unto eternal life in any other way than in that ordained of God. The manifest difference between the seed of a believing and that of an unbelieving man, as determined by the apostle, is this, that the former is "holy," but the latter "unclean." And on this sacred principle, before the Gentiles were ingrafted into the Church with the Jews by the breaking down of "the middle wall of partition between them," the apostle calls the branches of Abraham "holy" from their holy root. But what need is there of a lengthened discussion of this point? Did not the same prophet Ezekiel, whose word this monk so abuses, frequently condemn the uncircumcised Gentiles to destruction as profane persons? Nor would circumcision be the covenant of life even now on any other grounds. How, then, can it be true to assert that the son shall not bear the punishment of the sin of the father? And, on the other hand, I ask, How shall that man boast himself to be innocent who is born an unclean raven from an unclean egg? For original sin is so derived from Adam universally, that it becomes the peculiar property of the nature of every man. No one, therefore, can justly complain, under an imagination that he is bearing the guilt of another's sin, and considering himself free from fault. But if it is not lawful for God to punish, in their children, the sins of their fathers, what is the meaning of that word, "Visiting the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation"? (Exod. xx. 5.) And, again, "Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation"? (Exod. xxxiv. 17.) Moreover, the first part of this visiting vengeance is, that the non-elect children of Adam, being left destitute of the Spirit of God, remain sunk in the original sin of their nature.



When Georgius argues thus: "John says he that sinneth, I will blot his name out of the book of life; if you explain this applying to the reprobate, they never were written in the book of life. If you interpret it as referring to the elect, the eternal counsel of God will be mutable and fail." Now, our monk prates in this way, as if God did not always address us in a manner adapted to our comprehension as men. How base a specimen of ingratitude thus to insult God, for having, through the greatest indulgence towards us and our limited comprehension, expressed Himself in such simple terms! If this worthless fellow goes on with his interpretation of the Scriptures at this rate, according to the letter, he will by-and-bye fabricate for us a corporeal God, assigning as his reason, because the Scripture speaks of God as having ears, eyes, feet and hands. The meaning of the passage, however, is most simple and plain: that those are "blotted out of the book of life" who, having been considered for a time the children of God, as being among them, afterwards draw back and fall away into their own place, as Peter most truly describes Judas to have done. Such characters, however, as John testifies, "were never of us; for if they had been of us, they would not have gone out from us" (1 John ii. 19). That, however, which John expresses thus summarily, the prophet Ezekiel sets forth essentially and circumstantially: "They shall not be in the secret assembly of My people; neither shall they be written in the writing of the house of Israel." The same key also will unlock the difficulty that may appear in the cases where Moses and Paul express their willingness "to be blotted out of the book of life." The fact is, that they were so carried out of themselves, as it were, by the excess of their grief, that they uttered their readiness rather to perish than that the Church of God, populous as it then was, should be extinguished. When, however, Christ bids His disciples "rejoice because their names were written in heaven," He speaks of that as an everlasting blessing, of which they never should be deprived. In a word, Christ unites and harmonises

both meanings, concerning names being written in the book of life, when He says, "Every tree that My heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up." Whereby He plainly intimates that the reprobate also sometimes take root, in appearance, and yet are not planted by the hand of God.

On that comparison of the Apostle Paul (Rom. v. 12), where he says, "As by one man sin came into the world unto condemnation; so by one Man came the gift of righteousness unto life," Georgius argues thus: "If, therefore, many died through one, much more must the grace of God abound, that many may reign in life by Christ." Now if the apostle were here proving that the grace of Christ extended unto all men, acknowledging myself vanquished, I would be silent and say no more on the subject. But as the apostle's purpose is simply to show how much more powerful the grace of Christ is in the faithful than the curse which they derived from Adam, what is there in this blessed truth to shake the eternal election of those whom Christ has restored from the ruins of the Fall to the possession and enjoyment of everlasting life, leaving the rest to perish in their sins? But our monk wishes to dwell on the particular expressions of the apostle. "Paul (he says) comprehends the whole race of mankind when he uses the terms, 'the sin of one man,' and 'came upon all men.' Therefore, no one can be lawfully excluded from the participation of eternal life." But if we are allowed to reason at this rate, I should be inclined to contend that, if it be so, God must needs, and as a natural consequence, create some new worlds, that in them things might be managed better than in this! Christ declares that the curse in Adam by no means equalled the grace in Himself, because, as His apostle saith, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Now if the numbers of the sons of men (of the elect and the reprobate, of those under the curse and those under grace) be reduced into one, Christ could not certainly save more than Adam destroyed, namely,

more than these two numbers of men. Therefore, the faith of Paul must be altogether imperilled in his own election and salvation, unless some new world should immediately rise out of the sea! I will use, however, in the defence of the truth, no other shield than that which our monk himself fits on my arm by another passage of Paul, which he boastingly adduces, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." If this worthless opponent of the truth applies the second member of this text to all the sons of Adam, Paul immediately holds up his hand to stop him. For he plainly testifies, directly afterwards, that he is therein speaking of the members of Christ only. "Christ (saith he), the Firstfruits; afterwards, they that are Christ's at His coming." Now, Paul is here undeniably speaking of the resurrection, which shall be followed by a blessed immortality--that immortality in which, in our creed, we confess our faith when we utter, "I believe in . . . the life everlasting."

That I may not, however, wear out my readers to no purpose by taking up the absurd arguments of this worthless person one after the other, my purpose now shall be to lay hold of a few more out of the many that still remain unnoticed. In what sense we are to understand that God willeth not the death of a sinner, but that all should turn and live, I have explained at length in former pages. For when God exhorts men to repentance, and offers life to them upon their return, that exhortation and offer are common to all men. But with respect to His own children, God makes them worthy of the inestimable privilege of His taking out of them their "stony hearts," and giving them "hearts of flesh." Nor do I by any means concede to the monk that all those words of the Lord are spoken in vain, and into the air, by which He leaves all the wicked who are convicted of their malice against Him without excuse; while He so works in His elect that the doctrine of His truth becomes effectual in their hearts by the secret power of His Spirit, while the Word sounds in their

ears. Nor is there the least reason why that common slander should distress the mind of anyone, which profanely intimates "that God merely mocks men by exhorting them to walk, when He knows that they are disabled in their feet." For surely God doth men no injury whatever when He demands nothing more of them than that which they really owe Him, unless indeed the debtor, who has nothing to pay, may boast before his creditor that he has paid him all; and that, too, while the creditor laughs at his boasts with astonishment. But I will pursue this part of the serious battle no farther. The truth involved cannot be destroyed without the destruction of every man's conscience also.

God commands the ears of His people Israel to be stricken by, and filled with, the voice of His prophet. For what end? That their hearts might be touched? Nay; but that they might be hardened! That those who hear might repent? Nay; but that, being already lost, they might doubly perish! If thou reply, O monk, that the cause was mightier, and so ruled over all the consequences; this confession is all I wish to be granted me in the present instance. Hence, it is by no means absurd that the doctrine of the truth should, as commanded of God, be spread abroad; though He knows that, in multitudes, it will be without its saving effects. Nor less frivolous is the cavil, when the monk declares that that word of Christ cannot be made to stand consistently with the doctrine of election, where He is speaking of the "sheep" that was "brought back" after it had been "lost." I am satisfied, however, that I can, with much more propriety and effect, hurl back at the monk the javelin which he launches at me. The very reason why Christ represents that it was a sheep that was thus "brought back" after having been "lost" for a time, was because, being a sheep, in reference to its free and eternal election of God, it was safe all the while it was lost under the protection of the eternal Shepherd!

Of the same trash is that logical dilemma which he introduces, and by which he hopes to bewilder us all: "If (argues he) there were such a thing as special election, the exhortation of the prophet could not possibly be made consistent with it, where he says, 'Let the wicked forsake his way.' For if that exhortation be addressed to the elect, how can those be 'wicked' in whom 'all things work together for good'? If it be addressed to the reprobate, how can the reprobate be exhorted to repentance?" My reply is, that the exhortation of the prophet is addressed both to the elect and to the reprobate--to the former, that those among them who have, for a time, shaken off the yoke, and have wantonly gone out of the way, might, by being thus warned, return to a right mind; to the latter, that lying stupefied in their iniquities, they might, by such piercing appeals, be goaded into a sense of their awful condition. For we never imagine to ourselves, nor falsely picture to others, that the elect always hold on the right course, under the constant direction of the Holy Spirit; on the contrary, we ever affirm that they slip with their feet, wander out of the way, and dash against various rocks of sin and of error, and frequently are quite out of the right way of salvation. But as the protection of God, by which they are governed and defended, is stronger than all things, it is impossible that they should fall into utter ruin. "Men (continues the monk) are commanded to take heed lest they perish. But it is all the while certain that the elect are placed beyond all danger. And to the reprobate all heed or caution must be vain." To this argument also I reply: There is nothing strange in this sacred matter at all. The elect, who are engaged in a perpetual conflict, require to be thus furnished with armour necessary for the battle. Moreover, the diligence of all men, generally, is stimulated by such exhortations. While the reprobate, by disregarding all exhortation, prove themselves at length to be incurable. For medicine is sedulously administered in diseases until despair of all cure makes its irremediable appearance.

Another objection urged by Georgius is, "That Abraham is not called the father of the elect, but the father of the faithful; and that salvation is not promised to the elect, but to the believing." Whom, then, will he make those to be, who are to be gathered together with their father Abraham into the kingdom of heaven? For Christ most certainly declares that this great blessing belongs to the elect alone. Nay, Christ also declares that a limit shall be put to the horrible coming destructions, "for the elect's sake!" What! Shall we deny that those are the children of Abraham who, together with him, are made the members of God's household, the Church? And how was it, I pray you, that so great an honour was conferred on Abraham, as that he was called the father of the faithful, unless it was because he was chosen of God? And how is it that those are accounted degenerate children of his who do not duly represent their believing father by their faith?

In fact, the audacity of this worthless renegade is perfectly execrable. He labours with all his might, in all his arguments, to deface, blot out, and do away with, that very mark by which God, more especially than by any other, designates and distinguishes His people. I confess, without any hesitation, that eternal life is promised "to them that believe," provided, however, that the monk deny not, on his part, that eternal life is in like manner promised to the elect; for thus saith Isaiah, "And Mine elect shall possess it" (Isaiah v. 9). I shall demand also of my opponent, that he confess that those only believe whom God enlightens by His Spirit, and that he confess, moreover, that election is the mother of faith. Paul testifies that he is ready "to endure all things for the elect's sake" (2 Tim. ii. 10). And Christ proclaims aloud that God the Father "is the avenger" of all the elect (Luke xviii. 7). Paul, moreover, exhorts the Colossians that they "put on, as the elect of God, and as the holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, Meekness, long-suffering,"

etc. (Col. iii. 12). In another place the apostle declares the elect to be free from every charge of sin or guilt. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" Rom. viii. 33. Are, then, believers to be robbed of all these blessings? This would be making a worse than hostile separation of those things which God hath mutually, and indeed inseparably, joined together. Nay, "that the election of God might stand," those who were once blind are "illuminated" unto faith. By that they receive the righteousness of Christ; and by that faith they are "kept" and "persevere unto the end."

Georgius farther argues: "When the Scripture denounces destruction on them that are lost, it by no means refers or attributes the cause of that destruction to the eternal counsel of God, but declares that it rests with the lost themselves." We, however, never so represent the reprobate to be left destitute of the Spirit of God, in His appeals to their resisting consciences, as to charge the fault of their iniquities on God. What sins soever men commit, let them charge all the fault on themselves alone. And if any man should attempt to escape the fault or guilt of his sin, I affirm that such an one would find himself bound too securely by the chains of his own conscience ever to free himself from righteous condemnation for his transgressions. Let Adam excuse himself as long as he will, by saying that he was deceived by the enticements of the wife which God gave him. Within himself, nevertheless, will be found the deadly poison of infidelity; within himself will be found that worst of all counsellors, depraved ambition; within himself will be found the flaming torch of a devilish defiance of God! Far less excusable, therefore, shall they be who attempt to force, out of the profound secrets of the eternal counsel of God, that cause of their iniquities, which is ever putting forth its awful head from the deep corruption of their own hearts. Richly do they deserve to be "given over to a reprobate mind," who have not glorified God as they ought, even as far as He may be known by the

contemplation of "His works that are seen"--the heavens and the earth. Those who wilfully, deliberately, and maliciously reject the grace of Christ, and turn their backs upon the burning and shining light of the gospel, deserve still heavier punishment. Wherefore, let each one acknowledge his own sins and condemn himself alone, and, confessing from his heart all the fault to be his own, let him supplicate the mercy of his Judge.

If any reprobate one should cavil, and be inclined to make a noise, the Scripture furnishes a ready and silencing reply, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself!" (Hosea xiii. 9). For, as we have observed towards our commencement, if the complaint of Medea of old, in the classic poet, is utterly ridiculous, when she laments that the trees were ever cut down from Mount Pelion to furnish wood for building the ship Argo, when the fact was, that the flame of love, burning out of her own lustful heart, was the real cause of her destroying her father and her whole kingdom, together with herself; much less, most certainly, are their arguments to be listened to who would fetch from afar, even from the clouds themselves, remote causes of their sin and fault; when the sight of it is ever before their eyes, issuing forth continually from the deep-seated fountain of their own hearts, the evidences of which are plain and perpetual, how much soever they may strive to hide them. The Scripture therefore assigns the cause of all evils to the natural sins of men!

Indeed, the great question between me and the monk is not whether men yield necessary obedience to the secret judgment of God, or are inevitably carried on in their sin by it without any fault of their own, which we not only declare to be a false tenet, but a foul and detestable profanity; but the question between us is whether the wicked, who by their voluntary sins provoke the wrath of God against themselves, were afore reprobated of God (as the righteous but



incomprehensible cause of all) "according to the counsel of His own will." Now, as Paul severely condemns the sins of men, powerfully pressing them home upon their own conscience, and determinately vindicating, at the same time, the justice of God from the profane slanders of men; so he openly declares, and dissembles not, that those who precipitate themselves into destruction by their sins, are "vessels of wrath fitted to destruction." Christ also charges home their guilt on the reprobate as they deserve. But He, at the same time, shows that the great cause of all was that they were "trees, not planted by the hand of His Father." In a word, we are told that the Father gave unto the Son those that were His, that He might sanctify them. In the opposite view, Paul, having strewn that "the elect obtained it" (namely, "the righteousness of faith"), adds, that all "the rest were blinded." Vain, therefore, are all the arguments of Georgius, who, fixing his eyes on the open sins of men only, never thinks of that hidden source of all the wickedness of mankind, the corruption of nature!

The monk considers that we are implicated in a great absurdity because we make the will of man free to sin, when the reprobate certainly sin of necessity. But that freedom of will in man of which we speak, and with which our monk is so familiarly acquainted, is, after all, quite unknown to him. Now Paul calls some "free" who are "free from righteousness," namely, those who, destitute of the fear of God and of all temperance, revel in iniquity. Does it follow, then, that such are not "the servants of sin"? Our monk condemns us also for limiting and binding the power of God. "For (says he) if God foreknows and ordains all things that shall come to pass, He has not power to change them afterwards." A prodigious wonder this, truly, that God is not like a mortal man, who is ever flexible and variable, and changes his mind and purposes every hour! Why, the very thing against which the monk so violently fights is that the adorable God is

ever of one mind and consistent with Himself! Hence, his great hallucination is, that by separating the fixed decrees of God from His power, he makes Him to be divided against Himself. If we were to speak as the Stoics, we should say, according to the noted sentiment of Seneca, "that God is a necessity in Himself." We, however, with greater reverence and sobriety, say "that God always wills the same thing; and that this is the very praise of His immutability." Whatever He decrees, therefore, He effects; and this is in Divine consistency with His Omnipotence. And the will of God, being thus inseparably united with His power, constitutes an exalted harmony of His attributes worthy that Divine Providence, by which all things in heaven and earth are governed.

As to this miserable being's vain display of heaping testimonies upon testimonies of the Scripture which have nothing to do with each other, and have often contrary meanings and applications; to all this I pay not the least regard. But though I am willing to pass by his ignorance, I am anxious to put a rein upon his impudence, to prevent his causing any distress to the simple-minded. After having shown, from one passage of the apostle Paul, that God "sends upon those that receive not the truth, strong delusion that they should believe a lie" (2 Thess. ii. 10, 11); he brings forward, on the back of this, another passage of a reference quite diverse, where the apostle says that the doctrine of the Gospel is "hid in them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not" (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4). I confess, indeed, that these blind ones are called "those that believe not." But if unbelief is the sole cause of the blindness in these characters, what is the meaning of the words which immediately follow, "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts"? We know that darkness rules everywhere; but it is God alone, as we here see, that brings light out of darkness.

As Georgius moreover accuses us of cruelty, averring that we block up the way of salvation against ourselves and many others also, while Christ Himself most kindly invites Canaanitish women and "lost sheep," and even "strange dogs" -- to all this we reply that we faithfully set forth before all men the doctrines of faith and repentance, to the end that all men (if God will) might be profited by Christ. When our Lord Himself was entreated by the wife of Zebedee that He would set one of her sons on His right hand and the other on His left, by way of restraining this foolish and untimely desire, our Lord declares that such a wish was unbecoming her present state and calling; and He, at the same time, intimates by no means obscurely that there is a place decreed of His heavenly Father for everyone, which shall be revealed in its time. In this same manner, also, that superstition of men that dwells on future events and issues (which rest with God alone), and which superstition is so plainly revealed in the Scripture, ought ever to be exposed by us, and not indulged by our keeping silence. For until the day of the revelation of the issues shall come, our duty is to do what God commandeth: to exhort all men, without exception, to repentance and faith. For the doctrine and preaching of the Gospel belong to all men, and are for the benefit of all men; and for those ends are they committed unto us, to be openly declared by us, even until the reprobate shall, by their deplorable obstinacy, block up our way and shut the door.

Finding himself compelled by our testimony to admit the doctrine of predestination, confirmed as it is by the multiplied testimony of so many passages of the Scripture, Georgius throws a new cavil into the field, than which nothing can be imagined more stupid or more putrid: "That the believers of the New Testament are said to be 'chosen' of God, as being those to whom God made known the riches of the mystery, which had been hidden from ages." To confirm this sense which he puts upon the subject by his own silly invention, he

collects together all those texts of the Scripture which set forth the excellency of the grace revealed by Christ. And then he arrives at the conclusion, that whatever is contained in the first chapter to the Ephesians, has no other intent than to show that God condescended to dignify the believers of the New Testament by bestowing on them this peculiar treasure. And when pushed to state the time to which this grace refers, he says that it was made common unto all men, without distinction, from the coming of Christ to the end of the world.

The words of Paul, however, show a very different boundary to this grace. The sum of Paul's testimony is, that those only are illuminated unto faith who were predestinated unto eternal life "according to the eternal good pleasure of God." Nor can it be denied that there was, at the first preaching of the Gospel, a special call of certain persons. Nor was the Gospel published to all. And suppose it be granted that it did sound in the ears of all, as proclaimed by the external voice; yet Paul's testimony refers to a far deeper call, even to that call by which the Spirit of God penetrates into the hearts of men. When, however, we make this great distinction between the outward and the internal and effectual call, such a distinction is, to Georgius, all a dream! But whether the making of this difference be a trifling or a grave matter, the experience of faith furnishes a rich understanding. Moreover, the apostle does not treat of election in this chapter to the Ephesians in any other sense, or with any other object, than he does elsewhere, as when (2 Thess. ii. 13) he "gives thanks to God, because He had, from the beginning, chosen the Thessalonians to salvation." And Paul, be it remembered, is here separating a small company of believers from the multitude of the wicked.

The monk will here reply, "That lawless despisers of grace, when spoken of, are always set forth in apposition to the elect." But this is

nothing whatever to the purpose; for all I am contending for, in the present instance, is that some are specially chosen of God in preference to others. Whereas Georgius, on the other hand, continues to prate that we are only predestinated to be born at a certain time, namely, after the coming of Christ, as he argues above. How stands the case then, with the reprobate Judas, of whom Christ declares that he was not one of the elect, but "had a devil," though he had heard the words of his Divine Master and had enjoyed His domestic fellowship? But Christ immediately and distinctively adds, "I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen" (John xiii. 18). If, however, we are to listen to this fanatical being, the condition of Herod, who was since Christ, was better than that of David, who was before Christ; and, according to him, the impious Scribes and Pharisees will precede the holy prophets in the honour of election! For he will say that the latter, by reason of their age and time, were not in the number of elect believers. Nay, he everywhere clamours that the grace of election belongs generally to a certain age. In a word, he offers himself as a guarantee that the apostle has nowhere spoken of predestination otherwise. What! Does the apostle include all the men of his own age, when he says, "Whom God did predestinate, them He also called"? What! Does he not separate from the general multitude of men those of whom he speaks as "being the called, according to His purpose"? Finally, when the apostle elsewhere says, "But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise" (1 Cor. i. 27), does he, when making so evident a distinction, intend his words to apply to his whole generation?

But finding himself still entangled in the net of the truth, he seizes upon another way of escape: "That those are not called the elect whom God preferred above others, but those who persevere in the common election and grace." By which he means that those are at length considered of God the elect who distinguish themselves from

the common multitude of men by the constancy of their faith. The passage of the apostle Paul, which he adduces to prove his doctrine, is this: "I charge thee before God and the elect angels." Now what the monk requires to be granted to him from this passage is, that as the elect angels did not separate themselves and fall away with the apostate angels, they procured for themselves, by such high merit, the grace of election. But suppose we should assert, on the contrary, that it was because of their being elect angels they stood fast, how much more near the truth would be such an assertion!

When Christ predicts that the delusion of Satan shall be so great as even, if it were possible, to "deceive the very elect," He implies the impossibility that Satan ever should carry away the elect by any violence he may adopt. By what power, then, are we to suppose that the elect will be thus secure? Georgius dreams, their own strength! Far different, however, is the positive declaration of Christ: "No one (says He) shall pluck out of My hand those sheep which My Father hath committed to My charge. My Father that gave them to Me is greater than all; and no one can pluck them out of My Father's hand" (John x. 29). In the same manner the apostle by no means commends believers to depend upon their own faithfulness; but, on the contrary, he reminds them that "God is faithful, who hath called them: who also will do it" (1 Thess. v. 24). The monk, however, makes each one the author and disposer of his own election. Whereas Christ positively declares that those whom He hath chosen out of the world are His own (John xv. 19). In perfect harmony with which declaration of Christ, Paul asserts aloud that "all things work together for good to them that love God, who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. viii. 28). And he asserts the same great truth, as loudly, concerning children not yet born: "That the purpose of God might stand; not of works, but of Him that calleth. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated" (Romans ix. 11-

13). To what necessity, then, is the monk here driven ? Why, this worthless being will positively have to prove, according to his own doctrine, that Jacob, even while yet enclosed in the womb of his mother, procured for himself, by his own industry, the honour of his own election; and that he stood in the possession of it, by his own faithfulness, unto the end.

Just the same amount of common reason and common sense is there in the monk's dispute, "That the casting off, concerning which Paul speaks, did not refer to single persons, but to the whole body of the Jewish people." For his exposition of the passage is, that the nation of the Jews, by rejecting Christ, deprived themselves of the inheritance of eternal life. Now, I am free to confess, that on this one point has been founded the cause of all dispute, upon the mighty subject now in question. But no one of a sound mind will conclude, or suppose, that the whole great question is bounded by these narrow limits. For, in the first place, the apostle Paul plainly teaches that the generation of Abraham consisted both of elect and reprobate individuals, promiscuously mingled together. And in the next place, the same apostle declares, generally, that from the mixed multitude of the human race are produced by birth, as distinctive classes, the "vessels of wrath" and the "vessels of mercy," for the manifestation of the glory of God.

Paul does, indeed, make the first proximate cause of the reprobation of Israel to be their not having believed the Gospel. That this cause is plainly set forth by the apostles I by no means deny. But he first clearly lays down, be it remembered, the great doctrine concerning the secret judgments of God. Two things are distinctly dwelt on by the apostle. First, that God was never so bound to one people, as to prevent His free election from reigning in the choice or reprobation of certain individuals. And secondly, that the Jews, by their

ingratitude, shut themselves out from the family of God, when they were the peculiar heirs of the covenant of eternal life. But lest the appearance of change in the purposes of God should disturb the mind of anyone, by this later rejection of the Jews seeming to shake the secret counsel of God, the apostle guards against such a consequence by the appropriate declaration that "the gifts and callings of God are without repentance" (Rom. xi. 29), and that, therefore, "the remnant according to the election of grace" should be saved (Rom. xi. 5). By which words the apostle means that the election of God, which stands in His secret counsel, remains firm and immovable.

But the impudence of this worthless mortal discovers itself more basely still in his declaring that Esau was not reprobated before he sold his birthright. I willingly acknowledge the testimony of the apostle, where he says that after Esau had deprived himself of his inheritance he was rejected (Heb. xii. 17). But are we to suppose that his rejection by his father Isaac, which he was then suffering, entirely did away with that former judgment and purpose of God, which was the original cause of his reprobation? Most certainly not. No more than the faith and obedience of Jacob did away with his free and eternal adoption of God.

The observation with which I opened this discussion, I now repeat at its close: that no one will ever attempt to disprove the doctrine which I have set forth herein, but he who may imagine himself to be wiser than the Spirit of God. Now-a-days, however, the soured opposition of men has attained to such a height, that they will not willingly and quietly receive even that which is evidently taken from the Scripture itself, without arrogating to themselves the prerogatives of God by imposing on others the law of speech and of silence. And yet some of these insolent ones wish to conceal their real principles under the



garb of modesty, professing that, for themselves, they would not dare to deny that which had been testified by all the servants of God. For my part, I soberly and reverently profess that I know no other law of modesty than that which I have learnt in the school of my heavenly Master! I am, however, fully aware that all possible prudence should be adopted in tempering all things to the building up of men in the most holy faith. But as I have studied to do that throughout my ministry, and in the present TREATISE also, with faith and a good conscience -- if the nice objections of some are not yet satisfied, I feel, for myself, that I have done my duty. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear."

#### A BRIEF REPLY, ETC.

THERE has been cast in my way the silly script of a certain worthless mortal, who, with all his vileness, boasts of being a defender and avenger of the glory of God by waging war against the Divine principle and doctrine: "That the world is so governed by God, that nothing is done therein but by His secret counsel and decree."

Meanwhile, this miserable being sees not that when he is catching at fallacious pretences of clearing the justice of God from imputation, he is all the while utterly subverting His power, all which is, as it were, attempting to rend in pieces God Himself. But to give a colour to his profanity, he prefaces his undertaking not less wickedly than maliciously with the remark: "That God is not the cause of evil, nor wills sin." As if, when we claim for God the supremacy of all rule, we assert that He is the author of sin!

Now it is evident that JOHN CALVIN is attacked by this sentence. But it is well known that JOHN CALVIN is too far removed from the blasphemy with which this worthless being would charge him to need any lengthened protection of himself from its malignity.

John Calvin constantly declares aloud throughout his writings, wherever sin is the subject of discussion, that the name of God is not to be mingled or mentioned with sin, because nothing is consistent with the character of God but rectitude and equity. How foul, then, is the calumny to involve a man, so long deserving well of the Church of God, in the crime of making God the author of sin!

The OBJECT of this malicious calumny does indeed affirm throughout his publications that nothing is done but by the WILL of God! But he, at the same time, asserts that those things which are done wickedly by men are so overruled by the secret counsel of God, that that counsel hath no connection whatever with the sinfulness of men.

The sum of the doctrine of the thus reviled one is; that God, in wondrous ways and in ways unknown to us, directs all things to the end that He wills, that His eternal WILL might be the FIRST CAUSE of all things. But why God wills that which may seem to us inconsistent with His nature the reviled one confesses to be incomprehensible! And, therefore, he declares aloud that the why? of God's works is not to be audaciously or curiously pried into; but that, on the contrary, as the counsels of God are a mighty deep, and mysteries that surpass the limits of our comprehension, it becomes a man rather to adore them with reverence than to investigate them with presumption.

Meantime, the object of all this foul calumny maintains, as a sacred principle, that, although the reason why of the counsels of God lies hidden and unknown, nevertheless, the high praise of His justice is ever to be given to God, because His will is, and must be, the highest rule of all equity! Wherefore, let him, whosoever he may be, who desires to load the man that constantly teaches these things with so

atrocious a charge, as the making God the author of sin, first take upon himself the task of proving that when those wicked men who, by crucifying Christ, did "that which the hand of God and His counsel before determined to be done," they made God a partaker of their wickedness, and involved Him in a share of their guilt! The words, "That which Thy hand and Thy counsel before determined to be done," are not the words of Calvin (let it be remembered), but of the Holy Spirit and of Peter, and of the whole Primitive Church (Acts iv. 28).

Let these unreasonable and extravagant men, then, cease to defile the pure and lucid doctrine of the Holy Spirit, with their pollution and their filth, and thus to blind the eyes of the simple; that the inexperienced, who understand not the real nature of the question, may not, when they hear sin mentioned, dash against the awful and abhorrent rock of making God the author of sin! After David had complained that he was oppressed by the unjust violence of his enemies on every side, he fails not to add, "that God had done all this!" When Job was despoiled of his substance by plunderers and tormented by the devil, he likewise confesses that all these evils came upon him from God! If anyone should reply, "That in this manner God is made the author of sin," let him wage his war with the holy prophets of God and with the Holy Spirit Himself. But while the holy prophets and the witnesses of the Holy Spirit held fast the sacred distinction that, though all things were thus done as ordained of God, and yet that whatsoever God wills or decrees is righteous and just, they, with equal plainness and firmness, set HIM high above all, who rules with His secret and sovereign reign Satan himself and all the wicked.

This short reply, thus far made, had John Calvin said no more, might have been sufficient to refute the iniquitous calumny of this

worthless being, who so purposely and perversely corrupts and deforms his sentiments and doctrine. But that this calumniator's ends and aims may be the more completely uncovered, neither the time nor pains will be lost, perhaps, if we look into some other rising volumes of his malicious smoke. Now, as this vain being's purpose is to deprive God of His supreme rule and government; and as, with all the impudence imaginable, he cuts down, at one stroke, the principle that the purpose of God is the first cause of all things; I will summarily lay hold of and examine some of the intermediate causes and reasons which he brings forward.

This abandoned mortal asserts that Plato's opinions were far above mine, because he does not suffer God to be called the author of sin. Whereas, this mortal knows not really what Plato either thinks or says. And so abhorrent is the very term evil to this profane scribbler, that he positively denies that those numberless "evils," of which we are all the subjects, proceed from God. This is nothing, more or less, than despoiling God at once of His office as the JUDGE of the world! But when Calvin, and before him Luther and Bucer, and antecedently to them, Augustine, and other godly teachers, testify that the will of God is the supreme cause of all things that are in the world; it was the farthest possible from the mind of each of them, and of them all, to entangle God in any shadow of fault. And as to Calvin, he, in all his writings, repudiates with fervid zeal, and pronounces to be detestable, that idea of the absolute, or tyrannical, power of God, which philosophising theologians set afloat throughout their schools. And for this reason: because the power of God ought not, and cannot be separated from His eternal wisdom. By this testimony the impudent barking of this unclean dog is at once refuted, when he makes honest and faithful teachers in the Church of Christ to utter things that are blasphemous, abhorrent, and before unheard, and

which, after all, are, with a futility equal to their malignity, brought out from the wicked workshop of his own brain!

After vomiting forth all this foul calumny, this impure being professes to prove that God is not the cause of evils -- first, from the law of nature; and next, from the authority of the divine Plato, as he terms him, by whom (he says) God is called the cause of good. The solution of the whole matter is perfectly simple. The image of that rectitude which we confess to be in God is stamped upon all natural knowledge of good and evil. In proportion, therefore, as each one forms his life according to the law of nature, in so far he represents the nature of God. For righteousness is a delight to God in the same proportion as iniquity is an abomination to Him. But how He rules and overrules by His secret counsel all those things that are done wickedly by man it is not ours to define; but it is ours to be assured, and to declare, that in whatsoever God doeth He never deviates from His own perfect justice!

I make the same reply to this worthless being's second argument. This noble champion for God puts the following question: If God be the author of sin (as he affirms that we say), why does He at all prevent sin from being committed? Why does He not throw the rein upon the necks of men altogether? Now, what means the barking of this dog about God being made the author of sin? The fact is, that this fellow fabricates monsters in his own imagination that he might get the fame of fighting with them. What, then, if I retort, but in quite a different manner, that question which may truly be put in assertion of the omnipotence of God: If God does not will to be done the things that are done, why does He not prevent their being done? why does He throw the rein on the necks of men to do them? But from this mode of figurative repugnance and contradiction we may at once elicit the substance of that which Augustine testifies: "God in a secret

and marvellous way justly wills the things which men unjustly do. Although according to His will, as truly expressed in His law, He hates iniquity, and has pleasure only in rectitude. And from this fountain flow all the curses which are appended to the law. For if iniquities did not displease Him, as being utterly contrary to His nature, He would neither denounce nor exact punishments." Wherefore, all that this worthless being has heaped together to vindicate God (as he thinks) from ignominy is utterly superfluous and vain. And, in fact, it is himself all the while who throws over God the idea of ignominy, while he is anxiously labouring, in a doubtful case (as he thinks), to make God appear to be good.

Having blattered forth his revilings till he was tired, our holy champion draws a little nearer, affirming that some men in these perilous times, not daring to teach openly that God is the cause of evils, intimate the same thing in varied forms of speech, asserting that Adam sinned by the will of God, and that wicked men perpetrate all their wickednesses not only by the permission of God, but by His actual impulse. Upon this our noble rhetorician exclaims with great lamentation, "O miserable man! How could it have been that God willed this, who had created Adam in His own image?" As if it were mine to render an exact reason for the secret counsels of God, and to make mortals understand, to a pin's point, that heavenly wisdom, the height and depth of which they are commanded to look upon and adore. No! let Moses rather break short all such foolish loquacity by that word of his: "Secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but these which I testify are revealed unto you" (Deut. xxix. 29). We here see how Moses, commanding the people to be content with the doctrine of the law, admonishes them to leave His hidden counsels to God alone, as mysteries to be adored, not to be inquired into.

Here, finding the point of his pen to have become somewhat bent and blunt. he sharpens it anew for a furious attack upon those who (according to his own account) assert that wickednesses are perpetrated not only by the will of God, but by His very impulse. Finding himself now entered into a boundless field, he exults and raves, leaving no kind of abuse whatever unuttered, that he might distress the minds of godly ministers, whose virtues, I would to God, he could imitate, even in a hundredth degree. He first of all classes them with the libertines, from whom, if he differed in the least degree in principle, he certainly would ruin this best of all causes by his sheer ignorance. Now as there exists a book of Calvin expressly written against these libertines, what kind of a face must that man possess who returns for a labour so useful and holy, so undeserved a reward? He positively contends that if God does impel men to sin, the devil himself does no more. Suppose we concede, for a moment, this profane comparison, what will our hero say about the servants of Christ, upon whom the devil wages war ever, but God never? But let us see upon what arguments this profane being rests his profanity. "Let Satan (saith he) do what he will, and tempt as he will, he cannot compel the will of man. But God, who holds the heart of man in His hand, can compel the will. If, therefore, God will force, do so He will and must, whether you will or no." Here the ignorance and its audacity are at once manifest.

Now, all men of a sound mind are agreed that there is no sin but that which is voluntary. Wherefore, you will not find one of a sound judgment who will assert that men sin against their will. But Calvin, according to the Word of God, following also Augustine and other godly writers, teaches that when men sin of their own will and accord, God, nevertheless, gives into the hands of Satan "strong delusions," that he may drive the reprobate hither and thither, as Paul testifies (2 Thess. ii. 11). Satan, in this manner, goes forth, at the

command of God, to be a lying spirit in the mouth of all the prophets to deceive Ahab (1 Kings xxii. 21).

But it is not my purpose, here to accumulate testimonies from the Scripture. My present object is merely to show how preposterously this barking dog howls against the innocent. "How (saith he) is a wicked man known to be such but by doing wickedly?" As if we, by attributing to the secret judgments of God, all the license which He puts into the hands of Satan, thereby make the adorable God the author of sin! As if we did not, on the contrary, openly and universally testify that God is, and must be, ever utterly remote from sin, because (as we show) it is in the strictest justice and righteousness that He blinds and hardens the reprobate!

"But in this way (argues this hero for God) the will of God and of the devil will be the same." Not so. There is, as I have before shown, a mighty difference, because, although God and the devil will the same thing, they do so in an utterly different manner. For who will deny that Satan eagerly desires the destruction of the wicked, which destruction, nevertheless, proceeds from God? Yet the object of the righteous JUDGE is infinitely different from that of the enemy, breathing out unmitigated cruelty! God willed that Jerusalem should be destroyed utterly; the same destruction Satan also desired. I would rather untie this sacred knot, however, by the words of Augustine than by my own, who, in his "Manual" against Laurentius (chap. ci.), nobly discusses the question: how it is that man wills with an evil will that which God wills with a good will (as where a wicked son, for instance, wills the death of his father, and God wills the same death); and finally, how it is that God performs that which He has decreed by the wicked wills and passions of men, rather than by the good wills of His own servants. I refer my readers to the exposition of



the sacred matter as given by Augustine in the portion of his works to which I have alluded.

If, then, a diversity of end prevents not the will from being the same, would it not have been according to his desert if this champion for God had been swallowed up in the deeps of hell before he had thus defiled the Divine Majesty and polluted it by his foul cavils? And yet, he dares to charge us with denying in our hearts that justice of God which we profess with our mouths! Whereas, this vile being himself, while he dares with unbridled insolence to assert that those against whom he wars never study uprightness of life, so indulges himself in all iniquity, as if there sat no JUDGE upon the throne of heaven at all! But I would calmly ask, In which breast is it the more probable that the righteousness of God is made a laughingstock -- in the breast in which all desire after godliness is found, or that in which the rein is given to every species of iniquity? The real fact is, that there is no one thing in Calvin, and in those like him, which this goodly teacher of morality more thoroughly hates than the unswerving rigour of their moral discipline!

Inspid, however, and unlettered as this worthless mortal is, he yet attempts to enlist in his base service the most scurrilous wit, demanding "whether it was God that rather willed the sin of Adam or Satan." Did ever godly or really serious men permit themselves to be facetious or pass jokes upon mysteries so profound; nay, to bark at them as impudent dogs? They do indeed confess that the Fall of Adam was not without the rule and overrule of the secret providence of God, but they never doubt that the end and object of His secret counsel were righteous and just. But as the reason lies hidden in the mind of God, they soberly and reverently await the revelation of it, which shall be made in the day in which we shall see that God "face to face," whom we now "behold through a glass darkly" and

unintelligibly. Having thus revelled in the vilest abuse of the best and most godly of men, the next thing that this pious warrior would have done is, that all their tongues should be wrenched out and thrown into the fire!

There is no slight probability, however, that the rage of this being against Calvin is all intended as a holy offering to the memory of his friend, Servetus, and that lamenting the death of his kin companion, and finding no other method of satisfying his revenge, he surpasses all hangmen in cruelty towards the defenders of the truth. Concerning the doctrine of the twofold will of God which Calvin, following Augustine and other godly teachers, ascribes to God Himself, this excellent theological judge declares that he wonders at the childish babble by which it is set forth. Everyone must surely set him down as one of the most learned of men who can talk about "the childish babble" of another! But this offensive affectation fully proves that he thus prates under a panting hunt after vain glory. And he afterwards adds. "That this distinction, the twofold will of God, invented by us, because without it we should have laid ourselves open to the charge of blaspheming God." Whereas, by this one word of his, his own frenzied madness is expressed and exposed; for he forgets that he himself has perpetually upbraided the most innocent men with uttering open blasphemies. And was it (I pray you) any doubtful blasphemy in himself when he made God the author of sin, and asserted that He not only wills sin, but actually impels men to sin, thus representing Him as renouncing His own nature, and feasting upon, and delighting Himself in, iniquities? And after having impudently vomited forth these revilings, he now, forgetting himself altogether and what he has uttered, says that we cover over our blasphemies with a certain colouring, that they might not be perceived.

It is worth while, however, to observe what arguments he adduces in his attempted refutation of the twofold will of God. He accuses us of attributing, by this doctrine, unfaithfulness to God; as making Him say one thing and think another, contrary to the testimonies of the Scripture, wherein God says, "I am the Lord, I change not" (Mal. iii. 6); "With Him is no variableness" (James i. 17). But this silly mortal considers not that it is not Calvin only, and other like witnesses of the truth, who are attacked by this calumny, but Moses himself, who, when declaring that the law was given unto the Jews and to their children, leaves all "hidden things" with God, saying that they "belong" to Him (Deut. xxix. 29). Not that there is any difficulty whatever in refuting this calumny, for God, commanding that which is right, thereby testifies what truly please Him; nor is there any other counsel concealed in His own mind by which He either loves or wills to accomplish anything whatever that He condemns in man. But He exercises His judgments in a marvellous way, so that, by His surpassing wisdom and equity, He ordains and directs to a good end things that are, in themselves, evil. Nor will Calvin ever concede that God wills that which is evil -- that is, in as far as it is evil -- but that His secret and righteous judgments shine forth marvellously in overruling the iniquities of men. For instance, by the incestuous deeds of Absalom God punishes the adultery of David. Wherefore, when God commands Adam not to taste the fruit of the "tree of knowledge of good and evil," He thereby tests his obedience. Meanwhile, He foreknew what would take place; and not only foreknew it, but ordained it. If this truth be too hard and rough for the palate of our delicate theological judge, let him not blame the savour of the doctrine, but his own acerbity and disrelish.

And when he attempts to thump into our hearts with all the weight of his iron mallet, wielded by his ponderous words, that the will of God is one only, which He reveals unto us by His prophets and by Christ,

Augustine, by the force of his authority, wards off all the blows of his maul. "These (saith the holy father) are the mighty works of the Lord, exquisitely perfect in every point of His will; and so wisely perfect, that when the angelic and the human natures had sinned -- that is, had each done not what God willed, but what each nature willed, though each nature did that which was contrary to the will of God in one sense -- yet God, by the same will of each nature, accomplished that which He willed righteously, using as the Supreme Good even evil deeds to the eternal condemnation of those whom He had justly predestinated to everlasting punishment, and to the eternal salvation of those whom He had predestinated unto grace. For, as far as the former were themselves concerned, they did that which God willed not; but with reference to the omnipotence of God, which could thus bring good out of evil, they could not by any means have willed to do it independently of that Omnipotence. For by the very fact of their acting contrary to the will of God, by that very acting the will of God was done through them. For in this very omnipotent way of working consists the mightiness of the works of God! So that, by an inexplicable manner of operation, that is not done without the will of God which is, in itself, even contrary to His will, because without His will it could not have been done at all. And yet God willeth not unwillingly, but willingly. For as the God of Goodness, He would not suffer evil to be done at all, unless, as the God of Omnipotence, He could, out of that evil, bring good!"

Wherefore, let this worthless being hurl all those horrible heresies and blasphemies, which he thus directs against the most godly ministers of our day, at the head of the eminent Augustine himself. It is indeed perfectly true that the will of God is to be sought for nowhere but in the Scripture. But while this gross hog is rooting up everything with his snout, he does not consider, that though reverence and sobriety are ever cultivated by the faithful, yet the

secret judgments of God cannot be done away with or reduced to nothing! But it is one thing to contemplate and adore that "great deep" (Ps. xxxvi. 6) with all the modesty of faith, and quite another to reject it with contumacy, because it at once engulfs all the powers of the human mind which attempts its comprehension. This vile mortal, however, in order that he might do away with all those testimonies of the Scripture, instructed by which we assert the wonderful and glorious providence of God, contents himself with broadly declaring that all we heretics have ever abused piety, making it a mere cloak, and have, under the name of God, originated every kind of evil. Why, if this round assertion is to be deemed sufficient to settle the whole matter, the same may as well be admitted as competent to disprove all heavenly doctrine, and to obliterate the name of God altogether.

This worthless being afterwards adds, "That he can answer every argument which we may bring against him in two ways. By showing, first, that all those passages which seem to attribute the cause of evil to God, do not intend His effectual will, but His permitting or His leaving a thing to be done." But away with that calumny altogether, which is built upon the terms good and evil, when used in discussing God's eternal will and decrees. For we well know that nothing is more contrary to the nature of God than sin. But men act from their own proper wickedness when they sin, so that the whole fault rests with themselves. But to turn all those passages of the Scripture (wherein the affection of the mind, in the act, is distinctly described) into a mere permission on the part of God is a frivolous subterfuge, and a vain attempt at escape from the mighty truth! The fathers, however, did interpret these passages by the term permission; for finding that the apparent asperity of the more direct terms gave offence to some at first hearing, they became anxious to mitigate them by milder expressions. In their too great anxiety, however, thus to mitigate, and in their study to avoid giving any such offence they

relaxed something of that fixedness of attention which was due to the great truth itself.

This worthless being, however, who professes to be so familiar with the fathers, betrays his utter ignorance of their real minds; for seizing hold of those instances of inexperience in Augustine which I have already alluded to as being found in his writings while he was, as yet, not deeply versed in the Scripture, he passes over all those plain and powerful passages wherein he acknowledges the secret judgments of God in their real and actual operations (if I may so express myself) of blinding and hardening the reprobate. The same ignorance and unletteredness is manifested also by this vain being when he tells us, on the authority of Hieronymus, "that when God is spoken of as doing or creating evils, the expressions are figurative." But if "evils" are nothing more or less than adversities (as is perfectly well known and universally acknowledged), why hunt after a figure in things which are, in themselves, perfectly manifest and plain?

But let us look into the doctrine of permission a little more closely, yet briefly. Joseph is wickedly sold by his brethren. Joseph himself declares that he was sent into Egypt by God through the means of this wickedness, not by his brethren, who perpetrated it; and he declares that all this was done by the counsel of God, that the family of his father might be nourished and kept alive. Now, is all this, I pray you, mere permission? Job also testifies that it was God who took away from him all that substance of which the robbers and plunderers had despoiled him! Does God's "taking away," I pray you, declare no act on the part of God? God is said to have turned the hearts of the Gentiles to hate His people. Shall we say that this was a mere permission on the part of God? The Scripture itself expresses the "turning" as a positive and open act of God. So when God is said to deliver men over "to a reprobate mind," and to give them up "to

vile affections," there cannot exist a doubt that those acts of His awful judgments are thereby declared by which He takes righteous vengeance on the reprobate! If God were merely an inactive looker-on while these mighty judgments were being effected, and merely permitted them to be executed, would He, by such mere permission of an observer, really execute the office of a JUDGE? God calls Nebuchadnezzar the "axe in His hand" (Isa. x. 5); He terms also the Assyrians the "staff of His indignation"; all wicked men He designates His "rod"; and He positively declares that by means of these He will do what He hath decreed to do. What place will mere permission find here? Jeremiah, addressing the Medes, exclaims, "Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully; and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood" (Jer. xlviii. 10). Behold! what cruelty soever these bloody men commit, the prophet, in another sense, calls the work of God, because God, by their hand, executed His vengeance on the Babylonians. David, in like manner, testifies that what evil soever he was suffering, it was God that did it, and that, therefore, he was "dumb" (Ps. xxxix. 9). Now, by what figures or tropes, I pray you, will any man convert the term "didst it" into permittedst it, or make the doing a thing merely the permitting it to be done? Paul likewise declares that it is God who "sends upon the wicked strong delusions that they should believe a lie" (2 Thess. ii. 11). Where, therefore, the "effectual working" (Eph. iii. 7) of God appears manifest, as it does here, by what alchemy or contrivance will anyone extract from such "effectual working" the Divine will and purpose?

This pre-eminent theological teacher and judge prescribes, as a canon, for the interpretation of such passages as, "Thou art not a God that hast pleasure in wickedness" (Ps. v. 4), that all those should be considered, as intended by that text, who seem to attribute evil to God. But what has this at all to do with the present question? No spot

of iniquity is affixed by us on God. All we affirm is quite the reverse. All we maintain, throughout our arguments, is that God rules and overrules all the actions of the world with perfect and Divine rectitude. If anyone of us sundered the power of God from His justice, then indeed we should lay ourselves justly open to the tacit censure of those who continually and reproachfully repeat to us "that there is nothing more contrary to the power of God than tyranny." But now, while we make Him "to have no pleasure in wickedness," is He, under this pretext, to be torn from His throne, as the Judge of the world, and as having no Omnipotence whereby to work good by means of evil men and their evil deeds? For the fact is, that as God frequently works out His judgments by the hands of the wicked, whosoever shall confine Him within the bounds of permission will at once expel Him from His office as Judge of the world! The sons of Eli had evilly and disgracefully abused their priestly office, and they perished by the hand of the Philistines. Now, by the canon of our great theologian, we must interpret this as meaning that all was done by the permission of God. But what saith the Scripture? That all was done because God had purposed to destroy them. Just observe to what extent of madness all madmen are driven by their madness where there is no religion, no modesty, no shame to stop them. They rush on, till they bring not only men, but God also, under subjection to their frenzied fictions.

But as it would be utterly absurd to hold that anything could be done contrary to the will of God, seeing that God is at Divine liberty to prevent that which He does not will to be done, how ingenious a workman this being is in getting rid of this argument which stands against him, let us now in a few words explain. He first of all asserts that it is ridiculous to inquire into this at all. What a pity it was that Augustine had not such a monitor by his side, to save him all the holy labour which he spent upon this great question, and by which labour



(according to our theological hero) he made himself "perfectly ridiculous"! Whereas, Augustine proves, by this very argument, that everything that is done on earth is effectually ruled and overruled by this secret providence of God. Nor does he hesitate to conclude that everything that is done, is done by the will of God! According to which conclusion, the Psalmist testifies that God, sitting in heaven, doth what He will: "But our God (saith the Psalmist) is in the heavens: He hath done whatsoever He hath pleased" (Ps. cxv. 3). But why, I pray you, is this question a ridiculous one? Our great theological monitor replies: "Because it is not lawful to ask of God a reason for His actions." Why does not our modest monitor, then, retain this great modesty throughout his treatment of this mighty matter? Whence arise, then, this modest being's furious clamours and tumults? Whence, but from the fact that the proud and ignorant reject, with hatred and disdain, the counsels of God? because, forsooth, their puny minds cannot grasp their profundity and immensity! Leave, then, to God the liberty to order all things according to His own will, and all strife about the matter will end at once. But it is just and right that madmen should be left thus to contend one with the other, that they may put an end to each other by a mutual destruction.

Here we are brought back to the old point of vain defence resorted to by our theological hero: "That many things are done contrary to the will of God." This we most willingly grant, provided that this contrary to the will of God be not carried too far. God, for instance, often willed to call the Jews together, "but they would not"; though He called them to Himself by His prophets, "rising up early," as He Himself forcibly expresses it (Jer. vii. 13). But as conversion is God's peculiar gift, He converts Himself effectually those whom He wills to be converted in reality. In what sense it is that Paul says, "God will have all men to be saved" (1 Tim. ii. 4), let readers, as we have before

observed and explained, learn from the context. There are different degrees and kinds of salvation (as we have shown above when opening this passage). But God does not deem all men (as we have before shown from the history of the world and from the few nations to whom God sent even His external word) worthy of the external word; and they are few whom He makes the partakers of His secret illumination.

But to extricate himself the more easily from his perplexity, this unworthy mortal finally catches up for his defence the shield of free will. He says, "That there is no wonder whatever in God's not preventing men from doing evil, who have the free will to do what they please." Whereas, that is the mighty wonder! And it is resolvable only by the sublime truth and its doctrine that whatsoever men do, they do according to the eternal will and secret purpose of God! But why does this vain being thrust upon us a term fabricated out of nothing? What is free will, when the Scripture everywhere declares that man, being the captive, the servant, and the slave of the devil, is carried away into wickedness of every kind with his whole mind and inclination, being utterly incapable of understanding the things of God, much less of doing them?

In this refutation of dog-faced dishonesty, as the omnipotence of God is honestly and clearly maintained against calumnies of every kind, I feel confident that I have humbly performed a work both useful and gratifying to the Church, and also acceptable unto God.

"According to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will."--Ephes. i. 11.

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out."--Romans xi. 33.

**BOOK 2**  
**CHAPTER 1**

# **BY THE FALL AND REVOLT OF ADAM THE WHOLE HUMAN RACE WAS DELIVERED TO THE CURSE, AND DEGENERATED FROM ITS ORIGINAL CONDITION; THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN**

**by John Calvin**

## **1. WRONG AND RIGHT KNOWLEDGE OF SELF**

With good reason the ancient proverb strongly recommended knowledge of self to man. For if it is considered disgraceful for us not to know all that pertains to the business of human life, even more detestable is our ignorance of ourselves, by which, when making decisions in necessary matters, we miserably deceive and even blind ourselves!

But since this precept is so valuable, we ought more diligently to avoid applying it perversely. This, we observe, has happened to certain philosophers, who, while urging man to know himself, propose the goal of recognizing his own worth and excellence. And they would have him contemplate in himself nothing but what swells him with empty assurance and puffs him up with pride [Genesis 1:27].

But knowledge of ourselves lies first in considering what we were given at creation and how generously God continues his favor toward us, in order to know how great our natural excellence would be if

only it had remained unblemished; yet at the same time to bear in mind that there is in us nothing of our own, but that we hold on sufferance whatever God has bestowed upon us. Hence we are ever dependent on him. Secondly, to call to mind our miserable condition after Adam's fall; the awareness of which, when all our boasting and self-assurance are laid low, should truly humble us and overwhelm us with shame. In the beginning God fashioned us after his image [Genesis 1:27] that he might arouse our minds both to zeal for virtue and to meditation upon eternal life. Thus, in order that the great nobility of our race (which distinguishes us from brute beasts) may not be buried beneath our own dullness of wit, it behooves us to recognize that we have been endowed with reason and understanding so that, by leading a holy and upright life, we may press on to the appointed goal of blessed immortality.

But that primal worthiness cannot come to mind without the sorry spectacle of our foulness and dishonor presenting itself by way of contrast, since in the person of the first man we have fallen from our original condition. From this source arise abhorrence and displeasure with ourselves, as well as true humility; and thence is kindled a new zeal to seek God, in whom each of us may recover those good things which we have utterly and completely lost.

## 2. MAN BY NATURE INCLINES TO DELUDED SELF-ADMIRATION

Here, then, is what God's truth requires us to seek in examining ourselves: it requires the kind of knowledge that will strip us of all confidence in our own ability, deprive us of all occasion for boasting, and lead us to submission. We ought to keep this rule if we wish to reach the true goal of both wisdom and action. I am quite aware how much more pleasing is that principle which invites us to weigh our

good traits rather than to look upon our miserable want and dishonor, which ought to overwhelm us with shame. There is, indeed, nothing that man's nature seeks more eagerly than to be flattered. Accordingly, when his nature becomes aware that its gifts are highly esteemed, it tends to be unduly credulous about them. It is thus no wonder that the majority of men have erred so perniciously in this respect. For, since blind self-love is innate in all mortals, they are most freely persuaded that nothing inheres in themselves that deserves to be considered hateful. Thus even with no outside support the utterly vain opinion generally obtains credence that man is abundantly sufficient of himself to lead a good and blessed life. But if any take a more modest attitude and concede something to God, so as not to appear to claim everything for themselves, they so divide the credit that the chief basis for boasting and confidence remains in themselves.

Nothing pleases man more than the sort of alluring talk that tickles the pride that itches in his very marrow. Therefore, in nearly every age, when anyone publicly extolled human nature in most favorable terms, he was listened to with applause. But however great such commendation of human excellence is that teaches man to be satisfied with himself, it does nothing but delight in its own sweetness; indeed, it so deceives as to drive those who assent to it into utter ruin. For what do we accomplish when, relying upon every vain assurance, we consider, plan, try, and undertake what we think is fitting; then - while in our very first efforts we are actually forsaken by and destitute of sane understanding as well as true virtue - we nonetheless rashly press on until we hurtle to destruction? Yet for those confident they can do anything by their own power, things cannot happen otherwise. Whoever, then, heeds such teachers as hold us back with thought only of our good traits will not advance in self-knowledge, but will be plunged into the worst ignorance.

### 3. THE TWO CHIEF PROBLEMS OF SELF-KNOWLEDGE

God's truth, therefore, agrees with the common judgment of all mortals, that the second part of wisdom consists in the knowledge of ourselves; yet there is much disagreement as to how we acquire that knowledge. According to carnal judgment, man seems to know himself very well, when, confident in his understanding and uprightness, he becomes bold and urges himself to the duties of virtue and, declaring war on vices, endeavors to exert himself with all his ardor toward the excellent and the honorable. But he who scrutinizes and examines himself according to the standard of divine judgment finds nothing to lift his heart to self-confidence. And the more deeply he examines himself, the more dejected he becomes, until, utterly deprived of all such assurance, he leaves nothing to himself with which to direct his life aright.

Yet God would not have us forget our original nobility, which he had bestowed upon our father Adam, and which ought truly to arouse in us a zeal for righteousness and goodness. For we cannot think upon either our first condition or to what purpose we were formed without being prompted to meditate upon immortality, and to yearn after the Kingdom of God. That recognition, however, far from encouraging pride in us, discourages us and casts us into humility. For what is that origin? It is that from which we have fallen. What is that end of our creation? It is that from which we have been completely estranged, so that sick of our miserable lot we groan, and in groaning we sigh for that lost worthiness. But when we say that man ought to see nothing in himself to cause elation, we mean that he has nothing to rely on to make him proud.

Therefore, if it is agreeable, let us divide the knowledge that man ought to have of himself. First, he should consider for what purpose

he was created and endowed with no mean gifts. By this knowledge he should arouse himself to meditation upon divine worship and the future life. Secondly, he should weigh his own abilities - or rather, lack of abilities. When he perceives this lack, he should lie prostrate in extreme confusion, so to speak, reduced to nought. The first consideration tends to make him recognize the nature of his duty; the second, the extent of his ability to carry it out. We shall discuss each as the order of teaching demands.

#### 4. THE HISTORY OF THE FALL SHOWS US WHAT SIN IS [GENESIS CH. 3]: UNFAITHFULNESS

Because what God so severely punished must have been no light sin but a detestable crime, we must consider what kind of sin there was in Adam's desertion that enkindled God's fearful vengeance against the whole of mankind. To regard Adam's sin as gluttonous intemperance (a common notion) is childish. As if the sum and head of all virtues lay in abstaining solely from one fruit, when all sorts of desirable delights abounded everywhere; and not only abundance but also magnificent variety was at hand in that blessed fruitfulness of earth!

We ought therefore to look more deeply. Adam was denied the tree of the knowledge of good and evil to test his obedience and prove that he was willingly under God's command. The very name of the tree shows the sole purpose of the precept was to keep him content with his lot and to prevent him from becoming puffed up with wicked lust. But the promise by which he was bidden to hope for eternal life so long as he ate from the tree of life, and, conversely, the terrible threat of death once he tasted of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, served to prove and exercise his faith. Hence it is not hard to deduce by what means Adam provoked God's wrath upon himself. Indeed,



Augustine speaks rightly when he declares that pride was the beginning of all evils. For if ambition had not raised man higher than was meet and right, he could have remained in his original state.

But we must take a fuller definition from the nature of the temptation which Moses describes. Since the woman through unfaithfulness was led away from God's Word by the serpent's deceit, it is already clear that disobedience was the beginning of the Fall. This Paul also confirms, teaching that all were lost through the disobedience of one man. [Romans 5:19.] Yet it is at the same time to be noted that the first man revolted from God's authority, not only because he was seized by Satan's blandishments, but also because, contemptuous of truth, he turned aside to falsehood. And surely, once we hold God's Word in contempt, we shake off all reverence for him. For, unless we listen attentively to him, his majesty will not dwell among us, nor his worship remain perfect.

Unfaithfulness, then, was the root of the Fall. But thereafter ambition and pride, together with ungratefulness, arose, because Adam by seeking more than was granted him shamefully spurned God's great bounty, which had been lavished upon him. To have been made in the likeness of God seemed a small matter to a son of earth unless he also attained equality with God - a monstrous wickedness! If apostasy, by which man withdraws from the authority of his Maker - indeed insolently shakes off his yoke - is a foul and detestable offense, it is vain to extenuate Adam's sin. Yet it was not simple apostasy, but was joined with vile reproaches against God. These assented to Satan's slanders, which accused God of falsehood and envy and ill will. Lastly, faithlessness opened the door to ambition, and ambition was indeed the mother of obstinate disobedience; as a result, men, having cast off the fear of God, threw themselves wherever lust carried them. Hence Bernard rightly teaches that the

door of salvation is opened to us when we receive the gospel today with our ears, even as death was then admitted by those same windows when they were opened to Satan [cf. Jeremiah 9:21]. For Adam would never have dared oppose God's authority unless he had disbelieved in God's Word. Here, indeed, was the best bridle to control all passions: the thought that nothing is better than to practice righteousness by obeying God's commandments; then, that the ultimate goal of the happy life is to be loved by him. Therefore Adam, carried away by the devil's blasphemies, as far as he was able extinguished the whole glory of God.

## 5. THE FIRST SIN AS ORIGINAL SIN

As it was the spiritual life of Adam to remain united and bound to his Maker, so estrangement from him was the death of his soul. Nor is it any wonder that he consigned his race to ruin by his rebellion when he perverted the whole order of nature in heaven and on earth. "All creatures," says Paul, "are groaning" [Romans 8:22], "subject to corruption, not of their own will" [Romans 8:20]. If the cause is sought, there is no doubt that they are bearing part of the punishment deserved by man, for whose use they were created. Since, therefore, the curse, which goes about through all the regions of the world, flowed hither and you from Adam's guilt, it is not unreasonable if it is spread to all his offspring. Therefore, after the heavenly image was obliterated in him, he was not the only one to suffer this punishment - that, in place of wisdom, virtue, holiness, truth, and justice, with which adornments he had been clad, there came forth the most filthy plagues, blindness, impotence, impurity, vanity, and injustice - but he also entangled and immersed his offspring in the same miseries.

This is the inherited corruption, which the church fathers termed "original sin," meaning by the word "sin" the depravation of a nature previously good and pure. There was much contention over this matter, inasmuch as nothing is farther from the usual view than for all to be made guilty by the guilt of one, and thus for sin to be made common. This seems to be the reason why the most ancient doctors of the church touched upon this subject so obscurely. At least they explained it less clearly than was fitting. Yet this timidity could not prevent Pelagius from rising up with the profane fiction that Adam sinned only to his own loss without harming his posterity. Through this subtlety Satan attempted to cover up the disease and thus to render it incurable. But when it was shown by the clear testimony of Scripture that sin was transmitted from the first man to all his posterity [Romans 5:12], Pelagius quibbled that it was transmitted through imitation, not propagation. Therefore, good men (and Augustine above the rest) labored to show us that we are corrupted not by derived wickedness, but that we bear inborn defect from our mother's womb. To deny this was the height of shamelessness. But no man will wonder at the temerity of the Pelagians and Coelestians when he perceived from that holy man's warnings what shameless beasts they were in all other respects. Surely there is no doubt that David confesses himself to have been "begotten in iniquities, and conceived by his mother in sin" [ <195105> Psalm 51:5 p.]. There he does not reprove his father and mother for their sins; but, that he may better commend God's goodness toward himself, from his very conception he carries the confession of his own perversity. Since it is clear that this was not peculiar to David, it follows that the common lot of mankind is exemplified in him.

Therefore all of us, who have descended from impure seed, are born infected with the contagion of sin. In fact, before we saw the light of this life we were soiled and spotted in God's sight. "For who can

bring a clean thing from an unclean? There is not one" - as The Book of Job says [Job 14:4, cf. Vg.].

## 6. ORIGINAL SIN DOES NOT REST UPON IMITATION

We hear that the uncleanness of the parents is so transmitted to the children that all without any exception are defiled at their begetting. But we will not find the beginning of this pollution unless we go back to the first parent of all, as its source. We must surely hold that Adam was not only the progenitor but, as it were, the root of human nature; and that therefore in his corruption mankind deserved to be vitiated. This the apostle makes clear from a comparison of Adam with Christ. "As through one man sin came into the world and through sin death, which spread among all men when all sinned" [Romans 5:12], thus through Christ's grace righteousness and life are restored to us [Romans 5:17]. What nonsense will the Pelagians chatter here? That Adam's sin was propagated by imitation? Then does Christ's righteousness benefit us only as an example set before us to imitate? Who can bear such sacrilege! But if it is beyond controversy that Christ's righteousness, and thereby life, are ours by communication, it immediately follows that both were lost in Adam, only to be recovered in Christ; and that sin and death crept in through Adam, only to be abolished through Christ. These are no obscure words: "Many are made righteous by Christ's obedience as by Adam's disobedience they had been made sinners" [Romans 5:19 p.]. Here, then, is the relationship between the two: Adam, implicating us in his ruin, destroyed us with himself; but Christ restores us to salvation by his grace. In such clear light of truth, I think that there is no need for longer or more laborious proof. In the first letter to the Corinthians, Paul wishes to strengthen the faith of the godly in the resurrection. Here he accordingly shows that the life lost in Adam is recovered in Christ [1 Corinthians 15:22]. Declaring that all of us

died in Adam, Paul at the same time plainly testifies that we are infected with the disease of sin. For condemnation could not reach those untouched by the guilt of iniquity. The clearest explanation of his meaning lies in the other part of the statement, in which he declares that the hope of life is restored in Christ. But it is well known that this occurs in no other way than that wonderful communication whereby Christ transfuses into us the power of his righteousness. As it is written elsewhere, "The Spirit is life to us because of righteousness" [Rom. 8:10 p.]. There is consequently but one way for us to interpret the statement, "We have died in Adam": Adam, by sinning, not only took upon himself misfortune and ruin but also plunged our nature into like destruction. This was not due to the guilt of himself alone, which would not pertain to us at all, but was because he infected all his posterity with that corruption into which he had fallen.

Paul's statement that "by nature all are children of wrath" [Ephesians 2:3] could not stand, unless they had already been cursed in the womb itself. Obviously, Paul does not mean "nature" as it was established by God, but as it was vitiated in Adam. For it would be most unfitting for God to be made the author of death. Therefore, Adam so corrupted himself that infection spread from him to all his descendants. Christ himself, our heavenly judge, clearly enough proclaims that all men<sup>10</sup> are born wicked and depraved when he says that "whatever is born of flesh is flesh" [John 3:6], and therefore the door of life is closed to all until they have been reborn [John 3:5].

## 7. THE TRANSMISSION OF SIN FROM ONE GENERATION TO ANOTHER

No anxious discussion is needed to understand this question, which troubled the fathers not a little - whether the son's soul proceeds by

derivation from the father's soul - because the contagion chiefly lies in it. With this we ought to be content: that the Lord entrusted to Adam those gifts which he willed to be conferred upon human nature. Hence Adam, when he lost the gifts received, lost them not only for himself but for us all. Who should worry about the derivation of the soul when he hears that Adam had received for us no less than for himself those gifts which he lost, and that they had not been given to one man but had been assigned to the whole human race? There is nothing absurd, then, in supposing that, when Adam was despoiled, human nature was left naked and destitute, or that when he was infected with sin, contagion crept into human nature. Hence, rotten branches came forth from a rotten root, which transmitted their rottenness to the other twigs sprouting from them. For thus were the children corrupted in the parent, so that they brought disease upon their children's children. That is, the beginning of corruption in Adam was such that it was conveyed in a perpetual stream from the ancestors into their descendants. For the contagion does not take its origin from the substance of the flesh or soul, but because it had been so ordained by God that the first man should at one and the same time have and lose, both for himself and for his descendants, the gifts that God had bestowed upon him.

But it is easy to refute the quibble of the Pelagians, who hold it unlikely that children should derive corruption from godly parents, inasmuch as the offspring ought rather to be sanctified by their parents' purity [cf. 1 Corinthians 7:14]. For they descend not from their parents' spiritual regeneration but from their carnal generation. Hence, as Augustine says, whether a man is a guilty unbeliever or an innocent believer, he begets not innocent but guilty children, for he begets them from a corrupted nature. Now, it is a special blessing of God's people that they partake in some degree of their parents' holiness. This does not gainsay the fact that the universal curse of the

human race preceded. For guilt is of nature, but sanctification, of supernatural grace.

## 8. THE NATURE OF ORIGINAL SIN

So that these remarks may not be made concerning an uncertain and unknown matter, let us define original sin. It is not my intention to investigate the several definitions proposed by various writers, but simply to bring forward the one that appears to me most in accordance with truth. Original sin, therefore, seems to be a hereditary depravity and corruption of our nature, diffused into all parts of the soul, which first makes us liable to God's wrath, then also brings forth in us those works which Scripture calls "works of the flesh" [Galatians 5:19]. And that is properly what Paul often calls sin. The works that come forth from it - such as adulteries, fornications, thefts, hatreds, murders, carousings - he accordingly calls "fruits of sin" [Galatians 5:19-21], although they are also commonly called "sins" in Scripture, and even by Paul himself. We must, therefore, distinctly note these two things. First, we are so vitiated and perverted in every part of our nature that by this great corruption we stand justly condemned and convicted before God, to whom nothing is acceptable but righteousness, innocence, and purity. And this is not liability for another's transgression. For, since it is said that we became subject to God's judgment through Adam's sin, we are to understand it not as if we, guiltless and undeserving, bore the guilt of his offense but in the sense that, since we through his transgression have become entangled in the curse, he is said to have made us guilty. Yet not only has punishment fallen upon us from Adam, but a contagion imparted by him resides in us, which justly deserves punishment. For this reason, Augustine, though he often calls sin "another's" to show more clearly that it is distributed among us through propagation, nevertheless declares at the same time that it is

peculiar to each. And the apostle himself most eloquently testifies that "death has spread to all because all have sinned" [Romans 5:12]. That is, they have been enveloped in original sin and defiled by its stains. For that reason, even infants themselves, while they carry their condemnation along with them from the mother's womb, are guilty not of another's fault but of their own. For, even though the fruits of their iniquity have not yet come forth, they have the seed enclosed within them. Indeed, their whole nature is a seed of sin; hence it can be only hateful and abhorrent to God. From this it follows that it is rightly considered sin in God's sight, for without guilt there would be no accusation.

Then comes the second consideration: that this perversity never ceases in us, but continually bears new fruits - the works of the flesh that we have already described - just as a burning furnace gives forth flame and sparks, or water ceaselessly bubbles up from a spring. Thus those who have defined original sin as "the lack of the original righteousness, which ought to reside in us," although they comprehend in this definition the whole meaning of the term, have still not expressed effectively enough its power and energy. For our nature is not only destitute and empty of good, but so fertile and fruitful of every evil that it cannot be idle. Those who have said that original sin is "concupiscence" have used an appropriate word, if only it be added - something that most will by no means concede - that whatever is in man, from the understanding to the will, from the soul even to the flesh, has been defiled and crammed with this concupiscence. Or, to put it more briefly, the whole man is of himself nothing but concupiscence.

## 9. SIN OVERTURNS THE WHOLE MAN



For this reason, I have said that all parts of the soul were possessed by sin after Adam deserted the fountain of righteousness. For not only did a lower appetite seduce him, but unspeakable impiety occupied the very citadel of his mind, and pride penetrated to the depths of his heart. Thus it is pointless and foolish to restrict the corruption that arises thence only to what are called the impulses of the senses; or to call it the "kindling wood" that attracts, arouses, and drags into sin only that part which they term "sensuality." In this matter Peter Lombard has betrayed his complete ignorance. For, in seeking and searching out its seat, he says that it lies in the flesh, as Paul testifies; yet not intrinsically, but because it appears more in the flesh. As if Paul were indicating that only a part of the soul, and not its entire nature, is opposed to supernatural grace! Paul removes all doubt when he teaches that corruption subsists not in one part only, but that none of the soul remains pure or untouched by that mortal disease. For in his discussion of a corrupt nature Paul not only condemns the inordinate impulses of the appetites that are seen, but especially contends the mind is given over to blindness and the heart to depravity.

The whole third chapter of Romans is nothing but a description of original sin [vs. 1-20]. From the "renewal" that fact appears more clearly. For the Spirit, who is opposed to the old man and to the flesh, not only marks the grace whereby the lower or sensual part of the soul is corrected, but embraces the full reformation of all the parts. Consequently, Paul not only enjoins that brute appetites be brought to nought but bids us "be renewed in the spirit of our mind" [Ephesians 4:23]; in another passage he similarly urges us to "be transformed in newness of mind" [Romans 12:2]. From this it follows that that part in which the excellence and nobility of the soul especially shine has not only been wounded, but so corrupted that it needs to be healed and to put on a new nature as well. We shall soon

see to what extent sin occupies both mind and heart. Here I only want to suggest briefly that the whole man is overwhelmed - as by a deluge - from head to foot, so that no part is immune from sin and all that proceeds from him is to be imputed to sin. As Paul says, all turnings of the thoughts to the flesh are enmities against God [Romans 8:7], and are therefore death [Romans 8:6].

#### 10. SIN IS NOT OUR NATURE, BUT ITS DERANGEMENT

Now away with those persons who dare write God's name upon their faults, because we declare that men are vicious by nature! They perversely search out God's handiwork in their own pollution, when they ought rather to have sought it in that unimpaired and uncorrupted nature of Adam. Our destruction, therefore, comes from the guilt of our flesh, not from God, inasmuch as we have perished solely because we have degenerated from our original condition.

Let no one grumble here that God could have provided better for our salvation if he had forestalled Adam's fall. Pious minds ought to loathe this objection, because it manifests inordinate curiosity. Furthermore, the matter has to do with the secret of predestination, which will be discussed later in its proper place. Let us accordingly remember to impute our ruin to depravity of nature, in order that we may not accuse God himself, the Author of nature. True, this deadly wound clings to nature, but it is a very important question whether the wound has been inflicted from outside or has been present from the beginning. Yet it is evident that the wound was inflicted through sin. We have, therefore, no reason to complain except against ourselves. Scripture has diligently noted this fact. For Ecclesiastes says: "This I know, that God made man upright, but they have sought out many devices." [Ecclesiastes 7:29.] Obviously, man's ruin is to be

ascribed to man alone; for he, having acquired righteousness by God's kindness, has by his own folly sunk into vanity.

#### 11. "NATURAL" CORRUPTION OF THE "NATURE" CREATED BY GOD

Therefore we declare that man is corrupted through natural vitiation, but a vitiation that did not flow from nature. We deny that it has flowed from nature in order to indicate that it is an adventitious quality which comes upon man rather than a substantial property which has been implanted from the beginning. Yet we call it "natural" in order that no man may think that anyone obtains it through bad conduct, since it holds all men fast by hereditary right. Our usage of the term is not without authority. The apostle states: "We are all by nature children of wrath." [Ephesians 2:3.] How could God, who is pleased by the least of his works, have been hostile to the noblest of all his creatures? But he is hostile toward the corruption of his work rather than toward the work itself. Therefore if it is right to declare that man, because of his vitiated nature, is naturally abominable to God, it is also proper to say that man is naturally depraved and faulty. Hence Augustine, in view of man's corrupted nature, is not afraid to call "natural" those sins which necessarily reign in our flesh wherever God's grace is absent. Thus vanishes the foolish trifling of the Manichees, who, when they imagined wickedness of substance in man, dared fashion another creator for him in order that they might not seem to assign the beginning of evil to the righteous God.

# **BOOK 2**

## **CHAPTER 2**

MAN HAS NOW BEEN DEPRIVED OF FREEDOM OF CHOICE  
AND BOUND OVER TO MISERABLE SERVITUDE

**by John Calvin**

(Perils of this topic: point of view established, 1)

1. We have now seen that the dominion of sin, from the time it held the first man bound to itself, not only ranges among all mankind, but also completely occupies individual souls. It remains for us to investigate more closely whether we have been deprived of all freedom since we have been reduced to this servitude; and, if any particle of it still survives, how far its power extends. But in order that the truth of this question may be more readily apparent to us, I shall presently set a goal to which the whole argument should be directed. The best way to avoid error will be to consider the perils that threaten man on both sides.

(1) When man is denied all uprightness, he immediately takes occasion for complacency from that fact; and, because he is said to have no ability to pursue righteousness on his own, he holds all such pursuit to be of no consequence, as if it did not pertain to him at all.

(2) Nothing, however slight, can be credited to man without depriving God of his honor, and without man himself falling into ruin through brazen confidence. Augustine points out both these precipices.

Here, then, is the course that we must follow if we are to avoid crashing upon these rocks: when man has been taught that no good thing remains in his power, and that he is hedged about on all sides by most miserable necessity, in spite of this he should nevertheless be instructed to aspire to a good of which he is empty, to a freedom of which he has been deprived.

In fact, he may thus be more sharply aroused from inactivity than if it were supposed that he was endowed with the highest virtues. Everyone sees how necessary this second point is. I observe that too many persons have doubts about the first point. For since this is an undoubted fact, that nothing of his own ought to be taken away from man, it ought to be clearly evident how important it is for him to be barred from false boasting. At the time when man was distinguished with the noblest marks of honor through God's beneficence, not even then was he permitted to boast about himself. How much more ought he now to humble himself, cast down as he has been - due to his own ungratefulness - from the loftiest glory into extreme disgrace! At that time, I say, when he had been advanced to the highest degree of honor, Scripture attributed nothing else to him than that he had been created in the image of God [Genesis 1:27], thus suggesting that man was blessed, not because of his own good actions, but by participation in God. What, therefore, now remains for man, bare and destitute of all glory, but to recognize God for whose beneficence he could not be grateful when he abounded with the riches of his grace; and at least, by confessing his own poverty, to glorify him in whom he did not previously glory in recognition of his own blessings?

Also, it is no less to our advantage than pertinent to God's glory that we be deprived of all credit for our wisdom and virtue. Thus those who bestow upon us anything beyond the truth add sacrilege to our

ruin. When we are taught to wage our own war, we are but borne aloft on a reed stick, only to fall as soon as it breaks! Yet we flatter our strength unduly when we compare it even to a reed stick! For whatever vain men devise and babble concerning these matters is but smoke. Therefore Augustine with good reason often repeats the famous statement that free will is by its defenders more trampled down than strengthened. It has been necessary to say this by way of preface because some, while they hear that man's power is rooted out from its very foundations that God's power may be built up in man, bitterly loathe this whole disputation as dangerous, not to say superfluous. Nonetheless, it appears both fundamental in religion and most profitable for us.

(Critical discussion of opinions on free will given by philosophers and theologians, 2-9)

## 2. THE PHILOSOPHERS TRUST IN THE POWER OF THE UNDERSTANDING

Since we said just above that the faculties of the soul are situated in the mind and the heart, now let us examine what both parts can do. The philosophers (obviously with substantial agreement) imagine that the reason is located in the mind, which like a lamp illumines all counsels, and like a queen governs the will. For they suppose that it is suffused with divine light to take the most effective counsel; and that it excels in power to wield the most effective command. On the other hand, they imagine that sense perception is gripped by torpor and dimness of sight; so that it always creeps along the ground, is entangled in baser things, and never rises up to true discernment. They hold that the appetite, if it undertakes to obey the reason and does not permit itself to be subjected to the senses, is borne along to the pursuit of virtues, holds the right way, and is molded into will.

But if it subjects itself to the bondage of the senses, it is so corrupted and perverted by the latter as to degenerate into lust. In their opinion those faculties of which I have spoken above - understanding, sense, appetite, or will (which last designation is now accepted in more common usage) - have their seat in the soul. These philosophers consequently declare that the understanding is endowed with reason, the best ruling principle for the leading of a good and blessed life, provided it sustains itself within its own excellence and displays the strength bestowed upon it by nature. But they state that the lower impulse, called "sense," by which man is drawn off into error and delusion is such that it can be tamed and gradually overcome by reason's rod. Further, they locate the will midway between reason and sense. That is, it possesses right and freedom of itself either to obey reason or to prostitute itself to be ravished by sense - whichever it pleases.

### 3. THUS, IN SPITE OF ALL, THE PHILOSOPHERS ASSERT FREEDOM OF THE WILL

Sometimes, convinced by experience itself, they do not deny the great difficulty with which man establishes the rule of reason a kingdom within himself. At one time he is tickled by the enticements of pleasures; at another is tricked by a false image of good things; and again is violently struck by immoderate inclinations, and as by cords and strings is pulled in divers directions, as Plato says.

Accordingly, Cicero says that the faint glimmer given us by nature is soon quenched by our wicked opinions and evil customs. The philosophers concede that such diseases, once they have occupied men's minds, rage so violently that no one can easily restrain them. Nor do these writers hesitate to compare them to wild horses, which

when reason is overthrown, as a charioteer tossed from his chariot, intemperately and without restraint play the wanton.

Nevertheless, the philosophers hold as certain that virtues and vices are in our power. They say: If to do this or that depends upon our choice, so also does not to do it. Again, if not to do it, so also to do it. Now we seem to do what we do, and to shun what we shun, by free choice. Therefore, if we do any good thing when we please, we can also not do it; if we do any evil, we can also shun it. Indeed, certain of them have broken forth into such license as to boast that the fact that we live is a gift of the gods, but if we live well and holily, it is our own doing. Thence, also, comes that saying of Cicero in the person of Cotta, that "because every man acquires virtue for himself, no wise man ever has thanked God for it. For we are praised for our virtue, and glory in our virtue. This would not happen if the gift were of God and not from ourselves." A little later he says: "This is the judgment of all mortals, that fortune is to be sought from God but that wisdom is to be acquired from oneself. This is the sum of the opinion of all philosophers: reason which abides in human understanding is a sufficient guide for right conduct; the will, being subject to it, is indeed incited by the senses to evil things; but since the will has free choice, it cannot be hindered from following reason as its leader in all things.

#### 4. THE CHURCH FATHERS GENERALLY SHOW LESS CLARITY BUT A TENDENCY TO ACCEPT FREEDOM OF THE WILL. WHAT IS FREE WILL?

All ecclesiastical writers have recognized both that the soundness of reason in man is gravely wounded through sin, and that the will has been very much enslaved by evil desires. Despite this, many of them have come far too close to the philosophers. Of these, the early ones



seem to me to have, with a twofold intent, elevated human powers for the following reasons. First, a frank confession of man's powerlessness would have brought upon them the jeers of the philosophers with whom they were in conflict. Second, they wished to avoid giving fresh occasion for slothfulness to a flesh already indifferent toward good. Therefore, that they might teach nothing absurd to the common judgment of men, they strove to harmonize the doctrine of Scripture halfway with the beliefs of the philosophers. Yet they paid especial attention to the second point, not to give occasion for slothfulness. This appears from their words.

Chrysostom somewhere expresses it: "Since God has placed good and evil in our power, he has granted free decision of choice, and does not restrain the unwilling, but embraces the willing." Again: "He who is evil, if he should wish, is often changed into a good man; and he who is good falls through sloth and becomes evil. For the Lord has made our nature free to choose. Nor does he impose necessity upon us, but furnishes suitable remedies and allows everything to hinge on the sick man's own judgment."

Again: "Just as we can never do anything rightly unless we are aided by God's grace, so we cannot acquire heavenly favor unless we bring our portion." But he had said before: "In order that not everything may depend on divine help, we must at the same time bring something ourselves." One of his common expressions is: "Let us bring what is ours; God will furnish the rest." What Jerome says agrees with this: "Ours is to begin, God's to fulfill; ours to offer what we can, his to supply what we cannot."

Surely you see by these statements that they credited man with more zeal for virtue than he deserved because they thought that they could not rouse our inborn sluggishness unless they argued that we sinned

by it alone. But how skillfully they did this we shall subsequently see. A little later it will be quite evident that these opinions to which we have referred are utterly false.

Further, even though the Greeks above the rest - and Chrysostom especially among them - extol the ability of the human will, yet all the ancients, save Augustine, so differ, waver, or speak confusedly on this subject, that almost nothing certain can be derived from their writings. Therefore, we shall not stop to list more exactly the opinions of individual writers; but we shall only select at random from one or another, as the explanation of the argument would seem to demand.

The other writers who came after them, while each sought praise for his own cleverness in his defense of human nature, one after another gradually fell from bad to worse, until it came to the point that man was commonly thought to be corrupted only in his sensual part and to have a perfectly unblemished reason and a will also largely unimpaired. Meanwhile the well-known statement flitted from mouth to mouth: that the natural gifts in man were corrupted, but the supernatural taken away. But scarcely one man in a hundred had an inkling of its significance. For my part, if I wanted clearly to teach what the corruption of nature is like, I would readily be content with these words. But it is more important to weigh carefully what man can do, vitiated as he is in every part of his nature and shorn of supernatural gifts. Those, then, who boasted that they were Christ's disciples spoke of this matter too much like philosophers. The term "free will" has always been used among the Latins, as if man still remained upright. The Greeks were not ashamed to use a much more presumptuous word. They called it "self-power," as if each man had power in his own hands. All - even the common folk - were imbued with this principle, that man is endowed with free will. Yet some of

them who wish to seem distinguished do not know how far it extends. Let us, therefore, first investigate the force of this term; then let us determine from the simple testimony of Scripture what promise man, of his own nature, has for good or ill.

Few have defined what free will is, although it repeatedly occurs in the writings of all. Origen seems to have put forward a definition generally agreed upon among ecclesiastical writers when he said that it is a faculty of the reason to distinguish between good and evil, a faculty of the will to choose one or the other. Augustine does not disagree with this when he teaches that it is a faculty of the reason and the will to choose good with the assistance of grace; evil, when grace is absent. Bernard, wishing to speak subtly, "on account of the imperishable freedom of the will, and of the unfailing judgment of the reason," more obscurely says it is "consent." And Anselm's well-known definition is not plain enough: that it is the power of maintaining rectitude for its own sake. As a consequence, Peter Lombard and the Scholastics preferred to accept Augustine's definition because it was clearer and did not exclude God's grace. They realized that without grace the will could not be sufficient unto itself. Nevertheless, they bring forward their own ideas, which they consider either to be better or to make for a fuller explanation. First, they agree that the noun *arbitrium* ought rather to refer to reason, whose task it is to distinguish between good and evil; that the adjective *liberum* pertains properly to the will, which can be turned to one side or the other.

Hence, Thomas says that, since freedom properly belongs to the will, it would be most suitable to call free will a "power of selection," which, derived from a mingling of understanding and appetite, yet inclines more to appetite. We now find wherein they teach that the

power of free decision resides, that is, in the reason and the will. It remains for us to see briefly how much they attribute to each.

## 5. DIFFERENT KINDS OF "WILL" AND OF "FREEDOM" IN THE CHURCH FATHERS

Under man's free counsel they commonly class those intermediate things f50 which obviously do not pertain to God's Kingdom; but they refer true righteousness to God's special grace and spiritual regeneration. To show this, the author of the work *The Calling of the Gentiles* enumerates three kinds of will: first, the sensual; second, the psychic; third, the spiritual. With the first two, he teaches, man is freely endowed; the last is the work of the Holy Spirit in man. f51 We shall discuss in its proper place whether this is true. Now I intend briefly to weigh, not to refute, the statements of others. Hence, it happens that when the church fathers are discussing free will, they first inquire, not into its importance for civil or external actions, but into what promotes obedience to the divine law. Although I grant this latter question is the main one, I do not think the former ought to be completely neglected. I hope I shall render a very good account of my own opinion.

Now in the schools three kinds of freedom are distinguished: first from necessity, second from sin, third from misery. The first of these so inheres in man by nature that it cannot possibly be taken away, but the two others have been lost through sin. I willingly accept this distinction, except in so far as necessity is falsely confused with compulsion. The extent of the difference between them and the need to bear it in mind will appear elsewhere.

## 6. "OPERATING" AND "CO-OPERATING" GRACE?

If this be admitted, it will be indisputable that free will is not sufficient to enable man to do good works, unless he be helped by grace, indeed by special grace, which only the elect receive through regeneration. For I do not tarry over those fanatics who babble that grace is equally and indiscriminately distributed. But it has not yet been demonstrated whether man has been wholly deprived of all power to do good, or still has some power, though meager and weak; a power, indeed, that can do nothing of itself, but with the help of grace also does its part. The Master of the Sentences meant to settle this point when he taught: "We need two kinds of grace to render us capable of good works." He calls the first kind "operating," which ensures that we effectively will to do good. The second he calls "co-operating," which follows the good will as a help. The thing that displeases me about this division is that, while he attributes the effective desire for good to the grace of God, yet he hints that man by his very own nature somehow seeks after the good - though ineffectively. Thus Bernard declares the good will is God's work, yet concedes to man that of his own impulse he seeks this sort of good will. But this is far from Augustine's thought, from whom Peter Lombard pretended to have taken this distinction. The ambiguity in the second part offends me, for it has given rise to a perverted interpretation. They thought we co-operate with the assisting grace of God, because it is our right either to render it ineffectual by spurning the first grace, or to confirm it by obediently following it. This the author of the work *The Calling of the Gentiles* expresses as follows: "Those who employ the judgment of reason are free to forsake grace, so that not to have forsaken it is a meritorious act; and what could not be done without the co-operation of the Spirit is counted meritorious for those whose own will could not have accomplished it." I chose to note these two points in passing that you, my reader, may see how far I disagree with the sounder Schoolmen. I differ with the more recent Sophists f59 to an even

greater extent, as they are farther removed from antiquity. However, we at least understand from this division in what way they grant free will to man. For Lombard finally declares that we have free will, not in that we are equally capable of doing or thinking good and evil, but merely that we are freed from compulsion. According to Lombard, this freedom is not hindered, even if we be wicked and slaves of sin, and can do nothing but sin.

#### 7. THAT MAN IS NECESSARILY, BUT WITHOUT COMPULSION, A SINNER ESTABLISHES NO DOCTRINE OF FREE WILL

Man will then be spoken of as having this sort of free decision, not because he has free choice equally of good and evil, but because he acts wickedly by will, not by compulsion. Well put, indeed, but what purpose is served by labeling with a proud name such a slight thing? A noble freedom, indeed - for man not to be forced to serve sin, yet to be such a willing slave that his will is bound by the fetters of sin! Indeed, I abhor contentions about words, with which the church is harassed to no purpose. But I have scrupulously resolved to avoid those words which signify something absurd, especially where pernicious error is involved.

But how few men are there, I ask, who when they hear free will attributed to man do not immediately conceive him to be master of both his own mind and will, able of his own power to turn himself toward either good or evil? Yet (someone will say) this sort of danger will be removed if the common folk are diligently warned of its meaning. Man's disposition voluntarily so inclines to falsehood that he more quickly derives error from one word than truth from a wordy discourse. In this very word we have more certain experience of this matter than we should like. For, overlooking that interpretation of the ancient writers, almost all their successors,

while they have clung to the etymological meaning of the word, have been carried into a ruinous self-assurance.

## 8. AUGUSTINE'S DOCTRINE OF "FREE WILL"

Now, if the authority of the fathers has weight with us, they indeed have the word constantly on their lips, yet at the same time they declare what it connotes to them. First of all, there is Augustine, who does not hesitate to call it "unfree." Elsewhere he is angry toward those who deny that the will is free; but he states his main reason in these words: "Only let no one so dare to deny the decision of the will as to wish to excuse sin." Yet elsewhere he plainly confesses that "without the Spirit man's will is not free, since it has been laid under by shackling and conquering desires."

Likewise, when the will was conquered by the vice into which it had fallen, human nature began to lose its freedom. Again, man, using free will badly, has lost both himself and his will. Again, the free will has been so enslaved that it can have no power for righteousness. Again, what God's grace has not freed will not be free. Again, the justice of God is not fulfilled when the law so commands, and man acts as if by his own strength; but when the Spirit helps, and man's will, not free, but freed by God, obeys. And he gives a brief account of all these matters when he writes elsewhere: man, when he was created, received great powers of free will, but lost them by sinning. Therefore in another passage, after showing that free will is established through grace, he bitterly inveighs against those who claim it for themselves without grace. "Why then," he says, "do miserable men either dare to boast of free will before they have been freed, or of their powers, if they have already been freed? And they do not heed the fact that in the term 'free will' freedom seems to be implied. 'Now where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.' [2

Corinthians 3:17.] If, therefore, they are slaves of sin, why do they boast of free will? For a man becomes the slave of him who has overcome him. Now, if they have been freed, why do they boast as if it had come about through their own effort? Or are they so free as not to wish to be the slaves of him who says: 'Without me you can do nothing'" [John 15:5]?

Why, elsewhere he seems to ridicule the use of this word when he says that the will is indeed free but not freed: free of righteousness but enslaved to sin! he also repeats and explains this statement in another place, where he teaches that man is not free from righteousness except by decision of the will; moreover, he does not become free from sin except by the grace of the Savior. When he asserts that man's freedom is nothing but emancipation or manumission from righteousness he seems aptly to mock its empty name. If anyone, then, can use this word without understanding it in a bad sense, I shall not trouble him on this account. But I hold that because it cannot be retained without great peril, it will, on the contrary, be a great boon for the church if it be abolished. I prefer not to use it myself, and I should like others, if they seek my advice, to avoid it.

## 9. VOICES OF TRUTH AMONG THE CHURCH FATHERS

Perhaps I may seem to have brought a great prejudice upon myself when I confess that all ecclesiastical writers, except Augustine, have spoken so ambiguously or variously on this matter that nothing certain can be gained from their writings. Some will interpret this as if I wanted to deprive them of any voice in the matter because they all are my opponents. But I meant nothing else than that I wanted simply and sincerely to advise godly folk; for if they were to depend upon those men's opinions in this matter, they would always



flounder in uncertainty. At one time these writers teach that man, despoiled of the powers of free will, takes refuge in grace alone. At another time they provide, or seem to provide, him with his own armor.

Nevertheless, it is not difficult to demonstrate that they, in the ambiguity of their teaching, held human virtue in no or very slight esteem, but ascribed all credit for every good thing to the Holy Spirit. For this purpose I shall introduce certain of their expressions that clearly teach this. For what else does that statement of Cyprian mean which Augustine so often repeats: "We ought to glory in nothing, because nothing is ours," except that man, rendered utterly destitute in his own right, should learn to depend wholly upon God? What do Augustine and Eucherius mean when they interpret the tree of life as Christ and say that whoever extends his hand to it will live; while they interpret the tree of the knowledge of good and evil as the decision of the will, and say that he who, bereft of God's grace, tastes of it will die? What does Chrysostom mean when he says that every man is not only a sinner by nature, but wholly sin? If there is no good in us, if man is wholly sin from head to foot, if he is not even allowed to test how far the power of the will can be effective - how could anyone possibly parcel out the credit for good works between God and man? I could refer to very many statements of this sort from other authors. Lest, however, anyone should charge that I am choosing only what serves my purpose while I craftily suppress what disagrees with it, I shall refrain from such testimony. Yet I dare affirm this: however excessive they sometimes are in extolling free will, they have had this end in view - to teach man utterly to forsake confidence in his own virtue and to hold that all his strength rests in God alone. Now I come to a simple explanation of the truth concerning the nature of man.

(We must abandon all self-approbation, 10-11)

## 10. THE DOCTRINE OF FREE WILL IS ALWAYS IN DANGER OF ROBBING GOD OF HIS HONOR

Nevertheless, what I mentioned at the beginning of this chapter I am compelled here to repeat once more: that whoever is utterly cast down and overwhelmed by the awareness of his calamity, poverty, nakedness, and disgrace has thus advanced farthest in knowledge of himself. For there is no danger of man's depriving himself of too much so long as he learns that in God must be recouped what he himself lacks. Yet he cannot claim for himself ever so little beyond what is rightfully his without losing himself in vain confidence and without usurping God's honor, and thus becoming guilty of monstrous sacrilege. And truly, whenever this lust invades our mind to compel us to seek out something of our own that reposes in ourselves rather than in God, let us know that this thought is suggested to us by no other counselor than him who induced our first parents to want to become "like gods, knowing good and evil" [Genesis 3:5]. If it is the devil's word that exalts man in himself, let us give no place to it unless we want to take advice from our enemy. Sweet, indeed, it is for you to have so much power of your own that you are able to rely on yourself!

But, not to be deluded by this empty confidence, let us be deterred by numerous weighty passages of Scripture that utterly humiliate us. Such are these: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his arm." [Jeremiah 17:5.] Again, "God's delight is not in the strength of the horse, nor his pleasure in the legs of a man, but he takes pleasure in those who fear him, relying upon his goodness." [Psalm 147:10-11.]

Again, "He gives power to the faint, and to him who has no might he increases strength. He causes youths to faint and be weary, and young men to fall exhausted; but they who trust in him alone shall be strengthened." [Isaiah 40:29-31.] All these passages have this purpose: that we should not rely on any opinion of our own strength, however small it is, if we want God to be favorable toward us, Who "opposes the proud, but gives grace to the meek" [James 4:6 and 1 Peter 5:5, Vg.; cf. Proverbs 3:34]. Then let these promises come to mind: "I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground" [Isaiah 44:3]. Again, "All ye who thirst come to the waters." [Isaiah 55:1.] These testify that no one is permitted to receive God's blessings unless he is consumed with the awareness of his own poverty. And we must not pass over other statements like these, such as this one of Isaiah: "The sun shall be no more your light by day, nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you by night; but the Lord will be your everlasting light" [Isaiah 60:19]. Surely the Lord does not take away the brightness of the sun or moon from his servants; but because he wills alone to appear glorious in them, he calls them far away from trust even in those things which they deem most excellent.

## 11. TRUE HUMILITY GIVES GOD ALONE THE HONOR

A saying of Chrysostom's has always pleased me very much, that the foundation of our philosophy is humility. But that of Augustine pleases me even more: "When a certain rhetorician was asked what was the chief rule in eloquence, he replied, 'Delivery'; what was the second rule, 'Delivery'; what was the third rule, 'Delivery'; so if you ask me concerning the precepts of the Christian religion, first, second, third, and always I would answer, 'Humility.'"

But, as he elsewhere declares, Augustine does not consider it humility when a man, aware that he has some virtues, abstains from pride and arrogance; but when man truly feels that he has no refuge except in humility. "Let no man," he says, "flatter himself; of himself he is Satan. His blessing comes from God alone. For what do you have of your own but sin? Remove from yourself sin which is your own; for righteousness is of God." Again: "Why do we presume so much on ability of human nature? It is wounded, battered, troubled, lost. What we need is true confession, not false defense." Again: "When anyone realizes that in himself he is nothing and from himself he has no help, the weapons within him are broken, the wars are over. But all the weapons of impiety must be shattered, broken, and burned; you must remain unarmed, you must have no help in yourself. The weaker you are in yourself, the more readily the Lord will receive you." Thus in his interpretation of the Seventieth Psalm he forbids us to remember our own righteousness, that we may know God's righteousness; and he shows that God so commends his grace to us that we know that we are nothing. By God's mercy alone we stand, since by ourselves we are nothing but evil. At this point, then, let us not contend against God concerning our right, as if what is attributed to him were withdrawn from our well-being. As our humility is his loftiness, so the confession of our humility has a ready remedy in his mercy. Now I do not claim that man, unconvinced, should yield himself voluntarily, and that, if he has any powers, he should turn his mind from them in order that he may be subjected to true humility. But I require only that, laying aside the disease of self-love and ambition, by which he is blinded and thinks more highly of himself than he ought [cf. Galatians 6:3], he rightly recognize himself in the faithful mirror of Scripture [cf. James 1:22- 25].

(Man's natural endowments not wholly extinguished: the understanding, 12-17)

## 12. SUPERNATURAL GIFTS DESTROYED; NATURAL GIFTS CORRUPTED; BUT ENOUGH OF REASON REMAINS TO DISTINGUISH MAN FROM BRUTE BEASTS

And, indeed, that common opinion which they have taken from Augustine pleases me: that the natural gifts were corrupted in man through sin, but that his supernatural gifts were stripped from him. For by the latter clause they understand the light of faith as well as righteousness, which would be sufficient to attain heavenly life and eternal bliss. Therefore, withdrawing from the Kingdom of God, he is at the same time deprived of spiritual gifts, with which he had been furnished for the hope of eternal salvation. From this it follows that he is so banished from the Kingdom of God that all qualities belonging to the blessed life of the soul have been extinguished in him, until he recovers them through the grace of regeneration. Among these are faith, love of God, charity toward neighbor, zeal for holiness and for righteousness. All these, since Christ restores them in us, are considered adventitious, and beyond nature: and for this reason we infer that they were taken away. On the other hand, soundness of mind and uprightness of heart were withdrawn at the same time. This is the corruption of the natural gifts. For even though something of understanding and judgment remains as a residue along with the will, yet we shall not call a mind whole and sound that is both weak and plunged into deep darkness. And depravity of the will is all too well known.

Since reason, therefore, by which man distinguishes between good and evil, and by which he understands and judges, is a natural gift, it could not be completely wiped out; but it was partly weakened and partly corrupted, so that its misshapen ruins appear. John speaks in this sense: "The light still shines in the darkness, but the darkness comprehends it not" [John 1:5]. In these words both facts are clearly

expressed. First, in man's perverted and degenerate nature some sparks still gleam. These show him to be a rational being, differing from brute beasts, because he is endowed with understanding. Yet, secondly, they show this light choked with dense ignorance, so that it cannot come forth effectively.

Similarly the will, because it is inseparable from man's nature, did not perish, but was so bound to wicked desires that it cannot strive after the right. This is, indeed, a complete definition, but one needing a fuller explanation.

Therefore, so that the order of discussion may proceed according to our original division of man's soul into understanding and will, let us first of all examine the power of the understanding.

When we so condemn human understanding for its perpetual blindness as to leave it no perception of any object whatever, we not only go against God's Word, but also run counter to the experience of common sense. For we see implanted in human nature some sort of desire to search out the truth to which man would not at all aspire if he had not already savored it. Human understanding then possesses some power of perception, since it is by nature captivated by love of truth. The lack of this endowment in brute animals proves their nature gross and irrational. Yet this longing for truth, such as it is, languishes before it enters upon its race because it soon falls into vanity. Indeed, man's mind, because of its dullness, cannot hold to the right path, but wanders through various errors and stumbles repeatedly, as if it were groping in darkness, until it strays away and finally disappears. Thus it betrays how incapable it is of seeking and finding truth.

Then it grievously labors under another sort of vanity: often it cannot discern those things which it ought to exert itself to know. For this

reason, in investigating empty and worthless things, it torments itself in its absurd curiosity, while it carelessly pays little or no attention to matters that it should particularly understand. Indeed, it scarcely ever seriously applies itself to the study of them. Secular writers habitually complain of this perversity, yet they are almost all found to have entangled themselves in it. For this reason, Solomon, through the whole of his Ecclesiastes, after recounting all those studies in which men seem to themselves to be very wise, declares them to be vain and trifling [Ecclesiastes 1:2, 14; 2:11; etc.].

### 13. THE POWER OF THE UNDERSTANDING WITH RESPECT TO EARTHLY THINGS AND THE FORM OF THE HUMAN COMMUNITY

Yet its efforts do not always become so worthless <sup>f79</sup> as to have no effect, especially when it turns its attention to things below. On contrary, it is intelligent enough to taste something of things above, although it is more careless about investigating these. Nor does it carry on this latter activity with equal skill. For when the mind is borne above the level of the present life, it is especially convinced of its own frailty. Therefore, to perceive more clearly how far the mind can proceed in any matter according to the degree of its ability, we must here set forth a distinction. This, then, is the distinction: that there is one kind of understanding of earthly things; another of heavenly. I call "earthly things" those which do not pertain to God or his Kingdom, to true justice, or to the blessedness of the future life; but which have their significance and relationship with regard to the present life and are, in a sense, confined within its bounds. I call "heavenly things" the pure knowledge of God, the nature of true righteousness, and the mysteries of the Heavenly Kingdom. The first class includes government, household management, all mechanical

skills, and the liberal arts. In the second are the knowledge of God and of his will, and the rule by which we conform our lives to it.

Of the first class the following ought to be said: since man is by nature a social animal, he tends through natural instinct to foster and preserve society. Consequently, we observe that there exist in all men's minds universal impressions of a certain civic fair dealing and order. Hence no man is to be found who does not understand that every sort of human organization must be regulated by laws, and who does not comprehend the principles of those laws. Hence arises that unvarying consent of all nations and of individual mortals with regard to laws. For their seeds have, without teacher or lawgiver, been implanted in all men.

I do not dwell upon the dissension and conflicts that immediately spring up. Some, like thieves and robbers, desire to overturn all law and right, to break all legal restraints, to let their lust alone masquerade as law. Others think unjust what some have sanctioned as just (an even commoner fault), and contend that what some have forbidden is praiseworthy. Such persons hate laws not because they do not know them to be good and holy; but raging with headlong lust, they fight against manifest reason. What they approve of in their understanding they hate on account of their lust. Quarrels of this latter sort do not nullify the original conception of equity. For, while men dispute among themselves about individual sections of the law, they agree on the general conception of equity. In this respect the frailty of the human mind is surely proved: even when it seems to follow the way, it limps and staggers. Yet the fact remains that some seed of political order has been implanted in all men. And this is ample proof that in the arrangement of this life no man is without the light of reason.



#### 14. UNDERSTANDING AS REGARDS ART AND SCIENCE

Then follow the arts, both liberal and manual. The power of human acuteness also appears in learning these because all of us have a certain aptitude. But although not all the arts are suitable for everyone to learn, yet it is a certain enough indication of the common energy that hardly anyone is to be found who does not manifest talent in some art. There are at hand energy and ability not only to learn but also to devise something new in each art or to perfect and polish what one has learned from a predecessor. This prompted Plato to teach wrongly that such apprehension is nothing but recollection. Hence, with good reason we are compelled to confess that its beginning is inborn in human nature.

Therefore this evidence clearly testifies to a universal apprehension of reason and understanding by nature implanted in men. Yet so universal is this good that every man ought to recognize for himself in it the peculiar grace of God. The Creator of nature himself abundantly arouses this gratitude in us when he creates imbeciles. Through them he shows the endowments that the human soul would enjoy unpervaded by his light, a light so natural to all that it is certainly a free gift of his beneficence to each! Now the discovery or systematic transmission of the arts, or the inner and more excellent knowledge of them, which is characteristic of few, is not a sufficient proof of common discernment. Yet because it is bestowed indiscriminately upon pious and impious, it is rightly counted among natural gifts.

#### 15. SCIENCE AS GOD'S GIFT

Whenever we come upon these matters in secular writers, let that admirable light of truth shining in them teach us that the mind of man, though fallen and perverted from its wholeness, is nevertheless

clothed and ornamented with God's excellent gifts. If we regard the Spirit of God as the sole fountain of truth, we shall neither reject the truth itself, nor despise it wherever it shall appear, unless we wish to dishonor the Spirit of God. For by holding the gifts of the Spirit in slight esteem, we contemn and reproach the Spirit himself. What then? Shall we deny that the truth shone upon the ancient jurists who established civic order and discipline with such great equity? Shall we say that the philosophers were blind in their fine observation and artful description of nature? Shall we say that those men were devoid of understanding who conceived the art of disputation and taught us to speak reasonably? Shall we say that they are insane who developed medicine, devoting their labor to our benefit? What shall we say of all the mathematical sciences? Shall we consider them the ravings of madmen? No, we cannot read the writings of the ancients on these subjects without great admiration. We marvel at them because we are compelled to recognize how preeminent they are. But shall we count anything praiseworthy or noble without recognizing at the same time that it comes from God? Let us be ashamed of such ingratitude, into which not even the pagan poets fell, for they confessed that the gods had invented philosophy, laws, and all useful arts. Those men whom Scripture [1 Corinthians 2:14] calls "natural men" were, indeed, sharp and penetrating in their investigation of inferior things. Let us, accordingly, learn by their example how many gifts the Lord left to human nature even after it was despoiled of its true good.

#### 16. HUMAN COMPETENCE IN ART AND SCIENCE ALSO DERIVES FROM THE SPIRIT OF GOD

Meanwhile, we ought not to forget those most excellent benefits of the divine Spirit, which he distributes to whomever he wills, for the common good of mankind. The understanding and knowledge of

Bezalel and Oholiab, needed to construct the Tabernacle, had to be instilled in them by the Spirit of God [Exodus 31:2-11; 35:30-35]. It is no wonder, then, that the knowledge of all that is most excellent in human life is said to be communicated to us through the Spirit of God. Nor is there reason for anyone to ask, What have the impious, who are utterly estranged from God, to do with his Spirit? We ought to understand the statement that the Spirit of God dwells only in believers [Romans 8:9] as referring to the Spirit of sanctification through whom we are consecrated as temples to God [1 Corinthians 3:16]. Nonetheless he fills, moves, and quickens all things by the power of the same Spirit, and does so according to the character that he bestowed upon each kind by the law of creation. But if the Lord has willed that we be helped in physics, dialectic, mathematics, and other like disciplines, by the work and ministry of the ungodly, let us use this assistance. For if we neglect God's gift freely offered in these arts, we ought to suffer just punishment for our sloths. But lest anyone think a man truly blessed when he is credited with possessing great power to comprehend truth under the elements of this world [cf. Colossians 2:8], we should at once add that all this capacity to understand, with the understanding that follows upon it, is an unstable and transitory thing in God's sight, when a solid foundation of truth does not underlie it. For with the greatest truth Augustine teaches that as the free gifts were withdrawn from man after the Fall, so the natural ones remaining were corrupted. On this, the Master of the Sentences and the Schoolmen, as we have said, are compelled to agree with him. Not that the gifts could become defiled by themselves, seeing that they came from God. But to defiled man these gifts were no longer pure, and from them he could derive no praise at all.

## 17. SUMMARY OF 12-16

To sum up: We see among all mankind that reason is proper to our nature; it distinguishes us from brute beasts, just as they by possessing feeling differ from inanimate things. Now, because some are born fools or stupid, that defect does not obscure the general grace of God. Rather, we are warned by that spectacle that we ought to ascribe what is left in us to God's kindness. For if he had not spared us, our fall would have entailed the destruction of our whole nature. Some men excel in keenness; others are superior in judgment; still others have a readier wit to learn this or that art. In this variety God commends his grace to us, lest anyone should claim as his own what flowed from the sheer bounty of God. For why is one person more excellent than another? Is it not to display in common nature God's special grace which, in passing many by, declares itself bound to none? Besides this, God inspires special activities, in accordance with each man's calling. Many examples of this occur in The Book of Judges, where it is said that "the Spirit of the Lord took possession" of those men whom he had called to rule the people [Judges 6:34]. In short, in every extraordinary event there is some particular impulsion. For this reason, Saul was followed by the brave men "whose hearts God had touched" [1 Samuel 10:26]. And when Saul's consecration as king was foretold, Samuel said: "Then the Spirit of the Lord will come mightily upon you, and you shall be another man" [1 Samuel 10:6]. And this was extended to the whole course of government, as is said afterward of David: "The Spirit of the Lord came upon him from that day forward" [1 Samuel 16:13]. The same thing is taught elsewhere with respect to particular actions. Even in Homer, men are said to excel in natural ability not only as Jupiter has bestowed it upon each, but "as he leads them day by day." And surely experience shows that, when those who were once especially ingenious and skilled are struck dumb, men's minds are in God's hand and under his will, so that he rules them at every moment. For this reason it is said: "He takes understanding away

from the prudent [cf. Job 12:20] and makes them wander in trackless wastes" [Job 12:24; cf. Psalm 207:40]. Still, we see in this diversity some remaining traces of the image of God, which distinguish the entire human race from the other creatures.

(But spiritual discernment is wholly lost until we are regenerated, 18-21)

## 18. THE LIMITS OF OUR UNDERSTANDING

We must now analyze what human reason can discern with regard to God's Kingdom and to spiritual insight. This spiritual insight consists chiefly in three things: (1) knowing God; (2) knowing his fatherly favor in our behalf, in which our salvation consists; (3) knowing how to frame our life according to the rule of his law. In the first two points - and especially in the second - the greatest geniuses are blinder than moles! Certainly I do not deny that one can read competent and apt statements about God here and there in the philosophers, but these always show a certain giddy imagination. As was stated above, the Lord indeed gave them a slight taste of his divinity that they might not hide their impiety under a cloak of ignorance. And sometimes he impelled them to make certain utterances by the confession of which they would themselves be corrected. But they saw things in such a way that their seeing did not direct them to the truth, much less enable them to attain it! They are like a traveler passing through a field at night who in a momentary lightning flash sees far and wide, but the sight vanishes so swiftly that he is plunged again into the darkness of the night before he can take even a step - let alone be directed on his way by its help. Besides, although they may chance to sprinkle their books with droplets of truth, how many monstrous lies defile them! In short, they never even sensed that assurance of God's benevolence toward

us (without which man's understanding can only be filled with boundless confusion). Human reason, therefore, neither approaches, nor strives toward, nor even takes a straight aim at, this truth: to understand who the true God is or what sort of God he wishes to be toward us.

#### 19. MAN'S SPIRITUAL BLINDNESS SHOWN FROM JOHN 10:4-5

But we are drunk with the false opinion of our own insight and are thus extremely reluctant to admit that it is utterly blind and stupid in divine matters. Hence, it will be more effective, I believe, to prove this fact by Scriptural testimonies than by reasons. John very beautifully teaches it in a passage that I have previously quoted; he writes that: "Life was in God from the beginning and that life was the light of men; this light shines in the darkness, but the darkness comprehends it not" [John 1:4-5]. He shows that man's soul is so illumined by the brightness of God's light as never to be without some slight flame or at least a spark of it; but that even with this illumination it does not comprehend God. Why is this?

Because man's keenness of mind is mere blindness as far as the knowledge of God is concerned. For when the Spirit calls men "darkness," he at once denies them any ability of spiritual understanding. Therefore he declares that those believers who embrace Christ are "born not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God" [John 1:13]. This means: Flesh is not capable of such lofty wisdom as to conceive God and what is God's, unless it be illumined by the Spirit of God. As Christ testified, the fact that Peter recognized him was a special revelation of the Father [Matthew 16:17].

#### 20. MAN'S KNOWLEDGE OF GOD IS GOD'S OWN WORK

If we were convinced that our nature lacks everything that our Heavenly Father bestows upon his elect through the Spirit of regeneration [cf. Titus 3:5] - a fact that should be beyond controversy - we would have here no occasion for doubt! For so speak the faithful people according to the prophet: "For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light shall we see light" [Psalm 36:9]. The apostle testifies the same when he says that "no one can say 'Jesus is Lord' except by the Holy Spirit" [1 Corinthians 12:3]. And John the Baptist, seeing his disciples' wonderment, exclaimed: "No one can receive anything except what is given him from above" [John 3:27]. That he understands by "gift" a special illumination, not a common endowment of nature, is evident from his complaint that the very words with which he commended Christ to his disciples availed him not. "I see," he says, "that my words have no power to imbue men's minds with divine matters, unless the Lord through his Spirit gives understanding." Even Moses, reproaching the people for their forgetfulness, nevertheless notes at the same time that one cannot become wise in God's mysteries except by his gift. He says: "Your eyes saw those signs and great wonders; but the Lord has not given you a heart to understand, or ears to hear, or eyes to see." [Deuteronomy 29:3-4, cf. Vg.] What more could he express if he called us "blocks" in our contemplation of God's works? For this reason, the Lord as a singular grace promises through the prophet he will give the Israelites a heart to know him [Jeremiah 24:7]. This doubtless means man's mind can become spiritually wise only in so far as God illumines it.

Christ also confirmed this most clearly in his own words when he said: "No one can come to me unless it be granted by my Father" [John 6:44 P.]. Why? Is he not himself the living image of the Father [cf. Colossians 1:15], wherein the whole splendor of his glory is revealed [cf. Hebrews 1:3]? Therefore, he could characterize our

capacity to know God in no better way than by denying that we have eyes to see his image even when it is openly exhibited before us. Why? Did not Christ descend to earth in order to reveal the Father's will to men [cf. John 1:18]? And did he not faithfully carry out his mission? This is obviously so. But nothing is accomplished by preaching him if the Spirit, as our inner teacher, does not show our minds the way. Only those men, therefore, who have heard and have been taught by the Father come to him. What kind of learning and hearing is this? Surely, where the Spirit by a wonderful and singular power forms our ears to hear and our minds to understand. And Christ cites the prophecy of Isaiah to show that this is nothing new. When He promises the renewal of the church, he teaches that those who will be gathered unto salvation [Isaiah 54:7] "shall be God's disciples" [John 6:45; Isaiah 54:13]. If God is there foretelling some particular things concerning his elect, it is evident that he is not speaking of that sort of instruction which the impious and profane also share.

It therefore remains for us to understand that the way to the Kingdom of God is open only to him whose mind has been made new by the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Paul, however, having expressly entered this discussion, speaks more clearly than all [1 Corinthians 1:18 ff.]. After condemning the stupidity and vanity of all human wisdom and utterly reducing it to nothing [cf. 1 Corinthians 1:13 ff.], he concludes: "The natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned" [1 Corinthians 2:14]. Whom does he call "natural"? The man who depends upon the light of nature. He, I say, comprehends nothing of God's spiritual mysteries. Why is this? Is it because he neglects them out of laziness? No, even though he try, he can do nothing, for "they are spiritually discerned." What does this mean? Because these



mysteries are deeply hidden from human insight, they are disclosed solely by the revelation of the Spirit. Hence, where the Spirit of God does not illumine them, they are considered folly. Previously, however, Paul had extolled above the capacity of eye, ear, and mind "what God has prepared for those who love him" [1 Corinthians 2:9]. Indeed, he had likened human wisdom to a veil that hinders the mind from seeing God. What then? The apostle declares, "God has made foolish the wisdom of this world." [1 Corinthians 1:20.] Shall we then attribute to it the keen insight by which man can penetrate to God and to the secret places of the Kingdom of Heaven? Away with such madness!

## 21. WITHOUT THE LIGHT OF THE SPIRIT, ALL IS DARKNESS

Accordingly, what Paul here denies to men, elsewhere, in prayer, he ascribes to God alone. "May God," he says, ". . . and the Father of Glory give to you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation." [Ephesians 1:17, Vg. and Comm.] Now you hear that all wisdom and revelation are God's gift. What else does he say? "Having the eyes of your mind enlightened." [Ephesians 1:18a, Vg. and Comm.] Surely, if they have need of new revelation, they are blinded of themselves. There follows: "That you may know the hope to which he has called you," etc. [Ephesians 1:18b, cf. Vg. and Comm.]. He admits that men's minds are incapable of sufficient understanding to know their own calling.

Let no Pelagian babble here that God remedies this stupidity or, if you will, ignorance, when he directs man's understanding by the teaching of his Word to that which it could not have reached without guidance. For David had the Law in which was comprised all wisdom that can be desired; yet not content with it, he asks that his eyes be opened to "contemplate the mysteries of His law" [Psalm 119:18 p.].

By this expression he evidently means that the sun rises upon the earth when God's Word shines upon men; but they do not have its benefit until he who is called the "Father of lights" [James 1:17] either gives eyes or opens them. For wherever the Spirit does not cast his light, all is darkness. In this same way the apostles were properly and fully taught by the best of teachers. Yet if they had not needed the Spirit of truth to instruct their minds in this very doctrine which they had heard before [John 14:26], he would not have bidden them to wait for him [Acts 1:4]. If we confess that we lack what we seek of God, and he by promising it proves our lack of it, no one should now hesitate to confess that he is able to understand God's mysteries only in so far as he is illumined by God's grace. He who attributes any more understanding to himself is all the more blind because he does not recognize his own blindness.

(Sin is distinct from ignorance [vs. Plato], but may be occasioned by delusion, 22-25)

## 22. THE EVIDENCE OF GOD'S WILL THAT MAN POSSESSES MAKES HIM INEXCUSABLE BUT PROCURES FOR HIM NO RIGHT KNOWLEDGE

There remains the third aspect of spiritual insight, f96 that of knowing the rule for the right conduct of life. This we correctly call the "knowledge of the works of righteousness." The human mind sometimes seems more acute in this than in higher things. For the apostle testifies: "When Gentiles, who do not have the law, do the works of the law, they are a law to themselves... and show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their thoughts accuse them among themselves or excuse them before God's judgment" Romans 2:14-15 p.]. If the Gentiles by nature have law righteousness engraved upon their

minds, we surely cannot say they are utterly blind as to the conduct of life.

There is nothing more common than for a man to be sufficiently instructed in a right standard of conduct by natural law (of which the apostle is here speaking). Let us consider, however, for what purpose men have been endowed with this knowledge of the law. How far it can lead them toward the goal of reason and truth will then immediately appear. This is also clear from Paul's words, if we note their context. He had just before said that those who sinned in the law are judged through the law; they who sinned without the law perish without the law. Because it might seem absurd that the Gentiles perish without any preceding judgment, Paul immediately adds that for them conscience stands in place of law; this is sufficient reason 'for their just condemnation. The purpose of natural law, therefore, is to render man inexcusable. This would not be a bad definition: natural law is that apprehension of the conscience which distinguishes sufficiently between just and unjust, and which deprives men of the excuse of ignorance, while it proves them guilty by their own testimony. Man is so indulgent toward himself that when he commits evil he readily averts his mind, as much as he can, from the feeling of sin. This is why Plato seems to have been compelled to consider (in his Protagoras) that we sin only out of ignorance. This might have been an appropriate statement if only human hypocrisy had covered up vices with sufficient skill to prevent the mind from being recognized as evil in God's sight. The sinner tries to evade his innate power to judge between good and evil. Still, he is continually drawn back to it, and is not so much as permitted to wink at it without being forced, whether he will or not, at times to open his eyes. It is falsely said, therefore, that man sins out of ignorance alone.

### 23. JUDGMENT OF GOOD AND EVIL IS UNCLEAR, SO LONG AS IT TAKES PLACE ARBITRARILY

Themistius more correctly teaches that the intellect is very rarely deceived in general definition or in the essence of the thing; but that it is illusory when it goes farther, that is, applies the principle to particular cases. In reply to the general question, every man will affirm that murder is evil. But he who is plotting the death of an enemy contemplates murder as something good. The adulterer will condemn adultery in general, but will privately flatter himself in his own adultery. Herein is man's ignorance: when he comes to a particular case, he forgets the general principle that he has just laid down. On this point Augustine has expressed himself beautifully in his exposition of the first verse of Psalm 57.

Themistius' rule, however, is not without exception. Sometimes the shamefulness of evil-doing presses upon the conscience so that one, imposing upon himself no false image of the good, knowingly and willingly rushes headlong into wickedness. Out of such a disposition of mind come statements like this: "I see what is better and approve it, but I follow the worse." To my mind Aristotle has made a very shrewd distinction between incontinence and intemperance: "Where incontinence reigns," he says, "the disturbed mental state or passion so deprives the mind of particular knowledge that it cannot mark the evil in its own misdeed which it generally discerns in like instances; when the perturbation subsides, repentance straightway returns. Intemperance, however, is not extinguished or shattered by the awareness of sin, but on the contrary, stubbornly persists in choosing its habitual evil."

### 24. HUMAN KNOWLEDGE WHOLLY FAILS AS REGARDS THE FIRST TABLE OF THE LAW; AS REGARDS THE SECOND, FAILS

## IN A CRITICAL SITUATION

Now when you hear of a universal judgment discriminating between good and evil, do not consider it to be sound and whole in every respect. For if men's hearts have been imbued with the ability to distinguish just from unjust, solely that they should not pretend ignorance as an excuse, it is not at all a necessary consequence that truth should be discerned in individual instances. It is more than enough if their understanding extends so far that evasion becomes impossible for them, and they, convicted by the witness of their own conscience, begin even now to tremble before God's judgment seat. And if we want to measure our reason by God's law, the pattern of perfect righteousness, we shall find in how many respects it is blind!

Surely it does not at all comply with the principal points of the First Table; such as putting our faith in God, giving due praise for his excellence and righteousness, calling upon his name, and truly keeping the Sabbath [Exodus 20:3-17]. What soul, relying upon natural perception, ever had an inkling that the lawful worship of God consists in these and like matters? For when profane men desire to worship God, even if they be called away a hundred times from their empty trifles, they always slip back into them once more. They admit, of course, that God is not pleased with sacrifices unless sincerity of intention accompany them. By this they testify that they have some notion of the spiritual worship of God, yet they at once pervert it with false devisings. For they could never be persuaded that what the law prescribes concerning worship is the truth. Shall I then say that the mind that can neither be wise of itself nor heed warnings excels in discernment?

Men have somewhat more understanding of the precepts of the Second Table [Exodus 20:12 ff.] because these are more closely

concerned with the preservation of civil society among them. Yet even here one sometimes detects a failure to endure. A man of most excellent disposition finds it utterly senseless to bear an unjust and excessively imperious domination, if only he can in some way throw it off. And this is the common judgment of human reason: the mark of a servile and abject person is to bear it with patience; that of an honorable and freeborn man to shake it off. Nor do the philosophers consider the avenging of injuries to be a vice. But the Lord condemns this excessive haughtiness and enjoins upon his own people a patience disgraceful in men's eyes. But in all our keeping of the law we quite fail to take our concupiscence into account. For the natural man refuses to be led to recognize the diseases of his lusts. The light of nature is extinguished before he even enters upon this abyss. While the philosophers label the immoderate incitements of the mind as "vices," they have reference to those which are outward and manifested by grosser signs. They take no account of the evil desires that gently tickle the mind.

## 25. EVERY DAY WE NEED THE HOLY SPIRIT THAT WE MAY NOT MISTAKE OUR WAY

Just as we deservedly censured Plato above because he imputed all sins to ignorance, so also ought we to repudiate the opinion of those who suppose that there is deliberate malice and depravity in all sins. For we know all too well by experience how often we fall despite our good intention. Our reason is overwhelmed by so many forms of deceptions, is subject to so many errors, dashes against so many obstacles, is caught in so many difficulties, that it is far from directing us aright. Indeed, Paul shows us in every part of life how empty reason is in the Lord's sight when he denies "that we are sufficient of ourselves to claim something as coming from us as if it really did" [1 Corinthians 3:5]. He is not speaking of the will or the

emotions; but he even takes from us the ability to think how the right doing of anything can enter our minds. Is our diligence, insight, understanding, and carefulness so completely corrupted that we can devise or prepare nothing right in God's eyes? No wonder that it seems too hard for us who grudgingly suffer ourselves to be deprived of keenness of reason, which we count the most precious gift of all! But to the Holy Spirit who "knows that all the thoughts of the wise are futile" [1 Corinthians 3:20; cf. Psalm 94:11] and who clearly declares that "every imagination of the human heart is solely evil" [Genesis 6:5; 8:21 p.] it seems most fitting. If whatever our nature conceives, instigates, undertakes, and attempts is always evil, how can that which is pleasing to God, to whom holiness and righteousness alone are acceptable, even enter our minds?

Thus we can see that the reason of our mind, wherever it may turn, is miserably subject to vanity. David was aware of this feebleness when he prayed to be given understanding to learn the Lord's commandments rightly [Psalm 119:34]. In desiring to obtain a new understanding he intimates that his own nature is insufficient. And not once, but almost ten times in a single psalm he repeats the same prayer [Psalm 119:12,18,19, 26,33,64,68,73,124,125,135,169]. By this repetition he suggests how great is the necessity that compels him to pray thus. And what David seeks for himself alone, Paul is accustomed to implore for the churches in common. "We ceased not to pray for you and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of God in all spiritual wisdom and understanding in order that you may walk worthily before God," etc. [Colossians 1:9-10 p.; cf. Philippians 1:9.] We should remember, however, that whenever he represents this thing as a benefit from God he bears witness at the same time that it has not been placed within man's ability. But Augustine so recognizes this inability of the reason to understand the things of God that he deems the grace of illumination no less

necessary for our minds than the light of the sun for our eyes. Not content with this, he adds the correction that we ourselves open our eyes to behold the light, but the eyes of the mind, unless the Lord open them, remain closed. f105 Nor does Scripture teach that our minds are illumined only on one day and that they may thereafter see of themselves. For what I have just quoted from Paul has reference to continuing progress and increase. David has aptly expressed it in these words: "With my whole heart I have sought thee; let me not wander from thy commandments!" [Psalm 119:10]. Although he had been reborn and had advanced to no mean extent in true godliness, he still confesses that he needs continual direction at every moment, lest he decline from the knowledge with which he has been endowed. Therefore he prays elsewhere that a right spirit, lost by his own fault, be restored [Psalm 51:10]. For it is the part of the same God to restore that which he had given at the beginning, but which had been taken away from us for a time.

(Man's inability to will the good, 26-27)

## 26. THE NATURAL INSTINCT THAT TREATS THE "GOOD" AND THE "ACCEPTABLE" ALIKE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH FREEDOM

Now we must examine the will, f106 upon which freedom of decision especially depends; for we have already seen that choice belongs to the sphere of the will rather than to that of the understanding. To begin with, the philosophers teach that all things seek good through a natural instinct, and this view is received with general consent. But that we may not suppose this doctrine to have anything to do with the uprightness of the human will, let us observe that the power of free choice is not to be sought in such an appetite, which arises from inclination of nature rather than from deliberation of mind. Even the



Schoolmen admit that free will is active only when the reason considers alternative possibilities. By this they mean that the object of the appetite must be amenable to choice, and deliberation must go before to open the way to choice. And actually, if you consider the character of this natural desire of good in man, you will find that he has it in common with animals. For they also desire their own well-being; and when some sort of good that can move their sense appears, they follow it. But man does not choose by reason and pursue with zeal what is truly good for himself according to the excellence of his immortal nature; nor does he use his reason in deliberation or bend his mind to it. Rather, like an animal he follows the inclination of his nature, without reason, without deliberation. Therefore whether or not man is impelled to seek after good by an impulse of nature has no bearing upon freedom of the will. This instead is required: that he discern good by right reason; that knowing it he choose it; that having chosen it he follow it.

That no reader may remain in doubt, we must be warned of a double misinterpretation. For "appetite" here signifies not an impulse of the will itself but rather an inclination of nature; and "good" refers not to virtue or justice but to condition, as when things go well with man. To sum up, much as man desires to follow what is good, still he does not follow it. There is no man to whom eternal blessedness is not pleasing, yet no man aspires to it except by the impulsion of the Holy Spirit. The desire for well-being natural to men no more proves freedom of the will than the tendency of metals and stones toward perfection of their essence proves it in them. This being so, we must now examine whether in other respects the will is so deeply vitiated and corrupted in its every part that it can beget nothing but evil; or whether it retains any portion unimpaired, from which good desires may be born.

## 27. OUR WILL CANNOT LONG FOR THE GOOD WITHOUT THE HOLY SPIRIT

Those who attribute to God's first grace the fact that we effectually will, seem to imply, on the other hand, that there is a faculty in the soul voluntarily to aspire to good, but one too feeble to be able to come forth into firm intention, or to arouse effort. There is no doubt that this opinion, taken from Origen and certain other ancient writers, was commonly held by the Schoolmen: they usually consider man in "mere nature," as they phrase it. As such, man is described in the apostle's words: "For I do not do the good I will, but the evil I do not will is what I do. It lies in my power to will, but I find myself unable to accomplish" [Romans 7:19,18, cf. Vg.]. But they wrongly pervert the whole argument that Paul is pursuing here. For he is discussing the Christian struggle (more briefly touched in Galatians [Galatians 5:17]), which believers constantly feel in themselves in the conflict between flesh and spirit. But the Spirit comes, not from nature, but from regeneration. Moreover, it is clear that the apostle is speaking of these regenerated, because when he had said that no good dwelt in him, he adds the explanation that he is referring to his flesh [Romans 7:18]. Accordingly, he declares that it is not he who does evil, but sin dwelling in him. [Romans 7:20.] What does he mean by this correction: "In me, that is, in my flesh" [Romans 7:18]? It is as if he were speaking in this way: "Good does not dwell in me of myself, for nothing good is to be found in my flesh." Hence follows that form of an excuse: "I myself do not do evil, but sin that dwells in me" [Romans 7:20]. This excuse applies only to the regenerate who tend toward good with the chief part of their soul. Now the conclusion appended clearly explains this whole matter: "For I delight in the law... according to the inner man, but I see in my members another law at war with the law of my mind" [Romans 7:22-23]. Who would have such strife in himself but a man who,

regenerated by the Spirit of God, bears the remains of his flesh about with him? Therefore, Augustine, although at one time he had thought that passage to be concerned with man's nature, later retracted his interpretation as false and inappropriate. Yet if we hold the view that men have, apart from grace, some impulses (however puny) toward good, what shall we reply to the apostle who even denies that we are capable of conceiving anything [2 Corinthians 3:5]? What shall we reply to the Lord, who through Moses declares that every imagination of man's heart is only evil [Genesis 8:21]? Since they have stumbled in their false interpretation of a single passage, there is no reason for us to tarry over their view. Rather let us value Christ's saying: "Every one who commits sin is a slave to sin" [John 8:34]. We are all sinners by nature; therefore we are held under the yoke of sin. But if the whole man lies under the power of sin, surely it is necessary that the will, which is its chief seat, be restrained by the stoutest bonds. Paul's saying would not make sense, that "it is God who is at work to will in us" [Philippians 2:13 p.], if any will preceded the grace of the Spirit.

Away then with all that "preparation" which many babble about! For even if believers sometimes ask that their hearts be conformed to obedience to God's law, as David in a number of passages does, yet we must also note that this desire to pray comes from God.

This we may infer from David's words. When he desires that a clean heart be created in himself [Psalm 51:10], surely he does not credit himself with the beginning of its creation. For this reason we ought rather to value Augustine's saying: "God has anticipated you in all things; now do you yourself - while you may - anticipate his wrath. How? Confess that you have all these things from God: whatever good you have is from him; whatever evil, from yourself." And a little later, "Nothing is ours but sin."



## **BOOK 2**

### **CHAPTER 3**

#### **ONLY DAMNABLE THINGS COME FORTH FROM MAN'S CORRUPT NATURE**

**by John Calvin**

(Corruption of man's nature is such as to require total renewal of his mind and will, 1-5)

#### **1. THE WHOLE MAN IS FLESH**

But man cannot be better known in both faculties of his soul than if he makes his appearance with those titles whereby Scripture marks him. If the whole man is depicted by these words of Christ, "What is born of flesh, is flesh" [John 3:6] (as is easy to prove), man is very clearly shown to be a miserable creature. "For to set the mind on the flesh," as the apostle testifies, "is death. Because there is enmity against God, it does not submit to God's law, indeed it cannot." [Romans 8:6-7 p.] Is the flesh so perverse that it is wholly disposed to bear a grudge against God, cannot agree with the justice of divine law, can, in short, beget nothing but the occasion of death? Now suppose that in man's nature there is nothing but flesh: extract something good from it if you can. But, you will say, the word "flesh" pertains only to the sensual part of the soul, not to the higher part. This is thoroughly refuted from the words of Christ and of the apostle. The Lord's reasoning is: Man must be reborn [John 3:3], for he "is flesh" [John 3:6]. He is not teaching a rebirth as regards the

body. Now the soul is not reborn if merely a part of it is reformed, but only when it is wholly renewed. The antithesis set forth in both passages confirms this. The Spirit is so contrasted with flesh that no intermediate thing is left. Accordingly, whatever is not spiritual in man is by this reckoning called "carnal." We have nothing of the Spirit, however, except through regeneration. Whatever we have from nature, therefore, is flesh.

But Paul relieves us of any possible doubt on this matter. Having described the old man who, he had said, was "corrupted by deceptive desires" [Ephesians 4:22 p.], he bids us "be renewed in the spirit of our mind" [Ephesians 4:23 p.]. You see that he lodges unlawful and wicked desires not solely in the sensual part of the soul, but even in the mind itself, and for this reason he requires its renewal. To be sure, a little while before he had painted a picture of human nature that showed us corrupt and perverted in every part. He writes that "all the Gentiles walk in the vanity of their minds, being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance which is in them, and their blindness of heart." [Ephesians 4:17-18.] There is not the least doubt that this statement applies to all those whom the Lord has not yet formed again to the uprightness of his wisdom and justice. This also becomes clearer from the comparison immediately added wherein he admonishes believers that they "did not so learn Christ" [Ephesians 4:20]. We, indeed, infer from these words that the grace of Christ is the sole remedy to free us from that blindness and from the evils consequent upon it. Isaiah also had so prophesied concerning Christ's Kingdom when he promised: "The Lord will be an everlasting light" for his church [Isaiah 60:19 p.], while "shadows will shroud the earth and darkness will cover the peoples" [Isaiah 60:2]. He there testifies that the light of God will arise in the church alone; and leaves only shadows and blindness outside the church. I shall not individually recount the

statements made everywhere concerning men's vanity, especially in The Psalms and the Prophets. Great is the utterance of David: "If a man be weighed with vanity, he shall be vainer than vanity itself" Psalm 61:10, Vg.; Psalm 62:9, EV]. Man's understanding is pierced by a heavy spear when all the thoughts that proceed from him are mocked as stupid, frivolous, insane, and perverse.

## 2. ROMANS, CHAPTER 3, AS WITNESS FOR MAN'S CORRUPTION

That condemnation of the heart when it is called "deceitful and corrupt above all else" [Jeremiah 17:9 p.] is no less severe. But because I am striving for brevity, I shall be content with but one passage; yet it will be like the clearest of mirrors in which we may contemplate the whole image of our nature. For the apostle, when he wishes to cast down the arrogance of humankind, does so by these testimonies: "No one is righteous, no one understands, no one seeks God. All have turned aside, together they have become unprofitable; no one does good, not even one" [Psalm 14:1-3; 53:1-3]. 'Their throat is an open grave, they use their tongues deceitfully' [Psalm 5:9]. 'The venom of asps is under their lips' [Psalm 140:3]. 'Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness' [Psalm 10:7]. 'Their feet are swift to shed blood; in their paths are ruin and misery' [Isaiah 59:7 P.]. There is no fear of God before their eyes" [Romans 3:10-16, 18 p.]. With these thunderbolts he inveighs not against particular men but against the whole race of Adam's children. Nor is he decrying the depraved morals of one age or another, but indicting the unvarying corruption of our nature. Now his intention in this passage is not simply to rebuke men that they may repent, but rather to teach them that they have all been overwhelmed by an unavoidable calamity from which only God's mercy can deliver them. Because this could not be proved

unless it rested upon the ruin and destruction of our nature, he put forward these testimonies which prove our nature utterly lost.

Let this then be agreed: that men are as they are here described not merely by the defect of depraved custom, but also by depravity of nature. The reasoning of the apostle cannot otherwise stand: Except out of the Lord's mercy there is no salvation for man, for in himself he is lost and forsaken [Romans 3:23 ff.]. I shall not toil in proving the applicability of these passages, in order that they may not seem to have been inappropriately seized upon by the apostle. I shall proceed as if these statements had first been made by Paul, not drawn from the Prophets. First of all, he strips man of righteousness, that is, integrity and purity; then, of understanding [Romans 3:10-11]. Indeed, apostasy from God proves defect of understanding, for to seek him is the first degree of wisdom. This defect, therefore, is necessarily found in all who have forsaken God. He adds that all have fallen away and have, as it were, become corrupt, that there is no one who does good. Then he adds the shameful acts with which they - once they have been let loose in wickedness - defile their several members. Finally, he declares them devoid of the fear of God, to whose rule our steps ought to have been directed. If these are the hereditary endowments of the human race, it is futile to seek anything good in our nature. Indeed, I grant that not all these wicked traits appear in every man; yet one cannot deny that this hydra lurks in the breast of each. For as the body, so long as it nourishes in itself the cause and matter of disease (even though pain does not yet rage), will not be called healthy, so also will the soul not be considered healthy while it abounds with so many fevers of vice. This comparison, however, does not fit in every detail. For in the diseased body some vigor of life yet remains; although the soul, plunged into this deadly abyss, is not only burdened with vices, but is utterly devoid of all good.



### 3. GOD'S GRACE SOMETIMES RESTRAINS WHERE IT DOES NOT CLEANSE

Almost the same question that was previously answered now confronts us anew. In every age there have been persons who, guided by nature, have striven toward virtue throughout life. I have nothing to say against them even if many lapses can be noted in their moral conduct. For they have by the very zeal of their honesty given proof that there was some purity in their nature. Although in discussing merit of works we shall deal more fully with what value such virtues have in God's sight, we must nevertheless speak of it also at this point, inasmuch as it is necessary for the unfolding of the present argument. These examples, accordingly, seem to warn us against adjudging man's nature wholly corrupted, because some men have by its prompting not only excelled in remarkable deeds, but conducted themselves most honorably throughout life. But here it ought to occur to us that amid this corruption of nature there is some place for God's grace; not such grace as to cleanse it, but to restrain it inwardly. For if the Lord gave loose rein to the mind of each man to run riot in his lusts, there would doubtless be no one who would not show that, in fact, every evil thing for which Paul condemns all nature is most truly to be met in himself [Psalm 14:3; Romans 3:12].

What then? Do you count yourself exempt from the number of those whose "feet are swift to shed blood" [Romans 3:15], whose hands are fouled with robberies and murders, "whose throats are like open graves, whose tongues deceive, whose lips are envenomed" [Romans 3:13]; whose works are useless, wicked, rotten, deadly; whose hearts are without God; whose inmost parts, depravities; whose eyes are set upon stratagems; whose minds are eager to revile - to sum up, whose every part stands ready to commit infinite wickedness [Romans 3:10-18]? If every soul is subject to such abominations as the apostle

boldly declares, we surely see what would happen if the Lord were to permit human lust to wander according to its own inclination. No mad beast would rage as unrestrainedly; no river, however swift and violent, burst so madly into flood. In his elect the Lord cures these diseases in a way that we shall soon explain. Others he merely restrains by throwing a bridle over them only that they may not break loose, inasmuch as he foresees their control to be expedient to preserve all that is. Hence some are restrained by shame from breaking out into many kinds of foulness, others by the fear of the law - even though they do not, for the most part, hide their impurity. Still others, because they consider an honest manner of life profitable, in some measure aspire to it. Others rise above the common lot, in order by their excellence to keep the rest obedient to them. Thus God by his providence bridles perversity of nature, that it may not break forth into action; but he does not purge it within.

#### 4. UPRIGHTNESS IS GOD'S GIFT; BUT MAN'S NATURE REMAINS CORRUPTED

Nevertheless the problem has not yet been resolved. For either we must make Camillus equal to Catiline, or we shall have in Camillus an example proving that nature, if carefully cultivated, is not utterly devoid of goodness. Indeed, I admit that the endowments resplendent in Camillus were gifts of God and seem rightly commendable if judged in themselves. But how will these serve as proofs of natural goodness in him? Must we not hark back to his mind and reason thus: if a natural man excelled in such moral integrity, undoubtedly human nature did not lack the ability to cultivate virtue? Yet what if the mind had been wicked and crooked, and had followed anything but uprightness? And there is no doubt that it was such, if you grant that Camillus was a natural man. What power for good will you attribute to human nature in this respect, if

in the loftiest appearance of integrity, it is always found to be impelled toward corruption? Therefore as you will not commend a man for virtue when his vices impress you under the appearance of virtues, so you will not attribute to the human will the capability of seeking after the right so long as the will remains set in its own perversity.

Here, however, is the surest and easiest solution to this question: these are not common gifts of nature, but special graces of God, which he bestows variously and in a certain measure upon men otherwise wicked. For this reason, we are not afraid, in common parlance, to call this man wellborn, that one depraved in nature. Yet we do not hesitate to include both under the universal condition of human depravity; but we point out what special grace the Lord has bestowed upon the one, while not deigning to bestow it upon the other. When he wished to put Saul over the kingdom he "formed him as a new man" [1 Samuel 10:6 p.]. This is the reason why Plato, alluding to the Homeric legend, says that kings' sons are born with some distinguishing mark. For God, in providing for the human race, often endows with a heroic nature those destined to command. From this workshop have come forth the qualities of great leaders celebrated in histories. Private individuals are to be judged in the same way. But because, however excellent anyone has been, his own ambition always pushes him on - a blemish with which all virtues are so sullied that before God they lose all favor - anything in profane men that appears praiseworthy must be considered worthless. Besides, where there is no zeal to glorify God, the chief part of uprightness is absent; a zeal of which all those whom he has not regenerated by his Spirit are devoid. There is good reason for the statement in Isaiah, that "the spirit of the fear of God rests" upon Christ [Isaiah 11:2 p.]. By this we are taught that all estranged from Christ lack "the fear of God," which "is the beginning of wisdom"

[Psalm 111:10 p.]. As for the virtues that deceive us with their vain show, they shall have their praise in the political assembly and in common renown among men; but before the heavenly judgment seat they shall be of no value to acquire righteousness.

## 5. MAN SINS OF NECESSITY, BUT WITHOUT COMPULSION

Because of the bondage of sin by which the will is held bound, it cannot move toward good, much less apply itself thereto; for a movement of this sort is the beginning of conversion to God, which in Scripture is ascribed entirely to God's grace. So Jeremiah prayed to the Lord to be "converted" if it were his will to "convert him" [Jeremiah 31:18, cf. Vg.]. Hence the prophet in the same chapter, describing the spiritual redemption of the believing folk, speaks of them as "redeemed from the hand of one stronger than they" [verse 11 p.]. By this he surely means the tight fetters with which the sinner is bound so long as, forsaken by the Lord, he lives under the devil's yoke. Nonetheless the will remains, with the most eager inclination disposed and hastening to sin. For man, when he gave himself over to this necessity, was not deprived of will, but of soundness of will. Not inappropriately Bernard teaches that to will is in us all: but to will good is gain; to will evil, loss. Therefore simply to will is of man; to will ill, of a corrupt nature; to will well, of grace.

Now, when I say that the will bereft of freedom is of necessity either drawn or led into evil, it is a wonder if this seems a hard saying to anyone, since it has nothing incongruous or alien to the usage of holy men. But it offends those who know not how to distinguish between necessity and compulsion. Suppose someone asks them: Is not God of necessity good? Is not the devil of necessity evil? What will they reply? God's goodness is so connected with his divinity that it is no more necessary for him to be God than for him to be good. But the

devil by his fall was so cut off from participation in good that he can do nothing but evil. But suppose some blasphemer sneers that God deserves little praise for His own goodness, constrained as He is to preserve it. Will this not be a ready answer to him: not from violent impulsion, but from His boundless goodness comes God's inability to do evil? Therefore, if the fact that he must do good does not hinder God's free will in doing good; if the devil, who can do only evil, yet sins with his will - who shall say that man therefore sins less willingly because he is subject to the necessity of sinning? Augustine everywhere speaks of this necessity; and even though Caelestius caviled against him invidiously, he did not hesitate to affirm it in these words: "Through freedom man came to be in sin, but the corruption which followed as punishment turned freedom into necessity." And whenever he makes mention of the matter, he does not hesitate to speak in this manner of the necessary bondage of sin.

The chief point of this distinction, then, must be that man, as he was corrupted by the Fall, sinned willingly, not unwillingly or by compulsion; by the most eager inclination of his heart, not by forced compulsion; by the prompting of his own lust, not by compulsion from without. Yet so depraved is his nature that he can be moved or impelled only to evil. But if this is true, then it is clearly expressed that man is surely subject to the necessity of sinning.

Bernard, agreeing with Augustine, so writes: "Among all living beings man alone is free; and yet because sin has intervened he also undergoes a kind of violence, but of will, not of nature, so that not even thus is he deprived of his innate freedom. For what is voluntary is also free." And a little later: "In some base and strange way the will itself, changed for the worse by sin, makes a necessity for itself. Hence, neither does necessity, although it is of the will, avail to excuse the will, nor does the will, although it is led astray, avail to

exclude necessity. For this necessity is as it were voluntary." Afterward he says that we are oppressed by no other yoke than that of a kind of voluntary servitude. Therefore we are miserable as to servitude and inexcusable as to will because the will, when it was free, made itself the slave of sin. Yet he concludes: "Thus the soul, in some strange and evil way, under a certain voluntary and wrongly free necessity is at the same time enslaved and free: enslaved because of necessity; free because of will. And what is at once stranger and more deplorable, it is guilty because it is free, and enslaved because it is guilty, and as a consequence enslaved because it is free." Surely my readers will recognize that I am bringing forth nothing new, for it is something that Augustine taught of old with the agreement of all the godly, and it was still retained almost a thousand years later in monastic cloisters. But Lombard, since he did not know how to distinguish necessity from compulsion, gave occasion for a pernicious error.

(Conversion of the will is the effect of divine grace inwardly bestowed, 6-14)

## 6. MEN'S INABILITY TO DO GOOD MANIFESTS ITSELF ABOVE ALL IN THE WORK OF REDEMPTION, WHICH GOD DOES QUITE ALONE

On the other hand, it behooves us to consider the sort of remedy by which divine grace corrects and cures the corruption of nature. Since the Lord in coming to our aid bestows upon us what we lack, when the nature of his work in us appears, our destitution will, on the other hand, at once be manifest. When the apostle tells the Philippians he is confident "that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ" [Philippians 1:6], there is no doubt that through "the beginning of a good work"

he denotes the very origin of conversion itself, which is in the will. God begins his good work in us, therefore, by arousing love and desire and zeal for righteousness in our hearts; or, to speak more correctly, by bending, forming, and directing, our hearts to righteousness. He completes his work, moreover, by confirming us to perseverance. In order that no one should make an excuse that good is initiated by the Lord to help the will which by itself is weak, the Spirit elsewhere declares what the will, left to itself, is capable of doing: "A new heart shall I give you, and will put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh, and give you a heart of flesh. And I shall put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes" [Ezekiel 36:26-27]. Who shall say that the infirmity of the human will is strengthened by his help in order that it may aspire effectively to the choice of good, when it must rather be wholly transformed and renewed?

If in a stone there is such plasticity that, made softer by some means, it becomes somewhat bent, I will not deny that man's heart can be molded to obey the right, provided what is imperfect in him be supplied by God's grace. But if by this comparison the Lord wished to show that nothing good can ever be wrung from our heart, unless it become wholly other, let us not divide between him and us what he claims for himself alone. If, therefore, a stone is transformed into flesh when God converts us to zeal for the right, whatever is of our own will is effaced. What takes its place is wholly from God. I say that the will is effaced; not in so far as it is will, for in man's conversion what belongs to his primal nature remains entire. I also say that it is created anew; not meaning that the will now begins to exist, but that it is changed from an evil to a good will. I affirm that this is wholly God's doing, for according to the testimony of the same apostle, "we are not even capable of thinking" [2 Corinthians 3:5 p.]. Therefore he states in another place that God not only assists the

weak will or corrects the depraved will, but also works in us to will [Philippians 2:13]. From this, one may easily infer, as I have said, that everything good in the will is the work of grace alone. In this sense he says elsewhere: "It is God who works all things in all" [1 Corinthians 12:6 p.]. There he is not discussing universal governance, but is uttering praise to the one God for all good things in which believers excel. Now by saying "all" he surely makes God the author of spiritual life from beginning to end. Previously he had taught the same thing in other words: that believers are from God in Christ [Ephesians 1:1; 1 Corinthians 8:6].

Here he clearly commends the new creation, which sweeps away everything of our common nature. We ought to understand here an antithesis between Adam and Christ, which he explains more clearly in another place, where he teaches that "we are his workmanship, created in Christ for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" [Ephesians 2:10, cf. Vg.]. For he would prove our salvation a free gift [cf. Ephesians 2:5], because the beginning of every good is from the second creation, which we attain in Christ. And yet if even the least ability came from ourselves, we would also have some share of the merit. But Paul, to strip us, argues that we deserve nothing because "we have been created in Christ... for good works which God prepared beforehand" [Ephesians 2:20, cf. Vg.]. He means by these words that all parts of good works from their first impulse belong to God. In this way the prophet, after saying in the psalm that we are God's handiwork, so that we may not share it with him, immediately adds: "And we ourselves have not done it" [Psalm 100:3 p.]. It is clear from the context that he is speaking of regeneration, which is the beginning of the spiritual life; for he goes on to say that "we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture" [Psalm 100:3]. Moreover, we see how, not simply content to have given God due praise for our salvation, he expressly excludes us



from all participation in it. It is as if he were saying that not a whit remains to man to glory in, for the whole of salvation comes from God.

#### 7. IT IS NOT A CASE OF THE BELIEVER'S "CO-OPERATION" WITH GRACE; THE WILL IS FIRST ACTUATED THROUGH GRACE

But perhaps some will concede that the will is turned away from the good by its own nature and is converted by the Lord's power alone, yet in such a way that, having been prepared, it then has its own part in the action. As Augustine teaches, grace precedes every good work; while will does not go before as its leader but follows after as its attendant. This statement, which the holy man made with no evil intention, has by Lombard been preposterously twisted to that way of thinking. But I contend that in the words of the prophet that I have cited, as well as in other passages, two things are clearly signified: (1) the Lord corrects our evil will, or rather extinguishes it; (2) he substitutes for it a good one from himself.

In so far as it is anticipated by grace, to that degree I concede that you may call your will an "attendant." But because the will reformed is the Lord's work, it is wrongly attributed to man that he obeys prevenient grace with his will as attendant. Therefore Chrysostom erroneously wrote: "Neither grace without will nor will without grace can do anything." As if grace did not also actuate the will itself, as we have just seen from Paul [cf. Philippians 2:13]! Nor was it Augustine's intent, in calling the human will the attendant of grace, to assign to the will in good works a function second to that of grace. His only purpose was, rather, to refute that very evil doctrine of Pelagius which lodged the first cause of salvation in man's merit.

Enough for the argument at hand, Augustine contends, was the fact that grace is prior to all merit. In the meantime he passes over the other question, that of the perpetual effect of grace, which he nevertheless brilliantly discusses elsewhere. For while Augustine on several occasions says that the Lord anticipates an unwilling man that he may will, and follows a willing man that he may not will in vain, yet he makes God himself wholly the Author of good works. However, his statements on this matter are clear enough not to require a long review. "Men labor," he says, "to find in our will something that is our own and not of God; and I know not how it can be found." Moreover, in *Against Pelagius and Caelestius*, Book I, he thus interprets Christ's saying "Every one who has heard from my Father comes to me" [John 6:45 p.]: "Man's choice is so assisted that it not only knows what it ought to do, but also does because it has known. And thus when God teaches not through the letter of the law but through the grace of the Spirit, He so teaches that whatever anyone has learned he not only sees by knowing, but also seeks by willing, and achieves by doing."

## 8. SCRIPTURE IMPUTES TO GOD ALL THAT IS FOR OUR BENEFIT

Well, then, since we are now at the principal point, let us undertake to summarize the matter for our readers by but a few, and very clear, testimonies of Scripture. Then, lest anyone accuse us of distorting Scripture, let us show that the truth, which we assert has been drawn from Scripture, lacks not the attestation of this holy man - I mean Augustine. I do not account it necessary to recount item by item what can be adduced from Scripture in support of our opinion, but only from very select passages to pave the way to understanding all the rest, which we read here and there. On the other hand, it will not be untimely for me to make plain that I pretty much agree with that

man whom the godly by common consent justly invest with the greatest authority.

Surely there is ready and sufficient reason to believe that good takes its origin from God alone. And only in the elect does one find a will inclined to good. Yet we must seek the cause of election outside men. It follows, thence, that man has a right will not from himself, but that it flows from the same good pleasure by which we were chosen before the creation of the world [Ephesians 1:4]. Further, there is another similar reason: for since willing and doing well take their origin from faith, we ought to see what is the source of faith itself.

But since the whole of Scripture proclaims that faith is a free gift of God, it follows that when we, who are by nature inclined to evil with our whole heart, begin to will good, we do so out of mere grace. Therefore, the Lord when he lays down these two principles in the conversion of his people - that he will take from them their "heart of stone" and give them "a heart of flesh" [Ezekiel 36:26] - openly testifies that what is of ourselves ought to be blotted out to convert us to righteousness; but that whatever takes its place is from him. And he does not declare this in one place only, for he says in Jeremiah: "I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me all their days" [Jeremiah 32:39]. A little later: "I will put the fear of my name in their heart, that they may not turn from me" [Jeremiah 32:40]. Again, in Ezekiel: "I will give them one heart and will give a new spirit in their inward parts. I will take the stony heart out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh" [Ezekiel 11:19]. He testifies that our conversion is the creation of a new spirit and a new heart. What other fact could more clearly claim for him, and take away from us, every vestige of good and right in our will? For it always follows that nothing good can arise out of our will until it has been reformed; and

after its reformation, in so far as it is good, it is so from God, not from ourselves.

#### 9. THE PRAYERS IN SCRIPTURE ESPECIALLY SHOW HOW THE BEGINNING, CONTINUATION, AND END OF OUR BLESSEDNESS COME FROM GOD ALONE

So, also, do we read the prayers composed by holy men. "May the Lord incline our heart to him," said Solomon, "that we may keep his commandments." [1 Kings 8:58 p.] He shows the stubbornness of our hearts: by nature they glory in rebelling against God's law, unless they be bent. The same view is also held in The Psalms: "Incline my heart to thy testimonies [Psalm 119:36]. We ought always to note the antithesis between the perverse motion of the heart, by which it is drawn away to obstinate disobedience, and this correction, by which it is compelled to obedience. When David feels himself bereft, for a time, of directing grace, and prays God to "create in" him "a clean heart," "to renew a right Spirit in his inward parts" [Psalm 51: 10; cf. Psalm 50:12, Vg.], does he not then recognize that all parts of his heart are crammed with uncleanness, and his spirit warped in depravity? Moreover, does he not, by calling the cleanness he implores "creation of God," attribute it once received wholly to God? If anyone objects that this very prayer is a sign of a godly and holy disposition, the refutation is ready: although David had in part already repented, yet he compared his previous condition with that sad ruin which he had experienced. Therefore, taking on the role of a man estranged from God, he justly prays that whatever God bestows on his elect in regeneration be given to himself. Therefore, he desired himself to be created anew, as if from the dead, that, freed from Satan's ownership, he may become an instrument of the Holy Spirit. Strange and monstrous indeed is the license of our pride! The Lord demands nothing stricter than for us to observe his Sabbath most

scrupulously [Exodus 20:8 ff.; Deuteronomy 5:12 ff.], that is, by resting from our labors. Yet there is nothing that we are more unwilling to do than to bid farewell to our own labors and to give God's works their rightful place. If our unreason did not stand in the way, Christ has given a testimony of his benefits clear enough so that they cannot be spitefully suppressed. "I am," he says, "the vine, you the branches [John 15:5]; my Father is the cultivator [John 15:1]. Just as branches cannot bear fruit of themselves unless they abide in the vine, so can you not unless you abide in me [John 5:4]. For apart from me you can do nothing" [John 5:5].

If we no more bear fruit of ourselves than a branch buds out when it is plucked from the earth and deprived of moisture, we ought not to seek any further the potentiality of our nature for good. Nor is this conclusion doubtful: "Apart from me you can do nothing" [John 15:5]. He does not say that we are too weak to be sufficient unto ourselves, but in reducing us to nothing he excludes all estimation of even the slightest little ability. If grafted in Christ we bear fruit like a vine - which derives the energy for its growth from the moisture of the earth, from the dew of heaven, and from the quickening warmth of the sun - I see no share in good works remaining to us if we keep unimpaired what is God's. In vain this silly subtlety is alleged: there is already sap enclosed in the branch, and the power of bearing fruit; and it does not take everything from the earth or from its primal root, because it furnishes something of its own. Now Christ simply means that we are dry and worthless wood when we are separated from him, for apart from him we have no ability to do good, as elsewhere he also says: "Every tree which my Father has not planted will be uprooted" [Matthew 15:13, cf. Vg.]. For this reason, in the passage already cited the apostle ascribes the sum total to him. "It is God," says he, "who is at work in you, both to will and to work." [Philippians 2:13.]

The first part of a good work is will; the other, a strong effort to accomplish it; the author of both is God. Therefore we are robbing the Lord if we claim for ourselves anything either in will or in accomplishment. If God were said to help our weak will, then something would be left to us. But when it is said that he makes the will, whatever of good is in it is now placed outside us. But since even a good will is weighed down by the burden of our flesh so that it cannot rise up, he added that to surmount the difficulties of that struggle we are provided with constancy of effort sufficient to achieve this. Indeed, what he teaches in another passage could not otherwise be true: "It is God alone who works all things in all" [1 Corinthians 12:6]. In this statement, as we have previously noted, the whole course of the spiritual life is comprehended. So, too, David, after he has prayed the ways of God be made known to him so that he may walk in his truth, immediately adds, "Unite my heart to fear thy name" [Psalm 86:11; cf. Psalm 119:33]. By these words he means that even well-disposed persons have been subject to so many distractions that they readily vanish or fall away unless they are strengthened to persevere. In this way elsewhere, after he has prayed that his steps be directed to keep God's word, he begs also to be given the strength to fight: "Let no iniquity," he says, "get dominion over me" [Psalm 119:133]. Therefore the Lord in this way both begins and completes the good work in us. It is the Lord's doing that the will conceives the love of what is right, is zealously inclined toward it, is aroused and moved to pursue it. Then it is the Lord's doing that the choice, zeal, and effort do not falter, but proceed even to accomplishment; lastly, that man goes forward in these things with constancy, and perseveres to the very end.

**10. GOD'S ACTIVITY DOES NOT PRODUCE A POSSIBILITY THAT WE CAN EXHAUST, BUT AN ACTUALITY TO WHICH WE CANNOT ADD**

He does not move the will in such a manner as has been taught and believed for many ages - that it is afterward in our choice either to obey or resist the motion - but by disposing it efficaciously. Therefore one must deny that oft-repeated statement of Chrysostom: "Whom he draws he draws willing." By this he signifies that the Lord is only extending his hand to await whether we will be pleased to receive his aid. We admit that man's condition while he still remained upright was such that he could incline to either side. But inasmuch as he has made clear by his example how miserable free will is unless God both wills and is able to work in us, what will happen to us if he imparts his grace to us in this small measure? But we ourselves obscure it and weaken it by our unthankfulness. For the apostle does not teach that the grace of a good will is bestowed upon us if we accept it, but that He wills to work in us. This means nothing else than that the Lord by his Spirit directs, bends, and governs, our heart and reigns in it as in his own possession, indeed, he does not promise through Ezekiel that he will give a new Spirit to his elect only in order that they may be able to walk according to his precepts, but also that they may actually so walk [Ezekiel 11:19-20; 36:27].

Now can Christ's saying ("Every one who has heard... from the Father comes to me" [John 6:45, cf. Vg.]) be understood in any other way than that the grace of God is efficacious of itself. This Augustine also maintains. The Lord does not indiscriminately deem everyone worthy of this grace, as that common saying of Ockham (unless I am mistaken) boasts: grace is denied to no one who does what is in him. Men indeed ought to be taught that God's loving-kindness is set forth to all who seek it, without exception. But since it is those on whom heavenly grace has breathed who at length begin to seek after it, they should not claim for themselves the slightest part of his praise. It is obviously the privilege of the elect that, regenerated through the Spirit of God, they are moved and governed by his leading. For this

reason, Augustine justly derides those who claim for themselves any part of the act of willing, just as he reprehends others who think that what is the special testimony of free election is indiscriminately given to all. "Nature," he says, "is common to all, not grace." The view that what God bestows upon whomever he wills is generally extended to all, Augustine calls a brittle glasslike subtlety of wit, which glitters with mere vanity. Elsewhere he says: "How have you come? By believing. Fear lest while you are claiming for yourself that you have found the just way, you perish from the just way. I have come, you say, of my own free choice; I have come of my own will. Why are you puffed up? Do you wish to know that this also has been given you? Hear Him calling, 'No one comes to me unless my Father draws him' [John 6:44 p.]." And one may incontrovertibly conclude from John's words that the hearts of the pious are so effectively governed by God that they follow Him with unwavering intention. "No one begotten of God can sin," he says, "for God's seed abides in him." [1 John 3:9.] For the intermediate movement the Sophists dream up, which men are free either to accept or refuse, we see obviously excluded when it is asserted that constancy is efficacious for perseverance.

#### 11. PERSEVERANCE IS EXCLUSIVELY GOD'S WORK; IT IS NEITHER A REWARD NOR A COMPLEMENT OF OUR INDIVIDUAL ACT

Perseverance would, without any doubt, be accounted God's free gift if a most wicked error did not prevail that it is distributed according to men's merit, in so far as each man shows himself receptive to the first grace. But since this error arose from the fact that men thought it in their power to spurn or to accept the proffered grace of God, when the latter opinion is swept away the former idea also falls of itself. However, there is here a twofold error. For besides teaching that our gratefulness for the first grace and our lawful use of it are



rewarded by subsequent gifts, they add also that grace does not work in us by itself, but is only a co-worker with us.

As for the first point: we ought to believe that - while the Lord enriches his servants daily and heaps new gifts of his grace upon them - because he holds pleasing and acceptable the work that he has begun in them, he finds in them something he may follow up by greater graces. This is the meaning of the statement, "To him who has shall be given" [Matthew 25:29; Luke 19:26]. Likewise: "Well done, good servant; you have been faithful in a few matters, I will set you over much" [Matthew 25:21,23; Luke 19:17; all Vg., conflated]. But here we ought to guard against two things: (1) not to say that lawful use of the first grace is rewarded by later graces, as if man by his own effort rendered God's grace effective; or (2) so to think of the reward as to cease to consider it of God's free grace.

I grant that believers are to expect this blessing of God: that the better use they have made of the prior graces, the more may the following graces be thereafter increased. But I say this use is also from the Lord and this reward arises from his free benevolence. And they perversely as well as infelicitously utilize that worn distinction between operating and co-operating grace. Augustine indeed uses it, but moderates it with a suitable definition: God by co-operating perfects that which by operating he has begun. It is the same grace but with its name changed to fit the different mode of its effect. Hence it follows that he is not dividing it between God and us as if from the individual movement of each a mutual convergence occurred, but he is rather making note of the multiplying of grace. What he says elsewhere bears on this: many gifts of God precede man's good will, which is itself among his gifts. From this it follows that the will is left nothing to claim for itself. This Paul has expressly declared. For after he had said, "It is God who works in us to will and

to accomplish," he went on to say that he does both "for his good pleasure" [Philippians 2:13 p.]. By this expression he means that God's loving-kindness is freely given. To this, our adversaries usually say that after we have accepted the first grace, then our own efforts co-operate with subsequent grace. To this I reply: If they mean that after we have by the Lord's power once for all been brought to obey righteousness, we go forward by our own power and are inclined to follow the action of grace, I do not gainsay it. For it is very certain that where God's grace reigns, there is readiness to obey it. Yet whence does this readiness come? Does not the Spirit of God, everywhere self-consistent, nourish the very inclination to obedience that he first engendered, and strengthen its constancy to persevere? Yet if they mean that man has in himself the power to work in partnership with God's grace, they are most wretchedly deluding themselves.

## 12. MAN CANNOT ASCRIBE TO HIMSELF EVEN ONE SINGLE GOOD WORK APART FROM GOD'S GRACE

Through ignorance they falsely twist to this purport that saying of the apostle: "I labored more than they all - yet not I but the grace of God which was with me" [1 Corinthians 15:10]. Here is how they understand it: because it could have seemed a little too arrogant for Paul to say he preferred himself to all, he therefore corrected his statement by paying the credit to God's grace; yet he did this in such a way as to call himself a fellow laborer in grace. It is amazing that so many otherwise good men have stumbled on this straw. For the apostle does not write that the grace of the Lord labored with him to make him a partner in the labor. Rather, by this correction he transfers all credit for labor to grace alone. "It is not I," he says, "who labored, but the grace of God which was present with me." [1 Corinthians 15:10 p.] Now, the ambiguity of the expression deceived

them, but more particularly the absurd Latin translation in which the force of the Greek article had been missed. For if you render it word for word, he does not say that grace was a fellow worker with him; but that the grace that was present with him was the cause of everything. Augustine teaches this clearly, though briefly, when he speaks as follows: "Man's good will precedes many of God's gifts, but not all. The very will that precedes is itself among these gifts. The reason then follows: for it was written, 'His mercy anticipates me' [Psalm 59:10; cf. Psalm 58:11 Vg.]. And 'His mercy will follow me' [Psalm 23:6]. Grace anticipates unwilling man that he may will; it follows him willing that he may not will in vain." Bernard agrees with Augustine when he makes the church speak thus: "Draw me, however unwilling, to make me willing; draw me, slow-footed, to make me run."

### 13. AUGUSTINE ALSO RECOGNIZES NO INDEPENDENT ACTIVITY OF THE HUMAN WILL

Now let us hear Augustine speaking in his own words, lest the Pelagians of our own age, that is, the Sophists of the Sorbonne, according to their custom, charge that all antiquity is against us. In this they are obviously imitating their father Pelagius, by whom Augustine himself was once drawn into the same arena. In his treatise *On Rebuke and Grace to Valentinus*, Augustine treats more fully what I shall refer to here briefly, yet in his own words. The grace of persisting in good would have been given to Adam if he had so willed. It is given to us in order that we may will, and by will may overcome concupiscence. Therefore, he had the ability if he had so willed, but he did not will that he should be able. To us it is given both to will and to be able. The original freedom was to be able not to sin; but ours is much greater, not to be able to sin. And that no one may think that he is speaking of a perfection to come after

immortality, as Lombard falsely interprets it, Augustine shortly thereafter removes this doubt. He says: "Surely the will of the saints is so much aroused by the Holy Spirit that they are able because they so will, and that they will because God brings it about that they so will. Now suppose that in such great weakness in which, nevertheless, God's power must be made perfect to repress elation [2 Corinthians 12:9], their own will were left to them in order, with God's aid, to be able, if they will, and that God does not work in them that they will: amid so many temptations the will itself would then succumb through weakness, and for that reason they could not persevere. Therefore assistance is given to the weakness of the human will to move it unwaveringly and inseparably by divine grace, and hence, however great its weakness, not to let it fail." He then discusses more fully how our hearts of necessity respond to God as he works upon them. Indeed, he says that the Lord draws men by their own wills, wills that he himself has wrought. Now we have from Augustine's own lips the testimony that we especially wish to obtain: not only is grace offered by the Lord, which by anyone's free choice may be accepted or rejected; but it is this very grace which forms both choice and will in the heart, so that whatever good works then follow are the fruit and effect of grace; and it has no other will obeying it except the will that it has made. There are also Augustine's words from another place: "Grace alone brings about every good work in us."

#### 14. AUGUSTINE DOES NOT ELIMINATE MAN'S WILL, BUT MAKES IT WHOLLY DEPENDENT UPON GRACE

Elsewhere he says that will is not taken away by grace, but is changed from evil into good, and helped when it is good. By this he means only that man is not borne along without any motion of the heart, as if by an outside force; rather, he is so affected within that he obeys

from the heart. Augustine writes to Boniface that grace is specially and freely given to the elect in this manner: "We know that God's grace is not given to all men. To those to whom it is given it is given neither according to the merits of works, nor according to the merits of the will, but by free grace. To those to whom it is not given we know that it is because of God's righteous judgment that it is not given." And in the same epistle he strongly challenges the view that subsequent grace is given for men's merits because by not rejecting the first grace they render themselves worthy. For he would have Pelagius admit that grace is necessary for our every action and is not in payment for our works, in order that it may truly be grace. But the matter cannot be summed up in briefer form than in the eighth chapter of the book *On Rebuke and Grace* to Valentinus. There Augustine first teaches: the human will does not obtain grace by freedom, but obtains freedom by grace; when the feeling of delight has been imparted through<sup>67</sup> the same grace, the human will is formed to endure; it is strengthened with unconquerable fortitude; controlled by grace, it never will perish, but, if grace forsake it, it will straightway fall; by the Lord's free mercy it is converted to good, and once converted it perseveres in good; the direction of the human will toward good, and after direction its continuation in good, depend solely upon God's will, not upon any merit of man. Thus there is left to man such free will, if we please so to call it, as he elsewhere describes: that except through grace the will can neither be converted to God nor abide in God; and whatever it can do it is able to do only through grace.

## **BOOK 2**

# CHAPTER 4

## HOW GOD WORKS IN MEN'S HEARTS

### John Calvin

(Man under Satan's control: but Scripture shows God making use of Satan in hardening the heart of the reprobate, 1-5)

#### 1. MAN STANDS UNDER THE DEVIL'S POWER, AND INDEED WILLINGLY

Unless I am mistaken, we have sufficiently proved that man is so held captive by the yoke of sin that he can of his own nature neither aspire to good through resolve nor struggle after it through effort. Besides, we posited a distinction between compulsion and necessity from which it appears that man, while he sins of necessity, yet sins no less voluntarily. But, while he is bound in servitude to the devil, he seems to be actuated more by the devil's will than by his own. It consequently remains for us to determine the part of the devil and the part of man in the action. Then we must answer the question whether we ought to ascribe to God any part of the evil works in which Scripture signifies that some action of his intervenes.

Somewhere Augustine compares man's will to a horse awaiting its rider's command, and God and the devil to its riders. "If God sits astride it," he says, "then as a moderate and skilled rider, he guides it properly, spurs it if it is too slow, checks it if it is too swift, restrains it if it is too rough or too wild, subdues it if it balks, and leads it into the right path. But if the devil saddles it, he violently drives it far from the trail like a foolish and wanton rider, forces it into ditches, tumbles it over cliffs, and goads it into obstinacy and fierceness."

Since a better comparison does not come to mind, we shall be satisfied with this one for the present. It is said that the will of the natural man is subject to the devil's power and is stirred up by it. This does not mean that, like unwilling slaves rightly compelled by their masters to obey, our will, although reluctant and resisting, is constrained to take orders from the devil. It means rather that the will, captivated by Satan's wiles, of necessity obediently submits to all his leading. For those whom the Lord does not make worthy to be guided by his Spirit he abandons, with just judgment, to Satan's action. For this reason the apostle says that "the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers," who are destined to destruction, that they may not see the light of the gospel [2 Corinthians 4:4]; and in another place that he "is... at work in the disobedient sons" [Ephesians 2:2]. The blinding of the impious and all iniquities following from it are called "the works of Satan." Yet their cause is not to be sought outside man's will, from which the root of evil springs up, and on which rests the foundation of Satan's kingdom, that is, sin.

## 2. GOD, SATAN, AND MAN ACTIVE IN THE SAME EVENT

Far different is the manner of God's action in such matters. To make this clearer to us, we may take as an example the calamity inflicted by the Chaldeans upon the holy man Job, when they killed his shepherds and in enmity ravaged his flock [Job 1:17]. Now their wicked act is perfectly obvious; nor does Satan do nothing in that work, for the history states that the whole thing stems from him [Job 1:12].

But Job himself recognizes the Lord's work in it, saying that He has taken away what had been seized through the Chaldeans [Job 1:21]. How may we attribute this same work to God, to Satan, and to man

as author, without either excusing Satan as associated with God, or making God the author of evil? Easily, if we consider first the end, and then the manner, of acting. The Lord's purpose is to exercise the patience of His servant by calamity; Satan endeavors to drive him to desperation; the Chaldeans strive to acquire gain from another's property contrary to law and right. So great is the diversity of purpose that already strongly marks the deed. There is no less difference in the manner. The Lord permits Satan to afflict His servant; He hands the Chaldeans over to be impelled by Satan, having chosen them as His ministers for this task. Satan with his poison darts arouses the wicked minds of the Chaldeans to execute that evil deed. They dash madly into injustice, and they render all their members guilty and befoul them by the crime. Satan is properly said, therefore, to act in the reprobate over whom he exercises his reign, that is, the reign of wickedness. God is also said to act in His own manner, in that Satan himself, since he is the instrument of God's wrath, bends himself hither and thither at His beck and command to execute His just judgments. I pass over here the universal activity of God whereby all creatures, as they are sustained, thus derive the energy to do anything at all. I am speaking only of that special action which appears in every particular deed. Therefore we see no inconsistency in assigning the same deed to God, Satan, and man; but the distinction in purpose and manner causes God's righteousness to shine forth blameless there, while the wickedness of Satan and of man betrays itself by its own disgrace.

### 3. WHAT DOES "HARDNESS" MEAN?

The church fathers sometimes scrupulously shrink from a simple confession of the truth because they are afraid that they may open the way for the impious to speak irreverently of God's works. As I heartily approve of this soberness, so do I deem it in no way



dangerous if we simply adhere to what Scripture teaches. At times not even Augustine was free of that superstition; for example, he says that hardening and blinding refer not to God's activity but to his foreknowledge. Yet very many expressions of Scripture do not admit these subtleties, but clearly show that something more than God's mere foreknowledge is involved. And Augustine himself in the *Against Julian*, Book V, argues at great length that sins happen not only by God's permission and forbearance, but by his might, as a kind of punishment for sins previously committed. Likewise what they report concerning permission is too weak to stand.

Very often God is said to blind and harden the reprobate, to turn, incline, and impel, their hearts [e.g.. Isaiah 6:10], as I have taught more fully elsewhere. The nature of this activity is by no means explained if we take refuge in foreknowledge or permission. We therefore reply that it takes place in two ways. For after his light is removed, nothing but darkness and blindness remains. When his Spirit is taken away, our hearts harden into stones. When his guidance ceases, they are wrenched into crookedness. Thus it is properly said that he blinds, hardens, and bends those whom he has deprived of the power of seeing, obeying, and rightly following.

The second way, which comes much closer to the proper meaning of the words, is that to carry out his judgments through Satan as minister of his wrath, God destines men's purposes as he pleases, arouses their wills, and strengthens their endeavors. Thus Moses, when he relates that King Sihon did not give passage to the people because God had hardened his spirit and made his heart obstinate, immediately adds the purpose of His plan: that, as he says, "He might give him into our hands" [Deuteronomy 2:30, cf. Comm.]. Therefore, because God willed that Sihon be destroyed, He prepared his ruin through obstinacy of heart.

#### 4. SCRIPTURAL EXAMPLES OF HOW GOD TREATS THE GODLESS

According to the first way this seems to have been said: "He takes away speech from the truthful, and deprives the elders of reason" [Job 12:20; cf. Ezekiel 7:26]. "He takes the heart from those who are in authority over the people of the land, and makes them wander in trackless wastes." [Job 12:24 p.; cf. Psalm 107:40.] Likewise, "O Lord, why hast thou driven us mad and hardened our heart, that we may not fear thee?" [Isaiah 63:17, cf. Vg.] These passages indicate what sort of men God makes by deserting them rather than how he carries out his work in them. Yet there are other testimonies that go beyond these. Such, for example, are those of the hardening of Pharaoh: "I will harden his heart... so that he may not hear you [Exodus 7:3-4] and let the people go" [Exodus 4:21]. Afterward he said that he had made Pharaoh's heart "heavy" [Exodus 10:1] and "stiffened" it [Exodus 10:20,27; 11:10; 14:8]. Did he harden it by not softening it? This is indeed true, but he did something more. He turned Pharaoh over to Satan to be confirmed in the obstinacy of his breast. This is why he had previously said, "I will restrain his heart" [Exodus 4:21]. The people go forth from Egypt; as enemies the inhabitants of the region come to meet them. What has stirred them up? Moses, indeed, declared to the people that it was the Lord who stiffened their hearts [Deuteronomy 2:30]. The prophet, indeed, recounting the same history, says: "He turned their hearts to hate his people" [Psalm 105:25]. Now you cannot say that they stumbled from being deprived of God's counsel. For if they were "stiffened" and "turned," they were deliberately bent to that very thing. Moreover, whenever it pleased him to punish the transgressions of the people, how did he carry out his work through the reprobate? So that anyone may see that the power of execution was with him while they merely provided service. Accordingly he threatens to call them forth by his

whistle [Isaiah 5:26; 7:18], then to use them as a snare to catch [Ezekiel 12:13; 17:20], then as a hammer to shatter, the Israelites [Jeremiah 50:23]. But he expressly declared that he did not idly stand by when he called Sennacherib an ax [Isaiah 10:15] that was aimed and impelled by His own hand to cut them down. In another place Augustine rather well defines the matter as follows: "The fact that men sin is their own doing; that they by sinning do this or that comes from the power of God, who divides the darkness as he pleases."

## 5. SATAN ALSO MUST SERVE GOD

One passage will however be enough to show that Satan intervenes to stir up the reprobate whenever the Lord by his providence destines them to one end or another. For in Samuel it is often said that "an evil spirit of the Lord" and "an evil spirit from the Lord" has either "seized" or "departed from" Saul [1 Samuel 16:14; 18:10; 19:9]. It is unlawful to refer this to the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the impure spirit is called "spirit of God" because it responds to his will and power, and acts rather as God's instrument than by itself as the author. At the same time we ought to add what Paul teaches: the working of error and seduction is divinely sent "that those who have not obeyed the truth may believe a lie" [2 Thessalonians 2:10-11, cf. Vg.]. Yet in the same work there is always a great difference between what the Lord does and what Satan and the wicked try to do. God makes these evil instruments, which he holds under his hand and can turn wherever he pleases, to serve his justice. They, as they are evil, by their action give birth to a wickedness conceived in their depraved nature. The other considerations that are concerned with vindicating God's majesty from blame, or cutting off any excuses of the wicked, have already been discussed in the chapter on providence. Here my

sole intention was briefly to indicate how Satan reigns in a reprobate man, and how the Lord acts in both.

(God's providence overrules men's wills in external matters, 6-8)

## 6. IN ACTIONS OF THEMSELVES NEITHER GOOD NOR BAD, WE ARE NOT THROWN ON OUR OWN

Even though we have touched upon the matter above, we have not yet explained what freedom man may possess in actions that are of themselves neither righteous nor corrupt, and look toward the physical rather than the spiritual life. In such things some have conceded him free choice, more (I suspect) because they would not argue about a matter of no great importance than because they wanted to assert positively the very thing they grant. I admit that those who think they have no power to justify themselves hold to the main point necessary to know for salvation. Yet I do not think this part ought to be neglected: to recognize that whenever we are prompted to choose something to our advantage, whenever the will inclines to this, or conversely when ever our mind and heart shun anything that would otherwise be harmful - this is of the Lord's special grace.

The force of God's providence extends to this point: not only that things occur as he foresees to be expedient, but that men's wills also incline to the same end. Indeed, if we ponder the direction of external things, we shall not doubt that to this extent they are left to human judgment. But if we lend our ears to the many testimonies which proclaim that the Lord also rules men's minds in external things, these will compel us to subordinate decision itself to the special impulse of God. Who inclined the wills of the Egyptians toward the Israelites so that they should lend them all their most precious vessels [Exodus 11:2-3]? They would never voluntarily have

been so inclined. Therefore, their minds were more subject to the Lord than ruled by themselves.

Indeed, if Jacob had not been persuaded that God according to his pleasure variously disposes men, he would not have said of his son Joseph, whom he thought to be some heathen Egyptian, "May God grant you to find mercy in this man's sight" [Genesis 43:14]. Also, as the whole church confesses in the psalm, when God would have mercy upon his people, he tamed the hearts of the cruel nations to gentleness [cf. Psalm 106:46]. On the other hand, when Saul so broke out into anger as to gird himself for war, the cause is stated: the Spirit of God impelled him [1 Samuel 11:6]. Who turned Absalom's mind from embracing Ahithophel's counsel, which was usually regarded as an oracle [2 Samuel 17:14]? Who inclined Rehoboam to be persuaded by the young men's counsel [1 Kings 12:10,14]? Who caused the nations previously very bold to tremble at the coming of Israel? Even the harlot Rahab confessed that this was done by God [Joshua 2:9 ff.]. Again, who cast down the hearts of Israel with fear and dread, but he who threatened in the Law to give them "a trembling heart" [Deuteronomy 28:65; cf. Leviticus 26:36]?

## 7. IN EACH CASE GOD'S DOMINION STANDS ABOVE OUR FREEDOM

Someone will object that these are particular examples to whose rule by no means all instances ought to be applied. But I say that they sufficiently prove what I contend: God, whenever he wills to make way for his providence, bends and turns men's wills even in external things; nor are they so free to choose that God's will does not rule over their freedom. Whether you will or not, daily experience compels you to realize that your mind is guided by God's prompting rather than by your own freedom to choose. That is, in the simplest

matters judgment and understanding often fail you, while in things easy to do the courage droops. On the contrary, in the obscurest matters, ready counsel is immediately offered; in great and critical matters there is courage to master every difficulty.

In this way I understand Solomon's words, "God made both the ear to hear and the eye to see" [Proverbs 20:12 p.]. For he seems to me not to be speaking of their creation, but of the peculiar gift of their function. When he writes, "In his hand the Lord holds the king's heart as streams of water, and turns it wherever he will" [Proverbs 21:1], Solomon actually comprehends the whole genus under a single species. If any man's will has been released from all subjection, this privilege belongs above all to the kingly will, which in a measure exercises rule over others' wills. But if the king's will is bent by God's hand, our wills are not exempt from that condition. On this point there is a notable saying of Augustine: "Scripture, if diligently searched, shows that not only the good wills which he has made out of evil ones and directs, once so made by him, to good actions and to eternal life are in God's power; but so also are those wills which preserve the creatures of this world. And they are so in his power that he causes them to be inclined where and when he will, either to bestow benefits, or to inflict punishments - indeed by his most secret but most righteous judgment."

#### 8. THE QUESTION OF "FREE WILL" DOES NOT DEPEND ON WHETHER WE CAN ACCOMPLISH WHAT WE WILL, BUT WHETHER WE CAN WILL FREELY

Here let my readers remember that man's ability to choose freely is not to be judged by the outcome of things, as some ignorant folk absurdly have it. For they seem to themselves neatly and cleverly to prove the bondage of men's will from the fact that not even for the

highest monarchs do all things go according to their liking. Anyhow, this ability of which we are speaking we must consider within man, and not measure it by outward success. In discussing free will we are not asking whether a man is permitted to carry out and complete, despite external hindrances, whatever he has decided to do; but whether he has, in any respect whatever, both choice of judgment and inclination of will that are free. If men have sufficient of both, Atilius Regulus, confined in a nail-studded wine cask, has no less of free will than Augustus Caesar, governing at his command a great part of the world.

## **BOOK 2**

### **CHAPTER 5**

REFUTATION OF THE OBJECTIONS COMMONLY PUT  
FORWARD IN DEFENSE OF FREE WILL

**John Calvin**

(Answers to arguments for free will alleged on grounds of common sense, 1-5)

1. FIRST ARGUMENT: NECESSARY SIN IS NOT SIN; VOLUNTARY SIN IS AVOIDABLE

It would seem that enough had been said concerning the bondage of man's will, were it not for those who by a false notion of freedom try

to cast down this conception and allege in opposition some reasons of their own to assail our opinion. First, they heap up various absurdities to cast odium upon it, as something abhorrent also to common sense; afterward with Scriptural testimonies they contend against it. We shall beat back both siege engines in turn. If sin, they say, is a matter of necessity, it now ceases to be sin; if it is voluntary, then it can be avoided. These were also the weapons with which Pelagius assailed Augustine. Yet we do not intend to crush them by the weight of Augustine's name until we have satisfactorily treated the matter itself. I therefore deny that sin ought less to be reckoned as sin merely because it is necessary. I deny conversely the inference they draw, that because sin is voluntary it is avoidable. For if anyone may wish to dispute with God and escape judgment by pretending that he could not do otherwise, he has a ready reply, which we have brought forward elsewhere: it is not from creation but from corruption of nature that men are bound to sin and can will nothing but evil. For whence comes that inability which the wicked would freely use as an excuse, but from the fact that Adam willingly bound himself over to the devil's tyranny? Hence, therefore, the corruption that enchains us: the first man fell away from his Maker. If all men are deservedly held guilty of this rebellion, let them not think themselves excused by the very necessity in which they have the most evident cause of their condemnation. I explained this clearly above, and gave the devil himself as an example; from which it is clear that he who sins of necessity sins no less voluntarily. This is, conversely, true of the elect angels: although their will cannot turn away from good, yet it does not cease to be will. Bernard also aptly teaches the same thing: that we are the more miserable because the necessity is voluntary, a necessity which nevertheless having bound us to it, so constrains us that we are slaves of sin, as we have mentioned before. The second part of their syllogism is defective because it erroneously



leaps from "voluntary" to "free." For we proved above that something not subject to free choice is nevertheless voluntarily done.

## 2. SECOND ARGUMENT: REWARD AND PUNISHMENT LOSE THEIR MEANING

They submit that, unless both virtues and vices proceed from the free choice of the will, it is not consistent that man be either punished or rewarded. I admit that this argument, even though it is Aristotle's, is somewhere used by Chrysostom and Jerome. Yet Jerome himself does not hide the fact that it was a common argument of the Pelagians, and he even quotes their own words: "If it is the grace of God working in us, then grace, not we who do not labor, will be crowned." Concerning punishments, I reply that they are justly inflicted upon us, from whom the guilt of sin takes its source. What difference does it make whether we sin out of free or servile judgment, provided it is by voluntary desire - especially since man is proved a sinner because he is under the bondage of sin? As for the rewards of righteousness, it is a great absurdity for us to admit that they depend upon God's kindness rather than our own merits.

How often does this thought recur in Augustine: "God does not crown our merits but his own gifts"; "we call 'rewards' not what are due our merits, but what are rendered for graces already bestowed"! To be sure, they sharply note this: that no place is now left for merits if they do not have free will as their source. But in regarding this so much a matter for disagreement they err greatly. Augustine does not hesitate habitually to teach as an unavoidable fact what they think unlawful so to confess. For example, he says: "What are the merits of any men? When he comes not with a payment due but with free grace, he, alone free of sin and the liberator from it, finds all men sinners." Also: "If you shall be paid what you deserve, you must be

punished. What then happens? God has not rendered you the punishment you deserve, but bestows undeserved grace.

If you would be estranged from grace, boast of your own merits." Again: "Of yourself you are nothing. Sins are your own, but merits are God's. You deserve punishment, and when the reward comes he will crown his own gifts, not your merits." In the same vein he teaches elsewhere that grace does not arise from merit, but merit from grace! And a little later Augustine concludes that God precedes all merits with his gifts, that from them he may bring forth his own merits; he gives them altogether free because he finds no reason to save man. Why, then, is it necessary to list more proofs when such sentences recur again and again in Augustine's writings? Yet the apostle will even better free our adversaries from this error if they will hear from what principle he derives the glory of the saints. "Those whom he chose, he called; those whom he called, he justified; those whom he justified, he glorified." [Romans 8:30 p.] Why, then, according to the apostle, are believers crowned [2 Timothy 4:8]? Because they have been chosen and called and justified by the Lord's mercy, not by their own effort. Away, then, with this empty fear that there will be merit no longer if free will is not to stand! It is the height of foolishness to be frightened away and to flee from the very thing to which Scripture calls us. "If you received all things," he says, "why do you boast as if it were not a gift?" [1 Corinthians 4:7 p.] You see that Paul has taken everything away from free will in order not to leave any place for merits. But nevertheless, inexhaustible and manifold as God's beneficence and liberality are, he rewards, as if they were our own virtues, those graces which he bestows upon us, because he makes them ours.

### 3. THIRD ARGUMENT: ALL DISTINCTION BETWEEN GOOD AND EVIL WOULD BE OBLITERATED

Our opponents add an objection, which seems to have been drawn from Chrysostom: if to choose good or evil is not a faculty of our will, those who share in the same nature must be either all bad or all good. Close to this point of view is the writer (whoever he was) of that work, *The Calling of the Gentiles*, which has been circulated under Ambrose's name. He reasons: no one would ever have departed from the faith if God's grace had not left us in a mutable condition. Strange that such great men should have been so forgetful! For how did it not occur to Chrysostom that it is God's election which so distinguishes among men? Now we are not in the least afraid to admit what Paul asserts with great earnestness: all men are both depraved and given over to wickedness [cf. Romans 3:10]. But we add with him that it is through God's mercy that not all remain in wickedness. Therefore, though all of us are by nature suffering from the same disease, only those whom it pleases the Lord to touch with his healing hand will get well. The others, whom he, in his righteous judgment, passes over, waste away in their own rottenness until they are consumed. There is no other reason why some persevere to the end, while others fall at the beginning of the course. For perseverance itself is indeed also a gift of God, which he does not bestow on all indiscriminately, but imparts to whom he pleases. If one seeks the reason for the difference - why some steadfastly persevere, and others fail out of instability - none occurs to us other than that the Lord upholds the former, strengthening them by his own power, that they may not perish; while to the latter, that they may be examples of inconstancy, he does not impart the same power.

#### 4. FOURTH ARGUMENT: ALL EXHORTATION WOULD BE MEANINGLESS

Furthermore, they insist that it is vain to undertake exhortations, pointless to make use of admonitions, foolish to reprove, unless it be within the sinner's power to obey. When Augustine long ago was met by similar objections, he was constrained to write his treatise *On Rebuke and Grace*. Even though in it he amply refutes those charges, he recalls his adversaries to this chief point: "O man! Learn by precept what you ought to do; learn by rebuke that it is by your own fault that you have it not; learn by prayer whence you may receive what you desire to have." In the book *On the Spirit and the Letter* he uses almost the same argument: God does not measure the precepts of his law according to human powers, but where he has commanded what is right, he freely gives to his elect the capacity to fulfill it. And this matter does not require long discussion. First, we are not alone in this cause, but Christ and all the apostles are with us.

Let these men look to it how they may gain the upper hand in the struggle they are waging against such antagonists. Christ declares: "Without me you can do nothing." [John 15:5.] Does he for this reason any less reprove and chastise those who apart from him have been doing evil? Or does he for this reason any less urge everyone to devote himself to good works? How severely Paul inveighs against the Corinthians for their neglect of love [1 Corinthians 3:8; 16:14]! Yet he indeed prays that the Lord may give them love. Paul says in the letter to the Romans: "It depends not upon him who wills or upon him who runs, but upon God who shows mercy" [Romans 9:16]. Still, he does not cease afterward to admonish as well as to urge and rebuke. Why do they not therefore importune the Lord not to labor in vain in requiring of men what he alone can give and in chastising what is committed out of lack of his grace? Why do they not warn Paul to spare those who do not have the power to will or to run, unless God's mercy, which has now forsaken them, goes before? As if the best reason of his teaching, which readily offers itself to

those who more fervently seek it, did not rest in the Lord himself Paul writes, "Neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but God who gives the growth alone acts effectively." [1 Corinthians 8:7.] In this he indicates how much teaching, exhortation, and reproof do to change the mind! Thus we see how Moses placed the commandments of the law under severe sanctions [Deuteronomy 30:19], and how the prophets bitterly menaced and threatened the transgressors. Yet they then confess that men become wise only when an understanding heart is given them [e.g., Isaiah 5:24; 24:5; Jeremiah 9:13 ff.; 16:11 ff.; 44:10 ff.; Daniel 9:11; Amos 2:4], and that it is God's own work to circumcise hearts [cf. Deuteronomy 10:16; Jeremiah 4:4] and to give hearts of flesh for hearts of stone [cf. Ezekiel 11:19]; his to inscribe his law on our inward parts [cf. Jeremiah 31:33]; in fine, by renewing our souls [cf. Ezekiel 36:26], to make his teaching effective.

## 5. THE MEANING OF EXHORTATION

To what purpose then are exhortations? If rejected by the ungodly out of an obstinate heart, these shall be a testimony against them when they come to the Lord's judgment seat. Even now these are striking and beating their<sup>81</sup> consciences. For, however much the most insolent person scoffs at them, he cannot condemn them. But, you ask, what will miserable little man do when softness of heart, which is necessary for obedience, is denied him? Indeed, what excuse will he have, seeing that he can credit hardness of heart to no one but himself? Therefore the impious, freely prepared to make sport of God's exhortations if they can, are, in spite of themselves, dumfounded by the power of them.

But we must consider their especial value for believers, in whom (as the Lord does all things through his Spirit) he does not neglect the

instrument of his Word but makes effective use of it. Let this, then, be held true: all the righteousness of the pious rests upon God's grace. As the prophet said: "I will give them a new heart... that they may walk in my statutes" [Ezekiel 11:19-20]. Yet you will object, why are they now admonished about their duty, rather than left to the guidance of the Spirit? Why are they plied with exhortations, when they can hasten no more than the Spirit impels them? Why are they chastised whenever they stray from the path, when they have lapsed through the unavoidable weakness of the flesh?

O man, who are you to impose law upon God? If he wills to prepare us through exhortation to receive this very grace, by which we are made ready to obey the exhortation, what in this dispensation have you to carp or scoff at? If exhortations and reproofs profit the godly nothing except to convict them of sin, these ought not for this reason to be accounted utterly useless. Now, who would dare mock these exhortations as superfluous, since, with the Spirit acting within, they are perfectly able to kindle in us the desire for the good, to shake off sluggishness, to remove the lust for iniquity and its envenomed sweetness - on the contrary to engender hatred and loathing toward it?

If anyone wants a clearer answer, here it is: God works in his elect in two ways: within, through his Spirit; without, through his Word. By his Spirit, illuminating their minds and forming their hearts to the love and cultivation of righteousness, he makes them a new creation. By his Word, he arouses them to desire, to seek after, and to attain that same renewal. In both he reveals the working of his hand according to the mode of dispensation. When he addresses the same Word to the reprobate, though not to correct them, he makes it serve another use: today to press them with the witness of conscience, and in the Day of Judgment to render them the more inexcusable. Thus,

although Christ declares that no one except him whom the Father draws can come to him, and the elect come after they have "heard and learned from the Father" [John 6:44-45], still Christ does not neglect the teacher's office, but with his own voice unremittingly summons those who need to be taught within by the Holy Spirit in order to make any progress. Paul points out that teaching is not useless among the reprobate, because it is to them "a fragrance from death to death" [2 Corinthians 2:16], yet "a sweet fragrance to God" [2 Corinthians 2:15].

(Answers to arguments for free will based on interpretation of the law, promises and rebukes of Scripture, 6-11)

## 6. ARE GOD'S PRECEPTS "THE MEASURE OF OUR STRENGTH"?

Our opponents take great pains to heap up Scriptural passages: and they do this so unremittingly that, although they cannot prevail, in the numbers at least they can bear us down. But as in battle, when it comes to a hand-to-hand encounter an unwarlike multitude, however much pomp and ostentation it may display, is at once routed by a few blows and compelled to flee, so for us it will be very easy to disperse these adversaries with their host. All the passages that they misuse against us, when they have been sorted out into their classes, group themselves under a very few main headings. Hence one answer will suffice for several; it will not be necessary to dispose of each one individually.

They set chief stock by God's precepts. These they consider to be so accommodated to our capacities that we are of necessity able to fulfill all their demonstrable requirements. Consequently, they run through the individual precepts, and from them take the measure of our strength. Either God is mocking us (they say) when he enjoins holiness, piety, obedience, chastity, love, gentleness; when he forbids

uncleanness, idolatry, immodesty, anger, robbery, pride, and the like; or he requires only what is within our power.

Now we can divide into three classes almost all the precepts that they heap up. Some require man first to turn toward God; others simply speak of observing the law; others bid man to persevere in God's grace once it has been received. We shall discuss them all in general, then we shall get down to the three classes themselves.

A long time ago it became the common practice to measure man's capacities by the precepts of God's law, and this has some pretense of truth. But it arose out of the crassest ignorance of the law. For, those who deem it a terrible crime to say that it is impossible to observe the law press upon us as what is evidently their strongest reason that otherwise the law was given without purpose. Indeed, they speak as if Paul had nowhere spoken of the law. What then, I ask, do these assertions mean: "The law was put forward because of transgressions" [Galatians 3:19, cf. Vg.]; "Through the law comes knowledge of sin" [Romans 3:20]; the law engenders sin [cf. Romans 7:7-8]; "Law slipped in to increase the trespass" [Romans 5:20, cf. Vg.]? Was the law to be limited to our powers so as not to be given in vain? Rather, it was put far above us, to show clearly our own weakness! Surely, according to Paul's definition of the law, its purpose and fulfillment is love [cf. 1 Timothy 1:5]. And yet when Paul prays for the hearts of the Thessalonians to abound with it [1 Thessalonians 3:12] he fully admits that the law sounds in our ears without effect unless God inspires in our hearts the whole sum of the law [cf. Matthew 22:37-40].

## 7. THE LAW ITSELF POINTS OUR WAY TO GRACE

Of course, if Scripture taught nothing else than that the law is a rule of life to which we ought to direct our efforts, I, too, would yield to



their opinion without delay. But since it faithfully and clearly explains to us the manifold use of the law, it behooves us rather to consider from that interpretation what the law can do in man. With reference to the present question, as soon as the law prescribes what we are to do, it teaches that the power to obey comes from God's goodness. It thus summons us to prayers by which we may implore that this power be given us. If there were only a command and no promise, our strength would have to be tested whether it is sufficient to respond to the command. But since with the command are at once connected promises that proclaim not only that our support, but our whole virtue as well, rests in the help of divine grace, they more than sufficiently demonstrate how utterly inept, not to say unequal, we are to observe the law. For this reason, let us no longer press this proportion between our strength and the precepts of the law, as if the Lord had applied the rule of righteousness, which he was to give in the law, according to the measure of our feebleness. We who in every respect so greatly need his grace must all the more reckon from the promises how ill-prepared we are.

But who will believe it plausible (they say) that the Lord intended his law for stocks and stones? No one is trying to argue thus. For the wicked are not rocks or stumps when they are taught through the law that their lusts are opposed to God and they become guilty on their own admission; nor are believers stocks and stones when they are warned of their own weakness and take refuge in grace. On this point these profound statements of Augustine are pertinent: "God bids us do what we cannot, that we may know what we ought to seek from him." "The usefulness of the precepts is great if free will is so esteemed that God's grace may be the more honored." "Faith achieves what the law commands." "Indeed, it is for this reason the law commands, that faith may achieve what had been commanded through the law. Indeed, God requires faith itself of us; yet he does

not find something to require unless he has given something to find." Again, "Let God give what he commands, and command what he will."

## 8. THE SEVERAL KINDS OF THE COMMANDMENTS CLEARLY SHOW THAT WITHOUT GRACE WE CAN DO NOTHING

This will be more clearly seen in reviewing the three classes of precepts that we have touched on above. (1) Oftentimes both in the Law and in the Prophets the Lord commands us to be converted to him [Joel 2:12; Ezekiel 18:30-32; Hosea 14:2 f.]. On the other hand, the prophet answers: "Convert me, O Lord, and I will be converted... for after thou didst convert me I repented," etc. [Jeremiah 31:18-19, Vg.]. He bids us circumcise the foreskin of our heart [Deuteronomy 10:16; cf. Jeremiah 4:4]. But through Moses he declares that this circumcision is done by His own hand [Deuteronomy 30:6]. In some places he requires newness of heart [Ezekiel 18:31], but elsewhere he testifies that it is given by him [Ezekiel 11:19; 36:26]. "But what God promises," as Augustine says, "we ourselves do not do through choice or nature; but he himself does through grace." This observation he lists in fifth place among the rules of Tychonius: we must distinguish carefully between the law and the promises, or between the commandments and grace. Now away with those who infer from the precepts that man is perhaps capable of obedience, in order to destroy God's grace through which the commandments themselves are fulfilled. (2) The precepts of the second kind are simple: by them we are bidden to honor God, to serve his will and cleave to it, to observe his decrees, and to follow his teaching. But there are countless passages that bear witness that whatever righteousness, holiness, piety, and purity we can have are gifts of God. (3) Of the third type is the exhortation of Paul and Barnabas to believers "to remain under God's grace," referred to by Luke [Acts 13:43]. But

Paul also in another place teaches the source from which that virtue of constancy is to be sought. "It remains, brethren," he says, "for you to be strong in the Lord." [Ephesians 6:10 p.] Elsewhere he forbids us to "grieve the Spirit of God in whom we were sealed for the day of our redemption" [Ephesians 4:30 p.]. Since men cannot fulfill what is there required, Paul asks of the Lord in behalf of the Thessalonians to "render them worthy of his holy calling and to fulfill every good resolve of his goodness and work of faith in them" [2 Thessalonians 1:11 p.]. In the same way Paul, dealing in the second letter to the Corinthians with alms, often commends their good and devout will [cf. 2 Corinthians 8:11]. Yet a little later he gives thanks to God, "who has put in the heart of Titus to receive exhortation" [2 Corinthians 8:16 p.]. If Titus could not even make use of his mouth to exhort others except in so far as God prompted it, how could others be willing to act unless God himself directed their hearts?

#### 9. THE WORK OF CONVERSION IS NOT DIVIDED BETWEEN GOD AND MAN

The craftier of our opponents quibble over all these testimonies, holding that nothing hinders us from bringing all our strength to bear while God supports our weak efforts. They also bring forward passages from the Prophets in which the carrying out of our conversion seems to be divided equally between God and ourselves. "Be converted to me and I shall be converted to you." [Zechariah 1:3.] What assistance the Lord provides us has been demonstrated above, and there is no need to repeat it here. I wish this one thing at least to be conceded to me: it is pointless to require in us the capacity to fulfill the law, just because the Lord demands our obedience to it, when it is clear that for the fulfillment of all God's commands the grace of the Lawgiver is both necessary and is promised to us.

Hence it is evident that at least more is required of us than we can pay. And that statement of Jeremiah cannot be refuted by any cavils: that the covenant of God made with the ancient people was invalid because it was only of the letter; moreover, that it is not otherwise established than when the Spirit enters into it to dispose their hearts to obedience [Jeremiah 31:32-33]. Nor does this sentence lend support to their error: "Be converted to me and I shall be converted to you" [Zechariah 1:3]. For God's conversion there signifies not that by which he renews our hearts to repentance, but that by which he testifies through our material prosperity that he is kindly and well disposed toward us, just as by adverse circumstances he sometimes indicates his displeasure toward us. Since, therefore, the people, harassed by many sorts of miseries and calamities, complain that God is turned away from them, he replies that they will not lack his lovingkindness if they return to an upright life and to himself, who is the pattern of righteousness. Therefore they wrongly twist this passage when they infer from it that the work of conversion seems to be shared between God and men. We have touched this matter the more briefly because its proper place will be under the discussion of the law.

#### 10. THE BIBLICAL PROMISES SUPPOSE (ACCORDING TO OUR OPPONENTS' VIEW) THE FREEDOM OF THE WILL

The second class of arguments is very closely related to the first. They cite the promises in which the Lord makes a covenant with our will. Such are: "Seek good and not evil, and you will live." [Amos 5:14 p.] "If you will and hearken, you will eat of the good things of the earth; but if you will not,... a sword will devour you, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken." [Isaiah 1:19-20, Vg.] Again, "If you remove your abominations from my presence, you will not be cast out." [Jeremiah 4:1, cf. Comm.] "If you obey the voice of Jehovah your

God, being careful to do all his commandments... the Lord will set you high above all the nations of the earth" [Deuteronomy 28:1, cf. Vg.]; and other like passages [Leviticus 26:3 ff.].

These blessings which the Lord offers us in his promises they think to be referred to our will unsuitably and in mockery, unless it is in our power either to realize them or make them void. And it is quite easy to amplify this matter with such eloquent complaints as: "We are cruelly deluded by the Lord, when he declares that his lovingkindness depends upon our will, if the will itself is not under our control. This liberality of God would be remarkable if he so unfolded his blessings to us that we had no capacity to enjoy them! Wonderfully certain promises these - dependent upon an impossible thing, never to be fulfilled!" We shall speak elsewhere concerning such promises, which have a condition adjoined, so that it will become clear that there is nothing absurd in the impossibility of their fulfillment. In so far as this point is concerned, I deny that God cruelly deludes us when, though knowing us to be utterly powerless, he invites us to merit his blessings. Now since promises are offered to believers and impious alike, they have their usefulness for both groups.

As God by his precepts pricks the consciences of the impious in order that they, oblivious to his judgments, may not too sweetly delight in their sins, so in his promises he in a sense calls them to witness how unworthy they are of his loving-kindness. For who would deny that it is entirely fair and fitting that the Lord bless those who honor him, but punish according to his severity those who despise his majesty? God therefore acts duly.<sup>88</sup> and in order when in his promises he lays down this law for the impious lettered by sin: only if they depart from wickedness will they at last receive his blessings, even for the

simple purpose of having them understand that they are justly excluded from those blessings due the true worshipers of God.

On the other hand, since he strives in every way to spur believers to implore his grace, it will be not at all incongruous for him to attempt through his promises the same thing that, as we have shown, he has through his precepts already accomplished for their sake. When God by his precepts teaches us concerning his will, he apprizes us of our misery and how wholeheartedly we disagree with his will. At the same time he prompts us to call upon his Spirit to direct us into the right path. But because our sluggishness is not sufficiently aroused by precepts, promises are added in order, by a certain sweetness, to entice us to love the precepts. The greater our desire for righteousness, the more fervent we become to seek God's grace. That is how by these entreaties, "If you are willing," "If you hearken," the Lord neither attributes to us the free capacity to will or to hearken, nor yet does he mock us for our impotence.

#### 11. THE REPROOFS IN SCRIPTURE, THEY FURTHER OBJECT, LOSE THEIR MEANING IF THE WILL BE NOT FREE

The third class of their arguments bears a close resemblance to the two preceding. For our opponents bring forward passages wherein God reproaches his ungrateful people that it was their own fault that they did not receive every sort of good thing from his tender mercy. Of this sort are the following passages: "Amalekites and Canaanites are before you, and you shall fall by their sword because you will not obey the Lord" [Numbers 14:43, Vg.]. "Because... I called to you and you did not answer, I shall do to this house... as I did to Shiloh." [Jeremiah 7:13-14, Vg.] Again, "This... nation... did not obey the voice of the Lord their God, and did not accept discipline" [Jeremiah 7:28, Vg.]; for this reason it is rejected by the Lord [Jeremiah 7:29]. Again,

Because you have hardened your heart and have not been willing to obey the Lord, all these evils have come upon you [cf. Jeremiah 19:15. How, they say, could such reproaches apply against those who may at once reply: We cherished prosperity, we feared adversity. If we have not obeyed the Lord, nor heeded his voice, to obtain prosperity and avoid adversity, this came about because we were not free from bondage to the domination of sin. We are therefore without reason reproached for evils that it was not in our power to escape.

But disregarding the pretext of necessity, a weak and futile defense, I ask whether they can excuse the fault. For if they are held guilty of any fault, the Lord with reason reproaches them for not feeling, because of their perversity, the benefit of his kindness. Let them therefore answer whether they can deny that the cause of their obstinacy was their own perverse will. If they find the source of evil within themselves, why do they strain after external causes so as not to seem the authors of their own destruction? But if it is true that sinners are through their own fault both deprived of divine blessings and chastened by punishments, there is good reason why they should hearken to these reproaches from God's mouth. It is that if they obstinately persist in vices, they may learn in calamities to accuse and loathe their own worthlessness rather than to charge God with unjust cruelty; that if they have not cast off teachableness and if they are wearied with their own sins (because of which they see themselves miserable and lost), they may return to the path and acknowledge with earnest confession this very thing, namely, that the Lord reminds them by reproof.

What use the reproofs of the prophets serve among the godly is clear from the magnificent prayer of Daniel, given in the ninth chapter [Daniel 9:4-19]. We observe an example of the first use among the Jews, to whom God commanded Jeremiah to explain the cause of

their miseries. Yet these things could not have happened in any other way than as the Lord had foretold: "You shall speak all these words to them, and they will not listen to you. You shall call to them, and they will not answer you" [Jeremiah 7:27, Vg.]. To what purpose then did they sing to the deaf? That even against their will they might understand what they were hearing to be true: that it is wicked sacrilege to transfer to God the blame for their own misfortunes, which lay in themselves.

The enemies of God's grace customarily pile up these innumerable proofs, derived from his commandments and from his protestations against the transgressors of the law, to give the delusion of free will. But by these few explanations you can very easily free yourself from them. In a psalm the Jews are reproached as "a wicked generation... that kept not its heart straight" [Psalm 78:8; 77:8, Vg.]. Also, in another psalm, the prophet urges the men of his age not to "harden their hearts" [Psalm 95:8]. Surely this is because the blame for all stubbornness rests in the wickedness of men; but from this fact it is foolishly inferred that the heart, since the Lord has prepared it [cf. Proverbs 16:1], can be bent alike to either side. The prophet says: "I have inclined my heart to perform thy statutes" [Psalm 119:112], namely, because he had pledged himself willingly and with cheerful attitude of mind to God. And yet he does not boast of himself as the author of his inclination, which he confesses in the same psalm to be the gift of God [Psalm 119:36]. We ought therefore to heed Paul's warning, when he bids believers, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for God is at work... both to will and to accomplish" [Philippians 2:12-13 p.]. Indeed, he assigns tasks to them to do so that they may not indulge the sluggishness of the flesh. But enjoining fear and carefulness, he so humbles them that they remember what they are bidden to do is God's own work. By it he clearly intimates that believers act passively, so to speak, seeing that



the capacity is supplied from heaven, that they may claim nothing at all for themselves. Then, while Peter urges us "to supplement our faith with virtue" [2 Peter 1:5], he does not assign us secondary tasks as if we could do anything independently, but he is only arousing the indolence of the flesh, by which faith itself is very often choked. Paul's statement, "Do not quench the Spirit" [1 Thessalonians 5:19], means the same thing, because sloth continually steals upon believers unless it be corrected. Yet if anyone should conclude from this that it is in their choice to nourish the light given them, such stupidity will be easily refuted, for this very earnestness which Paul enjoins comes from God alone [2 Corinthians 7:1].

We are in fact often bidden to purge ourselves of all filthiness, even though the Spirit claims for himself alone the office of sanctifying. In fine, it is clear from John's words that what belongs to God is transferred by concession to us: "Whoever is born of God keeps himself" [1 John 5:18]. The proclaimers of free will seize upon this verse, as if we were preserved partly by God's power, partly by our own. As if we did not have from heaven this very preservation of which the apostle reminds us! Hence also Christ asks the Father to keep us from evil [John 17:15, cf. Vg.]. And we know that the pious, while they are fighting against Satan, attain victory by God's weapons alone [cf. Ephesians 6:13 ff.]. For this reason, Peter, when he enjoined us to purify our souls in obedience to truth, soon added by way of correction "through the Spirit" [1 Peter 1:22]. In short, John briefly shows how all human powers are of no avail in spiritual combat when he teaches that "they who are born of God cannot sin, for a seed of God abides in them" [1 John 3:9 p.]. And in another passage he gives the reason: "This is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith" [1 John 5:4].

(Answers to arguments based on special passages and incidents in Scripture, 12-19)

## 12. DEUTERONOMY 30:11 FF.

Yet our opponents cite a passage from the law of Moses that seems to be strongly opposed to our explanation. For, after promulgating the law, Moses calls the people to witness in this manner: "For this commandment which I command you this day is not obscure, nor is it far off, nor is it in heaven... But it is near you... in your mouth and in your heart, so that you can do it" [Deuteronomy 30:11-12, 14 p.]. Now if these words be understood as spoken concerning the bare precepts, I admit that they are of no slight importance for the present case. For even though it would be an easy matter to dodge the issue by contending that this has to do with man's capacity and disposition to understand the commandments, not with his ability to observe them, nevertheless perhaps some scruple would thus also remain. But the apostle, our sure interpreter, removes our every doubt when he declares that Moses here spoke of the teaching of the gospel [Romans 10:8]. But suppose some obstinate person contends that Paul violently twisted these words to make them refer to the gospel. Although such a man's boldness will not be lacking in impiety, yet we have a means of refuting him apart from the apostle's authority. For if Moses was speaking of the precepts only, he inspired in the people the vainest confidence. For what else would they have done but dash into ruin, if they had set out to keep the law by their own strength, as if it were easy for them? Where is that ready capacity to keep the law, when the only access to it lies over a fatal precipice? It is perfectly clear then that by these words Moses meant the covenant of mercy that he had promulgated along with the requirements of the law. For a few verses before he had also taught that our hearts must needs be circumcised by God's hand for us to love him [Deuteronomy 30:6].

He therefore lodged that ability, of which he immediately thereafter speaks, not in the power of man, but in the help and protection of the Holy Spirit, who mightily carries out his work in our weakness. Nevertheless, we are not to understand this passage as referring simply to the precepts, but rather to the promises of the gospel; and they, far from establishing in us the capacity to obtain righteousness, utterly destroy it. Paul confirms this testimony that in the gospel salvation is not offered under that hard, harsh, and impossible condition laid down for us by the law - that only those who have fulfilled all the commandments will finally attain it - but under an easy, ready, and openly accessible condition. Therefore this Scripture [Romans 10] has no value in establishing the freedom of the human will.

### 13. GOD'S "WAITING" UPON MEN'S ACTION IS HELD TO SUPPOSE FREEDOM OF THE WILL

By way of objection they commonly raise certain other passages, which show that God sometimes, having withdrawn the assistance of his grace, tries men and waits to see to what purpose they will turn their efforts. So Hosea says: "I shall go to my place, until they lay it upon their hearts to seek my face" [Hosea 5:15 p.]. It would be a ridiculous thing, they say, for the Lord to consider whether Israel would seek his face, if their minds were not capable of inclining either way through their own natural ability. As if it were not extremely common for God through his prophets to appear as one despising and rejecting his people until they should change their lives for the betel But what finally will our opponents deduce from such threats? If they mean that this people, forsaken by God, can of themselves set their minds on a conversion, they are doing so in the teeth of all Scripture. If they admit that God's grace is necessary for conversion, what quarrel do they have with us? Yet they concede

grace to be necessary in such a way as to reserve to man his own ability. On what basis do they prove it? Surely not from that passage or like passages. For it is one thing to withdraw from man, and to consider what he may do when left to his own devices. It is something else to aid his powers, such as they are, in proportion to their weakness.

What, then, someone will ask, do these expressions signify? I reply that their significance is as if God were to say: "Inasmuch as warning, urging, and rebuking have no effect upon this stubborn people, I shall withdraw for a little while and quietly permit them to be afflicted. I shall see whether at any time after long calamities the remembrance of me lays hold on them so that they seek my face." The Lord's going far away signifies his withdrawal of prophecy from them. His considering what men then might do means that for a time he quietly and as it were secretly tries them with various afflictions. He does both to make us more humble. For we would sooner be beaten down by the lashes of adversity than be corrected, if he did not by his Spirit render us teachable. Now, when the Lord, offended and even wearied by our obstinate stubbornness, leaves us for a short time - that is, removes his Word, in which he habitually reveals something of his presence - and makes trial of what we might do in his absence, from this we falsely gather that we have some power of free will for him to observe and test. For he does it for no other purpose than to compel us to recognize our own nothingness.

#### 14. ARE THESE WORKS THEN NOT "OUR" WORKS?

They also argue from the manner of speaking customary both in the Scripture and in the words of men: good works are indeed called "ours"; and we are credited just as much with doing what is holy and pleasing to the Lord, as with committing sins. But if sins are rightly

imputed to us as coming from ourselves, surely for the same reason some part in righteous acts ought to be assigned to us. And it would not be consonant with reason to say that we do those things which we are incapable of carrying out by our own effort and are moved like stones by God to do. Therefore, although we give the primary part to God's grace, yet those expressions indicate that our effort holds second place.

If our opponents simply urge that good works are called "ours," I will object in turn that the bread that we petition God to give us is also called "ours" [cf. Matthew 6:11]. What does the possessive pronoun "ours" signify to them but that what is otherwise by no means due us becomes ours by God's lovingkindness and free gift? Therefore they must either ridicule the same absurdity in the Lord's Prayer, or recognize that good works, in which we have nothing of our own save by God's bounty, are not foolishly called "ours."

Yet the second objection is a little stronger: Scripture often affirms that we ourselves worship God, preserve righteousness, obey the law, and are zealous in good works. Since these are the proper functions of the mind and will, how can one refer them to the Spirit and at the same time attribute them to ourselves, unless our zeal shares something of the divine power? We can easily dispose of these trifling objections if we duly reflect upon the way in which the Spirit of the Lord acts upon the saints. That comparison which they spitefully throw at us does not apply. For who is such a fool as to assert that God moves man just as we throw a stone? And nothing like this follows from our teaching. To man's natural faculties we refer the acts of approving and rejecting, willing and not willing, striving and resisting. That is, approving vanity and rejecting perfect good; willing evil and not willing good; striving toward wickedness and resisting righteousness. What does the Lord do in this? If he

wills to utilize such depravity as the instrument of his wrath, he directs and disposes it as he pleases to carry out his good works through man's corrupt hand. Shall we then compare a wicked man, who thus serves God's might while he strives to obey only his own lust, to a stone set in motion by an outside force, and borne along by no motion, sensation, or will of its own? We see how great the difference is.

But what about good men, concerning whom there is particular question here? When the Lord establishes his Kingdom in them, he restrains their will by his Spirit that it may not according to its natural inclination be dragged to and fro by wandering lusts. That the will may be disposed to holiness and righteousness, He bends, shapes, forms, and directs, it to the rule of his righteousness. That it may not totter and fall, he steadies and strengthens it by the power of his Spirit. In this vein Augustine says: "You will say to me, 'therefore we are acted upon and do not act ourselves.' Yes, you act and are acted upon. And if you are acted upon by one who is good, then you act well. The Spirit of God who acts upon you is the helper of those who act. The name 'helper' indicates that you also do something." In the first part of the statement he indicates that man's action is not taken away by the movement of the Holy Spirit, because the will, which is directed to aspire to good, is of nature. But when he directly adds that from the word "help" it can be inferred that we also do something, we must not so understand it as if something were to be attributed to each of us separately. But in order not to encourage indolence in us, he connects God's action with our own in these words: "To will is of nature, but to will aright is of grace." Therefore he had said a little earlier, "Unless God helps, we shall be able neither to conquer nor even to fight."

## 15. THE "WORKS" ARE OURS BY GOD'S GIFT, BUT GOD'S BY HIS PROMPTING

Hence it appears that God's grace, as this word is understood in discussing regeneration, is the rule of the Spirit to direct and regulate man's will. The Spirit cannot regulate without correcting, without reforming, without renewing. For this reason we say that the beginning of our regeneration is to wipe out what is ours. Likewise, he cannot carry out these functions without moving, acting, impelling, bearing, keeping. Hence we are right in saying that all the actions that arise from grace are wholly his. Meanwhile, we do not deny that what Augustine teaches is very true: "Grace does not destroy the will but rather restores it." The two ideas are in substantial agreement: the will of man is said to be restored when, with its corruption and depravity corrected, it is directed to the true rule of righteousness. At the same time a new will is said to be created in man, because the natural will has become so vitiated and corrupted that he considers it necessary to put a new nature within.

Nothing now prevents us from saying that we ourselves are fitly doing what God's Spirit is doing in us, even if our will contributes nothing of itself distinct from his grace. Therefore we must keep in mind what we have elsewhere cited from Augustine: in vain, people busy themselves with finding any good of man's own in his will. For any mixture of the power of free will that men strive to mingle with God's grace is nothing but a corruption of grace. It is just as if one were to dilute wine with muddy, bitter water. But even if there is something good in the will, it comes from the pure prompting of the Spirit. Yet because we are by nature endowed with will, we are with good reason said to do those things the praise for which God rightly claims for himself: first, because whatever God out of his lovingkindness does in us is ours, provided we understand that it is

not of our doing; secondly, because ours is the mind, ours the will, ours the striving, which he directs toward the good.

#### 16. GENESIS 4:7

The other evidence that they rake together from here and there will not much bother even those of moderate understanding who have duly absorbed the refutations just given. Our opponents cite this statement from Genesis: "Its appetite will be under you, and you shall master it" [Genesis 4:7 p., cf. Vg.]. This they apply to sin, as if the Lord had promised Cain that the power of sin would not have the upper hand in his mind, if he willed to work toward conquering it! But we maintain that it is more in keeping with the order of the words that this verse should be applied to Abel. For there it is God's intention to reprove the wicked envy that Cain had conceived against his brother. God does this in two ways. First, Cain vainly planned a crime whereby he might excel his brother in the sight of God, before whom there is no honor except that of righteousness. Secondly, he was too ungrateful for the blessing that he had received of God, and could not bear his brother even though he was under his authority.

But lest we seem to espouse this interpretation because the other one is contrary to our view, well, let us concede to them that God was speaking here of sin. If this is so, then the Lord is either promising or commanding what he here declares. If he is commanding, we have already demonstrated that no proof of human capacity follows. If he is promising, where is the fulfillment of the promise when Cain yields to sin, which he ought to master? Will they say that there is a tacit condition included in the promise, as if it were said: "If you fight, you will achieve victory"? But who can stomach such evasions? For if this mastery refers to sin, no one can doubt that form of speech is imperative, defining not what we can do, but what we ought to do -



even if it is beyond our power. However, both the matter itself and the principles of grammar require that Cain and Abel be compared, for the first-born brother would not have been subordinate to the younger had he not been worse through his own crime.

#### 17. ROMANS 9:16; 1 CORINTHIANS 3:9

They also use the testimony of the apostle: "So it depends not upon him who wills or upon him who runs but upon God who shows mercy" [Romans 9:16]. From this they derive the notion that there is something in man's will and effort which, although feeble in itself, when aided by God's mercy does not fail to yield a favorable outcome. Now if they were soberly to weigh what matter Paul is discussing here, they would not misinterpret this statement so rashly. I know that they can cite Origen and Jerome in support of their exposition, I could in turn oppose Augustine to these. But what these hold makes no difference to us, provided we understand what Paul means. There he teaches that salvation has been prepared only for those whom the Lord deems worthy of his mercy, while ruin and death remain for all those whom He has not chosen. Paul had pointed out the destiny of the wicked by the example of Pharaoh [Romans 9:17]. He had also confirmed by the testimony of Moses the certainty of free election: "I shall have mercy on whom I shall have mercy" [Romans 9:15; Exodus 33:19]. He concludes, "It depends not upon him who wills or him who runs, but upon God who shows mercy." [Romans 9:16.] But if it were understood in this way - that will and effort are not sufficient because they are unequal to such a load - what Paul said would have been inappropriate. Away then with these subtleties! It depends not upon him who wills or him who runs; therefore there is some will, there is some running.

Paul's meaning is simpler: it is not the will; it is not the running that prepares the way to salvation for us. Only the mercy of the Lord is here. Paul speaks in this very way to Titus when he writes: "When the goodness and loving-kindness of God... appeared... not because of deeds done by us in righteousness, but in virtue of his own infinite mercy" [Titus 3:4-5 p.]. Some persons prattle that Paul hinted there was some will and some running because he denied that "it depends on him who wills or upon him who runs" [Romans 9:16 p.]. Yet not even they would grant me the right to reason along the same lines: that we do some good works, because Paul denies that we attain to God's goodness by virtue of the works that we have done. But if they detect a flaw in this argument, let them open their eyes and they will perceive that their own suffers from a like fallacy, it is a firm reason that Augustine relies on: "If therefore it were said that, 'It depends not upon him who wills or upon him who runs' [Romans 9:16] because willing or running alone is not sufficient, then one can turn the argument around: that it does not depend upon God's mercy, because it would not act alone." Since this second argument is absurd, Augustine rightly concludes: therefore this is said because man has no good will unless it be prepared by the Lord. Not that we ought not to will and to run; but because God accomplishes both in us.

Certain persons just as ignorantly twist that saying of Paul's: "We are God's co-workers" [1 Corinthians 3:9]. This is without a doubt restricted to ministers alone. Moreover they are called "co-workers" not because they bring anything of themselves, but because God uses their work after he has rendered them capable of it and has furnished them with the necessary gifts.

18. ECCLESIASTICUS 15:14-17

They bring forth Ecclesiasticus, a writer whose authority is known to be in doubt. Granting that we do not reject this author - although we have a perfect right to do so - what does Ecclesiasticus testify on behalf of free will? He says: "Immediately after man was created, God left him in the power of his own counsel. Commandments were given to him. If he kept the commandments, they would keep him as well. God has set... life and death, good and evil... before man. And whichever he chooses will be given him" [Ecclesiasticus. 15:14, 15, 16, 17 p.; 15. 14-18, Vg.]. Granted that man received at his creation the capacity to obtain life or death. What if we reply on the other side that he has lost this capacity? Surely it is not my intention to contradict Solomon, who declares "that God made man upright, but he has sought out many devices for himself" [Ecclesiastes 7:29 p.]. But because man, in his degeneration, caused the shipwreck both of himself and of all his possessions, whatever is attributed to the original creation does not necessarily apply forthwith to his corrupt and degenerate nature. Therefore I am answering not only my opponents but also Ecclesiasticus himself, whoever he may be: If you wish to teach man to seek in himself the capacity to acquire salvation, we do not esteem your authority so highly that it may in the slightest degree raise any prejudice against the undoubted Word of God. But suppose you strive simply to repress the evil inclination of the flesh, which tries vainly to defend itself by transferring its vices to God, and for this reason you answer that uprightness was implanted in man that thereby it might be clear that he is the cause of his own ruin. I willingly assent to this, provided you and I agree that man has now been deprived through his own fault of those adornments with which the Lord in the beginning arrayed him. Thus let us alike confess that man now needs a physician, not an advocate.

19. LUKE 10:30

They have nothing more constantly on their lips than Christ's parable of the traveler, whom thieves cast down half alive on the road [Luke 20:30]. I know that almost all writers commonly teach that the calamity of the human race is represented in the person of the traveler. From this our opponents take the argument that man is not so disfigured by the robbery of sin and the devil as not to retain some vestiges of his former good, inasmuch as he is said to have been left "half alive." For unless some portion of right reason and will remained, how could there be a "half life"?

First, suppose I do not want to accept their allegory. What, pray, will they do? For no doubt the fathers devised this interpretation without regard to the true meaning of the Lord's words. Allegories ought not to go beyond the limits set by the rule of Scripture, let alone suffice as the foundation for any doctrines. And I do not lack reasons, if I so please, to uproot this falsehood. The Word of God does not leave a "half life" to man, but it teaches that he has utterly died as far as the blessed life is concerned. Paul does not call the saints "half alive" when he speaks of our redemption, "Even when we were dead ... he made us alive" [Ephesians 2:5]. He does not call upon the half alive to receive the illumination of Christ, but those who are asleep and buried [Ephesians 5:14]. In the same way the Lord himself says, "The hour has come when the dead rise again at his voice" [John 5:25 p.]. How shameless of them to oppose a slight allusion to so many clear statements!

Yet, suppose this allegory of theirs serves as a sure testimony, what can they nevertheless wrest from us? Man is half alive, they say; therefore he has something safe. Of course he has a mind capable of understanding, even if it may not penetrate to heavenly and spiritual wisdom. He has some judgment of honesty. He has some awareness of divinity, even though he may not attain a true knowledge of God.

But what do these qualities amount to? Surely they cannot make out that we are to abandon Augustine's view, approved by the common consent of the schools: the free goods upon which salvation depends were taken away from man after the Fall, while the natural endowments were corrupted and defiled.

Therefore let us hold this as an undoubted truth which no siege engines can shake: the mind of man has been so completely estranged from God's righteousness that it conceives, desires, and undertakes, only that which is impious, perverted, foul, impure, and infamous. The heart is so steeped in the poison of sin, that it can breathe out nothing but a loathsome stench. But if some men occasionally make a show of good, their minds nevertheless ever remain enveloped in hypocrisy and deceitful craft, and their hearts bound by inner perversity.

## **BOOK 2**

### **CHAPTER 6**

FALLEN MAN OUGHT TO SEEK REDEMPTION IN CHRIST

#### **John Calvin**

(Through the Mediator, God is seen as a gracious Father, 1-2)

##### **1. ONLY THE MEDIATOR HELPS FALLEN MAN**

The whole human race perished in the person of Adam. Consequently that original excellence and nobility which we have recounted would be of no profit to us but would rather redound to our greater shame, until God, who does not recognize as his handiwork men defiled and corrupted by sin, appeared as Redeemer in the person of his only-begotten Son. Therefore, since we have fallen from life into death, the whole knowledge of God the Creator that we have discussed would be useless unless faith also followed, setting forth for us God our Father in Christ. The natural order was that the frame of the universe should be the school in which we were to learn piety, and from it pass over to eternal life and perfect felicity. But after man's rebellion, our eyes - wherever they turn - encounter God's curse. This curse, while it seizes and envelops innocent creatures through our fault, must overwhelm our souls with despair. For even if God wills to manifest his fatherly favor to us in many ways, yet we cannot by contemplating the universe infer that he is Father. Rather, conscience presses us within and shows in our sin just cause for his disowning us and not regarding or recognizing us as his sons. Dullness and ingratitude follow, for our minds, as they have been blinded, do not perceive what is true. And as all our senses have become perverted, we wickedly defraud God of his glory.

We must, for this reason, come to Paul's statement: "Since in the wisdom of God the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of preaching to save those who believe" [1 Corinthians 1:21]. This magnificent theater of heaven and earth, crammed with innumerable miracles, Paul calls the "wisdom of God." Contemplating it, we ought in wisdom to have known God. But because we have profited so little by it, he calls us to the faith of Christ, which, because it appears foolish, the unbelievers despise.

Therefore, although the preaching of the cross does not agree with our human inclination, if we desire to return to God our Author and Maker, from whom we have been estranged, in order that he may again begin to be our Father, we ought nevertheless to embrace it humbly. Surely, after the fall of the first man no knowledge of God apart from the Mediator has had power unto salvation [cf. Romans 1:16; 1 Corinthians 1:24]. For Christ not only speaks of his own age, but comprehends all ages when he says: "This is eternal life, to know the Father to be the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent" [John 17:3 p.]. Thus, all the more vile is the stupidity of those persons who open heaven to all the impious and unbelieving without the grace of him whom Scripture commonly teaches to be the only door whereby we enter into salvation [John 10:9]. But if anyone would like to restrict this statement of Christ to the publishing of the gospel, there is a ready refutation: it was the common understanding of all ages and all nations that men who have become estranged from God [cf. Ephesians 4:18] and have been declared accursed [cf. Galatians 3:10] and children of wrath [cf. Ephesians 2:3] without reconciliation cannot please God.

Besides this, Christ answered the Samaritan woman: "You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know; for salvation is from the Jews" [John 4:22]. In these words he both condemns all pagan religions as false and gives the reason that under the law the Redeemer was promised to the chosen people alone. From this it follows that no worship has ever pleased God except that which looked to Christ. On this basis, also, Paul declares that all heathen were "without God and bereft of hope of life" [Ephesians 2:12 p.]. Now since John teaches that life was in Christ from the beginning [John 1:4], and all the world fell away from it [cf. John 1:10], it is necessary to return to that source. So also, Christ, inasmuch as he is the propitiator, declares himself to be "life" [John 11:25; 14:6]. To be

sure, the inheritance of heaven belongs only to the children of God [cf. Matthew 5:9-10]. Moreover, it is quite unfitting that those not engrafted into the body of the only-begotten Son are considered to have the place and rank of children. And John clearly declares: "Those who believe in his name become children of God" [John 1:12 p.]. But because it is not yet my purpose exhaustively to discuss faith in Christ, it will be sufficient to touch upon it in passing.

## 2. EVEN THE OLD COVENANT DECLARED THAT THERE IS NO FAITH IN THE GRACIOUS GOD APART FROM THE MEDIATOR

Accordingly, apart from the Mediator, God never showed favor toward the ancient people, nor ever gave hope of grace to them. I pass over the sacrifices of the law, which plainly and openly taught believers to seek salvation nowhere else than in the atonement that Christ alone carries out. I am only saying that the blessed and happy state of the church always had its foundation in the person of Christ. For even if God included all of Abraham's offspring in his covenant [cf. Genesis 17:4], Paul nevertheless wisely reasons that Christ was properly that seed in whom all the nations were to be blessed [Galatians 3:14], since we know that not all who sprang from Abraham according to the flesh were reckoned among his offspring [Galatians 3:16]. For, to say nothing of Ishmael and others, how did it come about that of the two sons of Isaac, the twin brothers Esau and Jacob, while they were yet in their mother's womb, one was chosen, the other rejected [Romans 9:11]? Indeed, how did it happen that the firstborn was set aside while the younger alone kept his status? How, also, did it come about that the majority was disinherited? It is therefore clear that Abraham's seed is to be accounted chiefly in one Head, and that the promised salvation was not realized until Christ appeared, whose task is to gather up what has been scattered. So, then, the original adoption of the chosen



people depended upon the Mediator's grace. Even if in Moses' writings this was not yet expressed in clear words, still it sufficiently appears that it was commonly known to all the godly. For before a king had been established over the people, Hannah, the mother of Samuel, describing the happiness of the godly, already says in her song: "God will give strength to his king and exalt the horn of his Messiah" [1 Samuel 2:10]. By these words she means that God will bless his church. To this corresponds the prophecy that is added a little later: "The priest whom I shall raise up... will walk in the presence of my Christ" [1 Samuel 2:35, cf. Vg.]. And there is no doubt that our Heavenly Father willed that we perceive in David and his descendants the living image of Christ. Accordingly David, wishing to urge the pious to fear God, commands them to "kiss the Son" [Psalm 2:12, cf. RV and marg.]. To this corresponds the saying of the Gospel: "He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father" [John 5:23]. Therefore, although the Kingdom collapsed because of the revolt of the ten tribes, yet the covenant that God made with David and his successors had to stand, just as he spoke through the prophets: "I will not tear away all the Kingdom... for the sake of David my servant and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen... but to your son one tribe will remain" [1 Kings 11:13,32]. This same promise is repeated a second and a third time. It is expressly stated: "I will... afflict David's descendants, but not eternally" [1 Kings 11:39]. Some time later it is said: "For the sake of David his servant, God gave him a lamp in Jerusalem, to raise himself up a son and to protect Jerusalem" [1 Kings 15:4, cf. Vg.]. Then, although affairs verged on ruin, it was again said: "The Lord was unwilling to destroy Judah, for the sake of David his servant, since he promised to give a lamp to him and to his sons forever" [2 Kings 8:19].

To sum up: while all others were passed over, David alone was chosen, as he in whom God's good pleasure should rest, just as it is said elsewhere: "He rejected the tent of Shiloh, and the tent of Joseph; and he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim" [Psalm 78:60,67, conflated], "but he chose the tribe of Judah, Mr. Zion, which he loved" [Psalm 78:68]. "He chose David his servant,... to shepherd Jacob his people, Israel his inheritance" [Psalm 78:70-71]. To conclude: God thus willed to preserve his church that its soundness and safety might depend upon that Head. Therefore David proclaims: "Jehovah is the strength of his people, the saving power of his Christ [Psalm 28:8, cf. RV marg.]. Immediately he adds the petition: "Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance" [Psalm 28:9], meaning that the condition of the church is joined by an indissoluble bond to Christ's authority. Another passage expresses the same idea: "Save us, O Jehovah; let the King hear us in the day that we shall call upon him" [Psalm 29:9]. By these words he clearly teaches that believers have sought refuge in God's help with no other assurance than that they were sheltered under the King's protection. This is implied in another psalm: "Save... O Jehovah!... Blessed be he who comes in the name of Jehovah" [Psalm 118:25-26]. There, it is sufficiently clear, believers are being called back to Christ, that they may hope to be saved by God's hand. Another petition expresses the same idea, where the whole church implores God's mercy: "Let thy hand be upon the man of thy right hand, upon the son of man whom thou hast preserved (or fashioned) for thyself" [Psalm 80:17, Comm.]. For although the author of the psalm bewails the scattering of the whole people, yet he begs for their restoration in the Head alone. But when, after the people have been carried off into exile, the land laid waste, and everything seemingly destroyed, Jeremiah sorrows for the calamity of the church, he especially bewails the fact that in the ruin of the Kingdom hope has been cut off from believers. "The anointed," he says, "the breath of our mouths, has been taken

captive in our sins, he to whom we said, 'Under tiny shadow we shall live among the heathen.'" [Lamentations 4:20, cf. Vg.] From this it is now clear enough that, since God cannot without the Mediator be propitious toward the human race, under the law Christ always set before the holy fathers as the end to which they should direct their faith.

(Christ essential to the covenant and to true faith, 3-4)

### 3. THE FAITH AND HOPE OF THE OLD COVENANT FED UPON THE PROMISE

Now, where solace is promised in affliction, especially where the deliverance of the church is described, the banner of trust and hope in Christ himself is prefigured. "God went forth for the salvation of his people with his Messiah," says Habakkuk. [Habakkuk 3:13 p.] And as often as the prophets mention the restoration of the church, they recall the people to the promise made to David that his kingdom would be everlasting [cf. 2 Kings 8:19]. And no wonder, for otherwise there would have been no stability in the covenant! To this, Isaiah's reply is especially pertinent. For inasmuch as he saw that the unbelieving King Ahaz rejected his testimony concerning the lifting of the siege of Jerusalem and its immediate safety, he rather abruptly passes on to the Messiah: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son" [Isaiah 7:14]. By this he indirectly indicates that although king and people wickedly rejected the promise offered them, as if they were purposely trying to discredit God's pledge, yet the covenant would not be invalidated, for the Redeemer would come at his appointed time.

In short, to show God merciful, all the prophets were constantly at pains to proclaim that kingdom of David upon which both redemption and eternal salvation depended. Thus Isaiah says: "I will

make with you a... covenant, my steadfast mercies for David. Behold, I made him a witness to the peoples" [Isaiah 55:3-4]. That is, under such adverse conditions believers could have no hope except when this witness was put forward that God would be compassionate to them. In the same way to lift up the despairing, Jeremiah says: "Behold, the days are coming when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch... and then Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely" [Jeremiah 23:5-6]. Ezekiel, moreover, says: "I will set over my sheep one shepherd... namely, my servant David... I, Jehovah, will be their God, and my servant David shall be shepherd... and I will make with them a covenant of peace." [Ezekiel 34:23-25 p.] Elsewhere, likewise, after discussing this incredible renewal, he says: "David, my servant, shall be their king, and shall be the one shepherd over all,... and I will make an everlasting covenant of peace with them." [Ezekiel 37:24,26 p.]

Here I am gathering a few passages of many because I merely want to remind my readers that the hope of all the godly has ever reposed in Christ alone. All the other prophets also agree. For example, in Hosea it is said: "And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint for themselves one head" [Hosea 1:11]. This he afterward explains more clearly: "The children of Israel shall return and seek Jehovah their God, and David their king" [Hosea 3:5]. Micah, also, referring to the people's return, clearly expresses it: "Their king will pass on before them, Jehovah at their head" [Micah 2:13]. So, too, Amos - meaning to foretell the renewal of the people - says: "In that day I will raise up the tent of David that is fallen, and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins" [Amos 9:11]. This signifies: "I will raise up once more the royal glory in the family of David, the sole standard of salvation, now fulfilled in Christ." Hence, Zechariah, as his era was closer to the manifestation of Christ, more openly proclaims: "Rejoice, daughter of Zion! Be

jubilant, daughter of Jerusalem! Lo, your king comes to you; righteous and unharmed is he" [Zechariah 9:9, cf. Comm.]. This agrees with the verse of the psalm already quoted: "Jehovah is... the saving power of his Christ. Save,... O Jehovah" [Psalm 28:8-9, cf. RV marg.]. Here salvation flows from the Head to the whole body.

#### 4. FAITH IN GOD IS FAITH IN CHRIST

God willed that the Jews should be so instructed by these prophecies that they might turn their eyes directly to Christ in order to seek deliverance. Even though they had shamefully degenerated, they still could not efface the memory of that general principle: that, as had been promised to David, God would be through the hand of Christ the deliverer of the church; and that his freely given covenant, whereby God had adopted his elect, would stand fast. From this it came about that when Christ entered Jerusalem a little before his death this song was on the children's lips: "Hosanna to the son of David" [Matthew 21:9]. The hymn sung by the children apparently was commonly and widely known, and in accordance with the general notion that the sole pledge of God's mercy rested upon the coming of the Redeemer. For this reason Christ himself bade his disciples believe in him, that they might clearly and perfectly believe in God: "You believe in God; believe also in me" [John 14:1]. For even if, properly speaking, faith mounts up from Christ to the Father, yet he means this: although faith rests in God, it will gradually disappear unless he who retains it in perfect firmness intercedes as Mediator. Otherwise, God's majesty is too lofty to be attained by mortal men, who are like grubs crawling upon the earth.

For this reason I subscribe to the common saying that God is the object of faith, yet it requires qualification. For Christ is not without reason called "the image of the invisible God" [Colossians 1:15]. This

title warns us that, unless God confronts us in Christ, we cannot come to know that we are saved. Among the Jews the scribes obscured with false glosses what the prophets had taught concerning the Redeemer. Yet in spite of this, Christ took to be commonly known, as if received by general agreement, that there is no other remedy for a hopeless condition, no other way of freeing the church, than the appearance of the Mediator. Indeed, Paul's teaching was not commonly known - as it ought to have been - that "Christ is the end of the law" [Romans 10:4]. Yet this is true and certain, as is perfectly clear from the Law itself and the Prophets. I am not yet discussing faith because there will be a more suitable place for it elsewhere. Only let the readers agree on this point: let the first step toward godliness be to recognize that God is our Father to watch over us, govern and nourish us, until he gather us unto the eternal inheritance of his Kingdom. Hence, what we have recently said becomes clear, that apart from Christ the saving knowledge of God does not stand. From the beginning of the world he had consequently been set before all the elect that they should look unto him and put their trust in him.

In this sense Irenaeus writes that the Father, himself infinite, becomes finite in the Son, for he has accommodated himself to our little measure lest our minds be overwhelmed by the immensity of his glory. Fanatics, not reflecting upon this, twist a useful statement into an impious fantasy, as if there were in Christ only a portion of divinity, outflowing from the whole perfection of God. Actually, it means nothing else than that God is comprehended in Christ alone. John's saying has always been true: "He that does not have the Son does not have the Father" [1 John 2:23 p.]. For even if many men once boasted that they worshiped the Supreme Majesty, the Maker of heaven and earth, yet because they had no Mediator it was not

possible for them truly to taste God's mercy, and thus be persuaded that he was their Father.

Accordingly, because they did not hold Christ as their Head, they possessed only a fleeting knowledge of God. From this it also came about that they at last lapsed into crass and foul superstitions and betrayed their own ignorance. So today the Turks, although they proclaim at the top of their lungs that the Creator of heaven and earth is God, still, while repudiating Christ, substitute an idol in place of the true God.

## **THE BELGIC CONFESSION OF FAITH (1561)**

This Reformed confession was prepared in 1561 by Guy de Bres (c.1523-1567), who was later martyred, and others, and then slightly revised by Francis Junius (1545-1602) of Bourges. First written in French, it was soon translated into Dutch and Latin. The Synod of Dort (1618-1619) made a revision but did not change the doctrine. It covers the spectrum of theological topics.

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### Article I. There Is Only One God

We all believe with the heart and confess with the mouth that there is one only simple and spiritual Being, which we call God; and that He is eternal, incomprehensible, invisible, immutable, infinite, almighty, perfectly wise, just, good, and the overflowing fountain of all good.

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## Article II. By What Means God Is Made Known unto Us

We know Him by two means: First, by the creation, preservation, and government of the universe; which is before our eyes as a most elegant book, wherein all creatures, great and small, are as so many characters leading us to see clearly the invisible things of God, even his everlasting power and divinity", as the apostle Paul says (Rom. 1:20). All which things are sufficient to convince men and leave them without excuse. Second, He makes Himself more clearly and fully known to us by His holy and divine Word, that is to say, as far as is necessary for us to know in this life, to His glory and our salvation.

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## Article III. The Written Word of God

We confess that this Word of God was not sent nor delivered by the will of man, but that "men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit", as the apostle Peter says; and that afterwards God, from a special care which He has for us and our salvation, commanded His servants, the prophets and apostles, to commit His revealed word to writing; and He Himself wrote with His own finger the two tables of the law. Therefore we call such writings holy and divine Scriptures.

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## Article IV. Canonical Books of the Holy Scripture

We believe that the Holy Scriptures are contained in two books, namely, the Old and the New Testament, which are canonical, against which nothing can be alleged. These are thus named in the Church of God.

The books of the Old Testament are the five books of Moses, to wit: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; the book of



Joshua, Judges, Ruth, the two books of Samuel, the two of the Kings, two books of the Chronicles, [commonly called Paralipomenon, the first of] Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther; Job, the Psalms [of David], the three books of Solomon, namely, the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs; the four great prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, {Lamentations,} Ezekiel, and Daniel; and the twelve lesser prophets, namely, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

Those of the New Testament are the four evangelists, to wit: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; the Acts of the Apostles; the thirteen epistles of the apostle Paul, namely, one to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, one to the Galatians, one to the Ephesians, one to the Philippians, one to the Colossians, two to the Thessalonians, two to Timothy, one to Titus, one to Philemon; Hebrews; the seven epistles of the other apostles, namely, one of James, two of Peter, three of John, one of Jude; and the Revelation of the apostle John.

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#### Article V. Whence the Holy Scriptures Derive Their Dignity and Authority

We receive all these books, and these only, as holy and canonical, for the regulation, foundation, and confirmation of our faith; believing without any doubt all things contained in them, not so much because the Church receives and approves them as such, but more especially because the Holy Spirit witnesses in our hearts that they are from God, and also because they carry the evidence thereof in themselves. For the very blind are able to perceive that the things foretold in them are being fulfilled.

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## Article VI. The Difference Between the Canonical and Apocryphal Books

We distinguish those sacred books from the apocryphal, viz: the third and fourth books of Esdras, the books of Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Jesus Sirach, Baruch, the Appendix to the book of Esther, the Song of the Three Children in the Furnace, the History of Susannah, of Bel and the Dragon, the Prayer of Manasseh, and the two books of the Maccabees. All of which the Church may read and take instruction from, so far as they agree with the canonical books; but they are far from having such power and efficacy that we may from their testimony confirm any point of faith or of the Christian religion; much less may they be used to detract from the authority of the other, that is, the sacred books.

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## Article VII. The Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures to Be the Only Rule of Faith

We believe that those Holy Scriptures fully contain the will of God, and that whatsoever man ought to believe unto salvation is sufficiently taught therein. For since the whole manner of worship which God requires of us is written in them at large, it is unlawful for any one, though an apostle, to teach otherwise than we are now taught in the Holy Scriptures: "nay, though it were an angel from heaven", as the apostle Paul says. For since it is forbidden to "add unto or take away anything from the Word of God", it does thereby evidently appear that the doctrine thereof is most perfect and complete in all respects.

Neither may we consider any writings of men, however holy these men may have been, of equal value with those divine Scriptures, nor ought we to consider custom, or the great multitude, or antiquity, or

succession of times and persons, or councils, decrees or statutes, as of equal value with the truth of God, since the truth is above all; "for all men are of themselves liars, and more vain than vanity itself". Therefore we reject with all our hearts whatsoever does not agree with this infallible rule, as the apostles have taught us, saying, "Prove the spirits, whether they are of God". Likewise: "If any one cometh unto you, and bringeth not this teaching, receive him not into your house."

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#### Article VIII. God Is One in Essence, Yet Distinguished in Three Persons

According to this truth and this Word of God, we believe in one only God, who is the one single essence, in which are three persons, really, truly, and eternally distinct according to their incommunicable properties; namely, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Father is the cause, origin, and beginning of all things visible and invisible; the Son is the word, wisdom, and image of the Father; the Holy Spirit is the eternal power and might, proceeding from the Father and the Son. Nevertheless, God is not by this distinction divided into three, since the Holy Scriptures teach us that the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit have each His personality, distinguished by Their properties; but in such wise that these three persons are but one only God.

Hence, then, it is evident that the Father is not the Son, nor the Son the Father, and likewise the Holy Spirit is neither the Father nor the Son. Nevertheless, these persons thus distinguished are not divided, nor intermixed; for the Father has not assumed the flesh, nor has the Holy Spirit, but the Son only. The Father has never been without His Son, or without His Holy Spirit. For They are all three co-eternal and

co-essential. There is neither first nor last; for They are all three one, in truth, in power, in goodness, and in mercy.

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#### Article IX. The Proof of the Foregoing Article of the Trinity of Persons in One God

All this we know as well from the testimonies of Holy Writ as from their operations, and chiefly by those we feel in ourselves. The testimonies of the Holy Scriptures that teach us to believe this Holy Trinity are written in many places of the Old Testament, which are not so necessary to enumerate as to choose them out with discretion and judgment.

In Genesis, chap. 1:26, 27, God says: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness", etc. "And God created man in his own image, male and female created he them." And Gen. 3:22, "Behold, the man is become as one of us". From this saying, Let us make man in our image, it appears that there are more persons than one in the Godhead; and when He says, God created, He signifies the unity. It is true, He does not say how many persons there are, but that which appears to us somewhat obscure in the Old Testament is very plain in the New. For when our Lord was baptized in Jordan, the voice of the Father was heard, saying, "This is my beloved Son"; the Son was seen in the water, and the Holy Spirit appeared in the shape of a dove. This form is also instituted by Christ in the baptism of all believers: "Make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit". In the Gospel of Luke the angel Gabriel thus addressed Mary, the mother of our Lord: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God". Likewise: "The

grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all". And (A.V.): "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."

In all these places we are fully taught that there are three persons in one only divine essence. And although this doctrine far surpasses all human understanding, nevertheless we now believe it by means of the Word of God, but expect hereafter to enjoy the perfect knowledge and benefit thereof in heaven.

Moreover, we must observe the particular offices and operations of these three persons towards us. The Father is called our Creator, by His power; the Son is our Savior and Redeemer, by His blood; the Holy Spirit is our Sanctifier, by His dwelling in our hearts.

This doctrine of the Holy Trinity has always been affirmed and maintained by the true Church since the time of the apostles to this very day against the Jews, Mohammedans, and some false Christians and heretics, as Marcion, Manes, Praxeas, Sabellius, Samosatenus, Arius, and such like, who have been justly condemned by the orthodox fathers. Therefore, in this point, we do willingly receive the three creeds, namely, that of the Apostles, of Nicea, and of Athanasius; likewise that which, conformable thereunto, is agreed upon by the ancient fathers.

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## Article X. Jesus Christ Is True and Eternal God

We believe that Jesus Christ according to His divine nature is the only begotten Son of God, begotten from eternity, not made, nor created (for then He would be a creature), but co-essential and co-eternal with the Father, "the very image of his substance and the effulgence of his glory", equal unto Him in all things. He is the Son of

God, not only from the time that He assumed our nature but from all eternity, as these testimonies, when compared together, teach us. Moses says that God created the world; and St. John says that all things were made by that Word which he calls God. The apostle says that God made the world by His Son; likewise, that God created all things by Jesus Christ. Therefore it must needs follow that He who is called God, the Word, the Son, and Jesus Christ, did exist at that time when all things were created by Him. Therefore the prophet Micah says: "His goingsforth are from of old, from everlasting". And the apostle: "He hath neither beginning of days nor end of life". He therefore is that true, eternal, and almighty God whom we invoke, worship, and serve.

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#### Article XI. The Holy Spirit Is True and Eternal God

We believe and confess also that the Holy Spirit from eternity proceeds from the Father and the Son; and therefore neither is made, created, nor begotten, but only proceeds from both; who in order is the third person of the Holy Trinity; of one and the same essence, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son; and therefore is the true and eternal God, as the Holy Scriptures teach us.

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#### Article XII. The Creation of All Things, Especially the Angels

We believe that the Father by the Word, that is, by His Son, has created of nothing the heaven, the earth, and all creatures, when it seemed good unto Him; giving unto every creature its being, shape, form, and several offices to serve its Creator; that He also still upholds and governs them by His eternal providence and infinite power for the service of mankind, to the end that man may serve his God.

He also created the angels good, to be His messengers and to serve His elect; some of whom are fallen from that excellency in which God created them into everlasting perdition, and the others have by the grace of God remained steadfast and continued in their first state. The devils and evil spirits are so depraved that they are enemies of God and every good thing; to the utmost of their power as murderers watching to ruin the Church and every member thereof, and by their wicked stratagems to destroy all; and are, therefore, by their own wickedness adjudged to eternal damnation, daily expecting their horrible torments.

Therefore we reject and abhor the error of the Sadducees, who deny the existence of spirits and angels; and also that of the Manichees, who assert that the devils have their origin of themselves, and that they are wicked of their own nature, without having been corrupted.

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### Article XIII. The Providence of God and His Government of All Things

We believe that the same good God, after He had created all things, did not forsake them or give them up to fortune or chance, but that He rules and governs them according to His holy will, so that nothing happens in this world without His appointment; nevertheless, God neither is the Author of nor can be charged with the sins which are committed. For His power and goodness are so great and incomprehensible that He orders and executes His work in the most excellent and just manner, even then when devils and wicked men act unjustly. And as to what He does surpassing human understanding, we will not curiously inquire into farther than our capacity will admit of; but with the greatest humility and reverence adore the righteous judgments of God, which are hid from us,

contenting ourselves that we are pupils of Christ, to learn only those things which He has revealed to us in His Word, without transgressing these limits.

This doctrine affords us unspeakable consolation, since we are taught thereby that nothing can befall us by chance, but by the direction of our most gracious and heavenly Father; who watches over us with a paternal care, keeping all creatures so under His power that "not a hair of our head (for they are all numbered), nor a sparrow can fall to the ground without the will of our Father", in whom we do entirely trust; being persuaded that He so restrains the devil and all our enemies that without His will and permission they cannot hurt us.

And therefore we reject that damnable error of the Epicureans, who say that God regards nothing but leaves all things to chance.

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#### Article XIV. The Creation and Fall of Man, and His Incapacity to Perform What Is Truly Good

We believe that God created man out of the dust of the earth, and made and formed him after His own image and likeness, good, righteous, and holy, capable in all things to will agreeably to the will of God. But being in honor, he understood it not, neither knew his excellency, but wilfully subjected himself to sin and consequently to death and the curse, giving ear to the words of the devil. For the commandment of life, which he had received, he transgressed; and by sin separated himself from God, who was his true life; having corrupted his whole nature; whereby he made himself liable to corporal and spiritual death. And being thus become wicked, perverse, and corrupt in all his ways, he has lost all his excellent gifts which he had received from God, and retained only small remains



thereof, which, however, are sufficient to leave man without excuse; for all the light which is in us is changed into darkness, as the Scriptures teach us, saying: "The light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness apprehended it not"; where St. John calls men darkness.

Therefore we reject all that is taught repugnant to this concerning the free will of man, since man is but a slave to sin, and "can receive nothing, except it have been given him from heaven". For who may presume to boast that he of himself can do any good, since Christ says: "No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him"? Who will glory in his own will, who understands that "the mind of the flesh is enmity against God"? Who can speak of his knowledge, since "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God"? In short, who dares suggest any thought, since he knows that "we are not sufficient of ourselves to account anything as of ourselves, but that our sufficiency is of God"? And therefore what the apostle says ought justly to be held sure and firm, that "God worketh in us both to will and to work, for his good pleasure". For there is no understanding nor will conformable to the divine understanding and will but what Christ has wrought in man; which He teaches us, when He says: "Apart from me ye can do nothing".

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## Article XV. Original Sin

We believe that through the disobedience of Adam original sin is extended to all mankind; which is a corruption of the whole nature and a hereditary disease, wherewith even infants in their mother's womb are infected, and which produces in man all sorts of sin, being in him as a root thereof, and therefore is so vile and abominable in the sight of God that it is sufficient to condemn all mankind. Nor is it

altogether abolished or wholly eradicated even by regeneration; since sin always issues forth from this woeful source, as water from a fountain; notwithstanding it is not imputed to the children of God unto condemnation, but by His grace and mercy is forgiven them. Not that they should rest securely in sin, but that a sense of this corruption should make believers often to sigh, desiring to be delivered from this body of death.

Wherefore we reject the error of the Pelagians, who assert that sin proceeds only from imitation.

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#### Article XVI. Eternal Election

We believe that, all the posterity of Adam being thus fallen into perdition and ruin by the sin of our first parents, God then did manifest Himself such as He is; that is to say, merciful and just: merciful, since He delivers and preserves from this perdition all whom He in His eternal and unchangeable counsel of mere goodness has elected in Christ Jesus our Lord, without any respect to their works; just, in leaving others in the fall and perdition wherein they have involved themselves.

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#### Article XVII. The Recovery of Fallen Man

We believe that our most gracious God, in His admirable wisdom and goodness, seeing that man had thus thrown himself into physical and spiritual death and made himself wholly miserable, was pleased to seek and comfort him, when he trembling fled from His presence, promising him that He would give His Son (who would be "born of a woman") "to bruise the head of the serpent" and to make him blessed.

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## Article XVIII. The Incarnation of Jesus Christ

We confess, therefore, that God has fulfilled the promise which He made to the fathers by the mouth of His holy prophets, when He sent into the world, at the time appointed by Him, His own only-begotten and eternal Son, who "took upon Him the form of a servant and became like unto man", really assuming the true human nature with all its infirmities, sin excepted; being conceived in the womb of the blessed virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit without the means of man; and did not only assume human nature as to the body, but also a true human soul, that He might be a real man. For since the soul was lost as well as the body, it was necessary that He should take both upon Him, to save both.

Therefore we confess (in opposition to the heresy of the Anabaptists, who deny that Christ assumed human flesh of His mother) that Christ "partook of the flesh and blood of the children"; that He is a "fruit of the loins of David after the flesh; born of the seed of David according to the flesh; a fruit of the womb of Mary; born of a woman; a branch of David; a shoot of the root of Jesse; sprung from the tribe of Judah"; descended from the Jews according to the flesh; of the seed of Abraham, since (A.V.) "he took on him the seed of Abraham", and "was made like unto his brethren in all things, sin excepted"; so that in truth He is our IMMANUEL, that is to say, "God with us".

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## Article XIX. The Union and Distinction of the Two Natures in the Person of Christ

We believe that by this conception the person of the Son is inseparably united and connected with the human nature; so that there are not two Sons of God, nor two persons, but two natures

united in one single person; yet each nature retains its own distinct properties. As, then, the divine nature has always remained uncreated, without beginning of days or end of life, filling heaven and earth, so also has the human nature not lost its properties but remained a creature, having beginning of days, being a finite nature, and retaining all the properties of a real body. And though He has by His resurrection given immortality to the same, nevertheless He has not changed the reality of His human nature; forasmuch as our salvation and resurrection also depend on the reality of His body. But these two natures are so closely united in one person that they were not separated even by His death. Therefore that which He, when dying, commended into the hands of His Father, was a real human spirit, departing from His body. But in the meantime the divine nature always remained united with the human, even when He lay in the grave; and the Godhead did not cease to be in Him, any more than it did when He was an infant, though it did not so clearly manifest itself for a while. Wherefore we confess that He is very God and very man: very God by His power to conquer death; and very man that He might die for us according to the infirmity of His flesh.

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#### Article XX. God Has Manifested His Justice and Mercy in Christ

We believe that God, who is perfectly merciful and just, sent His Son to assume that nature in which the disobedience was committed, to make satisfaction in the same, and to bear the punishment of sin by His most bitter passion and death. God therefore manifested His justice against His Son when He laid our iniquities upon Him, and poured forth His mercy and goodness on us, who were guilty and worthy of damnation, out of mere and perfect love, giving His Son unto death for us, and raising Him for our justification, that through Him we might obtain immortality and life eternal.

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## Article XXI. The Satisfaction of Christ, Our Only High Priest, for Us

We believe that Jesus Christ is ordained with an oath to be an everlasting High Priest, after the order of Melchizedek; and that He has presented Himself in our behalf before the Father, to appease His wrath by His full satisfaction, by offering Himself on the tree of the cross, and pouring out His precious blood to purge away our sins, as the prophets had foretold. For it is written: "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and numbered with the transgressors"; and condemned by Pontius Pilate as a malefactor, though he had first declared Him innocent. Therefore, He "restored that which he took not away, and suffered, the righteous for the unrighteous", as well in His body as in His soul, feeling the terrible punishment which our sins had merited; insomuch that "his sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground". He called out: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and has suffered all this for the remission of our sins.

Wherefore we justly say with the apostle Paul that we know nothing "save Jesus Christ, and him crucified; we count all things but loss and refuse for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord", in whose wounds we find all manner of consolation. Neither is it necessary to seek or invent any other means of being reconciled to God than this only sacrifice, once offered, by which he "hath perfected forever them that are sanctified". This is also the reason why He was called by the angel of God, JESUS, that is to say, SAVIOR, because He would "save his people from their sins".

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## Article XXII. Our Justification Through Faith in Jesus Christ

We believe that, to attain the true knowledge of this great mystery, the Holy Spirit kindles in our hearts an upright faith, which embraces Jesus Christ with all His merits, appropriates Him, and seeks nothing more besides Him. For it must needs follow, either that all things which are requisite to our salvation are not in Jesus Christ, or if all things are in Him, that then those who possess Jesus Christ through faith have complete salvation in Him. Therefore, for any to assert that Christ is not sufficient, but that something more is required besides Him, would be too gross a blasphemy; for hence it would follow that Christ was but half a Savior.

Therefore we justly say with Paul, that we "are justified by faith alone", or "by faith apart from works". However, to speak more clearly, we do not mean that faith itself justifies us, for it is only an instrument with which we embrace Christ our righteousness. But Jesus Christ, imputing to us all His merits, and so many holy works which He has done for us and in our stead, is our righteousness. And faith is an instrument that keeps us in communion with Him in all His benefits, which, when they become ours, are more than sufficient to acquit us of our sins.

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#### Article XXIII. Wherein Our Justification Before God Consists

We believe that our salvation consists in the remission of our sins for Jesus Christ's sake, and that therein our righteousness before God is implied; as David and Paul teach us, declaring this to be the blessedness of man that "God imputes righteousness to him apart from works". And the same apostle says that we are "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus".

And therefore we always hold fast this foundation, ascribing all the glory to God, humbling ourselves before Him, and acknowledging

ourselves to be such as we really are, without presuming to trust in anything in ourselves, or in any merit of ours, relying and resting upon the obedience of Christ crucified alone, which becomes ours when we believe in Him. This is sufficient to cover all our iniquities, and to give us confidence in approaching to God; freeing the conscience of fear, terror, and dread, without following the example of our first father, Adam, who, trembling, attempted to cover himself with fig-leaves. And, verily, if we should appear before God, relying on ourselves or on any other creature, though ever so little, we should, alas! be consumed. And therefore every one must pray with David: "O Jehovah, enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight no man living is righteous."

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#### Article XXIV. Man's Sanctification and Good Works

We believe that this true faith, being wrought in man by the hearing of the Word of God and the operation of the Holy Spirit, sanctifies him and makes him a new man, causing him to live a new life, and freeing him from the bondage of sin. Therefore it is so far from being true that this justifying faith makes men remiss in a pious and holy life, that on the contrary without it they would never do anything out of love to God, but only out of self-love or fear of damnation. Therefore it is impossible that this holy faith can be unfruitful in man; for we do not speak of a vain faith, but of such a faith which is called in Scripture a "faith working through love", which excites man to the practice of those works which God has commanded in His Word.

These works, as they proceed from the good root of faith, are good and acceptable in the sight of God, forasmuch as they are all sanctified by His grace. Nevertheless they are of no account towards

our justification, for it is by faith in Christ that we are justified, even before we do good works; otherwise they could not be good works, any more than the fruit of a tree can be good before the tree itself is good.

Therefore we do good works, but not to merit by them (for what can we merit?); nay, we are indebted to God for the good works we do, and not He to us, since it is He who "worketh in us both to will and to work, for his good pleasure". Let us therefore attend to what is written: "When ye shall have done all the things that are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants; we have done that which it was our duty to do." In the meantime we do not deny that God rewards good works, but it is through His grace that He crowns His gifts.

Moreover, though we do good works, we do not found our salvation upon them; for we can do no work but what is polluted by our flesh, and also punishable; and although we could perform such works, still the remembrance of one sin is sufficient to make God reject them. Thus, then, we would always be in doubt, tossed to and fro without any certainty, and our poor consciences would be continually vexed if they relied not on the merits of the suffering and death of our Savior.

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#### Article XXV. The Abolishing of the Ceremonial Law

We believe that the ceremonies and symbols of the law ceased at the coming of Christ, and that all the shadows are accomplished; so that the use of them must be abolished among Christians; yet the truth and substance of them remain with us in Jesus Christ, in whom they have their completion. In the meantime we still use the testimonies taken out of the law and the prophets to confirm us in the doctrine of



the gospel, and to regulate our life in all honorableness to the glory of God, according to His will.

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#### Article XXVI. Christ's Intercession

We believe that we have no access unto God but alone through the only Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ the righteous; who therefore became man, having united in one person the divine and human natures, that we men might have access to the divine Majesty, which access would otherwise be barred against us. But this Mediator, whom the Father has appointed between Him and us, ought in no wise to affright us by His majesty, or cause us to seek another according to our fancy. For there is no creature, either in heaven or on earth, who loves us more than Jesus Christ; who, though "existing in the form of God", yet "emptied himself, being made in the likeness of men and of a servant for us, and in all things was made like unto his brethren". If, then, we should seek for another mediator who would be favorably inclined towards us, whom could we find who loved us more than He who laid down His life for us, even "while we were his enemies"? And if we seek for one who has power and majesty, who is there that has so much of both as He "who sits at the right hand of God and to whom hath been given all authority in heaven and on earth"? And who will sooner be heard than the own well beloved Son of God?

Therefore it was only through distrust that this practice of dishonoring, instead of honoring, the saints was introduced, doing that which they never have done nor required, but have on the contrary steadfastly rejected according to their bounden duty, as appears by their writings. Neither must we plead here our unworthiness; for the meaning is not that we should offer our

prayers to God on the ground of our own worthiness, but only on the ground of the excellency and worthiness of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose righteousness is become ours by faith.

Therefore the apostle, to remove this foolish fear, or rather distrust, from us, rightly says that Jesus Christ "in all things was made like unto his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted". And further to encourage us to go to Him, he says: "Having then a great high priest, who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest that cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore draw near with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy, and may find grace to help us in time of need." The same apostle says: "Having boldness to enter into the holy place by the blood of Jesus, let us draw near with a true heart in fullness of faith", etc. Likewise: Christ "hath his priesthood unchangeable; wherefore also he is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

What more can be required? since Christ Himself says: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no one cometh unto the Father, but by me. " To what purpose should we, then, seek another advocate, since it has pleased God to give us His own Son as an Advocate? Let us not forsake Him to take another, or rather to seek after another, without ever being able to find him; for God well knew, when He gave Him to us, that we were sinners.

Therefore, according to the command of Christ, we call upon the heavenly Father through Jesus Christ our only Mediator, as we are

taught in the Lord's Prayer; being assured that whatever we ask of the Father in His Name will be granted us.

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#### Article XXVII. The Catholic Christian Church

We believe and profess one catholic or universal Church, which is a holy congregation of true Christian believers, all expecting their salvation in Jesus Christ, being washed by His blood, sanctified and sealed by the Holy Spirit.

This Church has been from the beginning of the world, and will be to the end thereof; which is evident from this that Christ is an eternal King, which without subjects He cannot be. And this holy Church is preserved or supported by God against the rage of the whole world; though it sometimes for a while appears very small, and in the eyes of men to be reduced to nothing; as during the perilous reign of Ahab the Lord reserved unto Him seven thousand men who had not bowed their knees to Baal.

Furthermore, this holy Church is not confined, bound, or limited to a certain place or to certain persons, but is spread and dispersed over the whole world; and yet is joined and united with heart and will, by the power of faith, in one and the same Spirit.

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#### Article XXVIII. Every One Is Bound to Join Himself to the True Church

We believe, since this holy congregation is an assembly of those who are saved, and outside of it there is no salvation, that no person of whatsoever state or condition he may be, ought to withdraw from it, content to be by himself; but that all men are in duty bound to join and unite themselves with it; maintaining the unity of the Church;

submitting themselves to the doctrine and discipline thereof; bowing their necks under the yoke of Jesus Christ; and as mutual members of the same body, serving to the edification of the brethren, according to the talents God has given them.

And that this may be the more effectually observed, it is the duty of all believers, according to the Word of God, to separate themselves from all those who do not belong to the Church, and to join themselves to this congregation, wheresoever God has established it, even though the magistrates and edicts of princes were against it, yea, though they should suffer death or any other corporal punishment. Therefore all those who separate themselves from the same or do not join themselves to it act contrary to the ordinance of God.

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#### Article XXIX. The Marks of the True Church, and Wherein it Differs from the False Church

We believe that we ought diligently and circumspectly to discern from the Word of God which is the true Church, since all sects which are in the world assume to themselves the name of the Church. But we speak not here of hypocrites, who are mixed in the Church with the good, yet are not of the Church, though externally in it; but we say that the body and communion of the true Church must be distinguished from all sects that call themselves the Church.

The marks by which the true Church is known are these: If the pure doctrine of the gospel is preached therein; if it maintains the pure administration of the sacraments as instituted by Christ; if church discipline is exercised in chastening of sin; in short, if all things are managed according to the pure Word of God, all things contrary thereto rejected, and Jesus Christ acknowledged as the only Head of

the Church. Hereby the true Church may certainly be known, from which no man has a right to separate himself.

With respect to those who are members of the Church, they may be known by the marks of Christians; namely, by faith, and when, having received Jesus Christ the only Savior, they avoid sin, follow after righteousness, love the true God and their neighbor, neither turn aside to the right or left, and crucify the flesh with the works thereof. But this is not to be understood as if there did not remain in them great infirmities; but they fight against them through the Spirit all the days of their life, continually taking their refuge in the blood, death, passion, and obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom they have remission of sins, through faith in Him.

As for the false Church, it ascribes more power and authority to itself and its ordinances than to the Word of God, and will not submit itself to the yoke of Christ. Neither does it administer the sacraments as appointed by Christ in His Word, but adds to and takes from them, as it thinks proper; it relies more upon men than upon Christ; and persecutes those who live holily according to the Word of God and rebuke it for its errors, covetousness, and idolatry.

These two Churches are easily known and distinguished from each other.

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### Article XXX. The Government of the Church and its Offices

We believe that this true Church must be governed by that spiritual polity which our Lord has taught us in His Word; namely, that there must be ministers or pastors to preach the Word of God and to administer the sacraments; also elders and deacons, who, together with the pastors, form the council of the Church; that by these means

the true religion may be preserved, and the true doctrine everywhere propagated, likewise transgressors chastened and restrained by spiritual means; also that the poor and distressed may be relieved and comforted, according to their necessities. By these means everything will be carried on in the Church with good order and decency, when faithful men are chosen, according to the rule prescribed by St. Paul in his Epistle to Timothy.

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#### Article XXXI. The Ministers, Elders, and Deacons

We believe that the ministers of God's Word, the elders, and the deacons ought to be chosen to their respective offices by a lawful election by the Church, with calling upon the name of the Lord, and in that order which the Word of God teaches. Therefore every one must take heed not to intrude himself by improper means, but is bound to wait till it shall please God to call him; that he may have testimony of his calling, and be certain and assured that it is of the Lord.

As for the ministers of God's Word, they have equally the same power and authority wheresoever they are, as they are all ministers of Christ, the only universal Bishop and the only Head of the Church.

Moreover, in order that this holy ordinance of God may not be violated or slighted, we say that every one ought to esteem the ministers of God's Word and the elders of the Church very highly for their work's sake, and be at peace with them without murmuring, strife, or contention, as much as possible.

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#### Article XXXII. The Order and Discipline of the Church

In the meantime we believe, though it is useful and beneficial that those who are rulers of the Church institute and establish certain ordinances among themselves for maintaining the body of the Church, yet that they ought studiously to take care that they do not depart from those things which Christ, our only Master, has instituted. And therefore we reject all human inventions, and all laws which man would introduce into the worship of God, thereby to bind and compel the conscience in any manner whatever. Therefore we admit only of that which tends to nourish and preserve concord and unity, and to keep all men in obedience to God. For this purpose, excommunication or church discipline is requisite, with all that pertains to it, according to the Word of God.

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#### Article XXXIII. The Sacraments

We believe that our gracious God, taking account of our weakness and infirmities, has ordained the sacraments for us, thereby to seal unto us His promises, and to be pledges of the good will and grace of God towards us, and also to nourish and strengthen our faith; which He has joined to the Word of the gospel, the better to present to our senses both that which He declares to us by His Word and that which He works inwardly in our hearts, thereby confirming in us the salvation which He imparts to us. For they are visible signs and seals of an inward and invisible thing, by means whereof God works in us by the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore the signs are not empty or meaningless, so as to deceive us. For Jesus Christ is the true object presented by them, without whom they would be of no moment.

Moreover, we are satisfied with the number of sacraments which Christ our Lord has instituted, which are two only, namely, the sacrament of baptism and the holy supper of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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## Article XXXIV. Holy Baptism

We believe and confess that Jesus Christ, who is the end of the law, has made an end, by the shedding of His blood, of all other sheddings of blood which men could or would make as a propitiation or satisfaction for sin; and that He, having abolished circumcision, which was done with blood, has instituted the sacrament of baptism instead thereof; by which we are received into the Church of God, and separated from all other people and strange religions, that we may wholly belong to Him whose mark and ensign we bear; and which serves as a testimony to us that He will forever be our gracious God and Father.

Therefore He has commanded all those who are His to be baptized with pure water, "into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit", thereby signifying to us, that as water washes away the filth of the body when poured upon it, and is seen on the body of the baptized when sprinkled upon him, so does the blood of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit internally sprinkle the soul, cleanse it from its sins, and regenerate us from children of wrath unto children of God. Not that this is effected by the external water, but by the sprinkling of the precious blood of the Son of God; who is our Red Sea, through which we must pass to escape the tyranny of Pharaoh, that is, the devil, and to enter into the spiritual land of Canaan.

The ministers, therefore, on their part administer the sacrament and that which is visible, but our Lord gives that which is signified by the sacrament, namely, the gifts and invisible grace; washing, cleansing, and purging our souls of all filth and unrighteousness; renewing our hearts and filling them with all comfort; giving unto us a true assurance of His fatherly goodness; putting on us the new man, and putting off the old man with all his deeds.



We believe, therefore, that every man who is earnestly studious of obtaining life eternal ought to be baptized but once with this only baptism, without ever repeating the same, since we cannot be born twice. Neither does this baptism avail us only at the time when the water is poured upon us and received by us, but also through the whole course of our life.

Therefore we detest the error of the Anabaptists, who are not content with the one only baptism they have once received, and moreover condemn the baptism of the infants of believers, who we believe ought to be baptized and sealed with the sign of the covenant, as the children in Israel formerly were circumcised upon the same promises which are made unto our children. And indeed Christ shed His blood no less for the washing of the children of believers than for adult persons; and therefore they ought to receive the sign and sacrament of that which Christ has done for them; as the Lord commanded in the law that they should be made partakers of the sacrament of Christ's suffering and death shortly after they were born, by offering for them a lamb, which was a sacrament of Jesus Christ. Moreover, what circumcision was to the Jews, baptism is to our children. And for this reason St. Paul calls baptism the "circumcision of Christ".

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#### Article XXXV. The Holy Supper of Our Lord Jesus Christ

We believe and confess that our Savior Jesus Christ did ordain and institute the sacrament of the holy supper to nourish and support those whom He has already regenerated and incorporated into His family, which is His Church.

Now those who are regenerated have in them a twofold life, the one corporal and temporal, which they have from the first birth and is common to all men; the other, spiritual and heavenly, which is given

them in their second birth, which is effected by the Word of the gospel, in the communion of the body of Christ; and this life is not common, but is peculiar to God's elect. In like manner God has given us, for the support of the bodily and earthly life, earthly and common bread, which is subservient thereto and is common to all men, even as life itself. But for the support of the spiritual and heavenly life which believers have He has sent a living bread, which descended from heaven, namely, Jesus Christ, who nourishes and strengthens the spiritual life of believers when they eat Him, that is to say, when they appropriate and receive Him by faith in the spirit.

In order that He might represent unto us this spiritual and heavenly bread, Christ has instituted an earthly and visible bread as a sacrament of His body, and wine as a sacrament of His blood, to testify by them unto us that, as certainly as we receive and hold this sacrament in our hands and eat and drink the same with our mouths, by which our life is afterwards nourished, we also do as certainly receive by faith (which is the hand and mouth of our soul) the true body and blood of Christ our only Savior in our souls, for the support of our spiritual life.

Now, as it is certain and beyond all doubt that Jesus Christ has not enjoined to us the use of His sacraments in vain, so He works in us all that He represents to us by these holy signs, though the manner surpasses our understanding and cannot be comprehended by us, as the operations of the Holy Spirit are hidden and incomprehensible. In the meantime we err not when we say that what is eaten and drunk by us is the proper and natural body and the proper blood of Christ. But the manner of our partaking of the same is not by the mouth, but by the spirit through faith. Thus, then, though Christ always sits at the right hand of His Father in the heavens, yet does He not therefore cease to make us partakers of Himself by faith. This

feast is a spiritual table, at which Christ communicates Himself with all His benefits to us, and gives us there to enjoy both Himself and the merits of His sufferings and death: nourishing, strengthening, and comforting our poor comfortless souls by the eating of His flesh, quickening and refreshing them by the drinking of His blood.

Further, though the sacraments are connected with the thing signified nevertheless both are not received by all men. The ungodly indeed receives the sacrament to his condemnation, but he does not receive the truth of the sacrament, even as Judas and Simon the sorcerer both indeed received the sacrament but not Christ who was signified by it, of whom believers only are made partakers.

Lastly, we receive this holy sacrament in the assembly of the people of God, with humility and reverence, keeping up among us a holy remembrance of the death of Christ our Savior, with thanksgiving, making there confession of our faith and of the Christian religion. Therefore no one ought to come to this table without having previously rightly examined himself, lest by eating of this bread and drinking of this cup he eat and drink judgment to himself. In a word, we are moved by the use of this holy sacrament to a fervent love towards God and our neighbor.

Therefore we reject all mixtures and damnable inventions which men have added unto and blended with the sacraments, as profanations of them; and affirm that we ought to rest satisfied with the ordinance which Christ and His apostles have taught us, and that we must speak of them in the same manner as they have spoken.

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#### Article XXXVI. The Magistracy (Civil Government)

We believe that our gracious God, because of the depravity of mankind, has appointed kings, princes, and magistrates; willing that

the world should be governed by certain laws and policies; to the end that the dissoluteness of men might be restrained, and all things carried on among them with good order and decency. For this purpose He has invested the magistracy with "the sword for the punishment of evil-doers and for the protection of them that do well".

Their office is not only to have regard unto and watch for the welfare of the civil state, but also to protect the sacred ministry, that the kingdom of Christ may thus be promoted. They must therefore countenance the preaching of the Word of the gospel everywhere, that God may be honored and worshipped by every one, as He commands in His Word.

Moreover, it is the bounden duty of every one, of whatever state, quality, or condition he may be, to subject himself to the magistrates; to pay tribute, to show due honor and respect to them, and to obey them in all things which are not repugnant to the Word of God; to supplicate for them in their prayers that God may rule and guide them in all their ways, and "that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and gravity".

Wherefore we detest the Anabaptists and other seditious people, and in general all those who reject the higher powers and magistrates and would subvert justice, introduce community of goods, and confound that decency and good order which God has established among men.

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#### Article XXXVII. The Last Judgment

Finally, we believe, according to the Word of God, when the time appointed by the Lord (which is unknown to all creatures) is come and the number of the elect complete, that our Lord Jesus Christ will

come from heaven, corporally and visibly, as He ascended, with great glory and majesty to declare Himself Judge of the living and the dead, burning this old world with fire and flame to cleanse it.

Then all men will personally appear before this great Judge, both men and women and children, that have been from the beginning of the world to the end thereof, being summoned by "the voice of the archangel, and by the sound of the trump of God". For all the dead shall be raised out of the earth, and their souls joined and united with their proper bodies in which they formerly lived. As for those who shall then be living, they shall not die as the others, but be changed in the twinkling of an eye, and from corruptible become incorruptible. Then "the books" [(that is to say, the consciences)] "shall be opened, and the dead judged" according to what they shall have done in this world, whether it be good or evil. Nay, all men "shall give account of every idle word they have spoken", which the world only counts amusement and jest; and then the secrets and hypocrisy of men shall be disclosed and laid open before all.

And therefore the consideration of this judgment is justly terrible and dreadful to the wicked and ungodly, but most desirable and comfortable to the righteous and elect; because then their full deliverance shall be perfected, and there they shall receive the fruits of their labor and trouble which they have borne. Their innocence shall be known to all, and they shall see the terrible vengeance which God shall execute on the wicked, who most cruelly persecuted, oppressed, and tormented them in this world, and who shall be convicted by the testimony of their own consciences, and shall become immortal, but only to be tormented in "the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels".

But on the contrary, the faithful and elect shall be crowned with glory and honor; and the Son of God will confess their names before God His Father and His elect angels; all tears shall be wiped from their eyes; and their cause which is now condemned by many judges and magistrates as heretical and impious will then be known to be the cause of the Son of God. And for a gracious reward, the Lord will cause them to possess such a glory as never entered into the heart of man to conceive.

Therefore we expect that great day with a most ardent desire, to the end that we may fully enjoy the promises of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. AMEN. "Amen, come, Lord Jesus." Rev. 22:20.

# **THE HEIDELBERG CATECHISM (1563)**

This catechism was written by Zacharias Ursinus (1534-1583) and Caspar Olevianus (1536-1584) in Heidelberg, Germany and published in 1563 in German. It was endorsed by the Synod of Dort and embraced by Reformed Churches in many different countries. It is the custom of many churches that use it to explain it from the pulpit every Sunday afternoon, so it is divided into fifty-two sections.

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## **LORD'S DAY 1**

**Q.1. WHAT IS YOUR ONLY COMFORT, IN LIFE AND IN DEATH?**

**A.** That I am not my own, but belong - body and soul, in life and in death - to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with his precious blood, and has set me free from the tyranny of the devil. He also watches over me in such a way that not a hair can fall from my head without the will of my Father in heaven: in fact all things must work together for my salvation. Because I belong to him, Christ, by His Holy Spirit, assures me of eternal life, and makes me wholeheartedly willing and ready from now on to live for him.

**Q.2. WHAT MUST YOU KNOW TO LIVE AND DIE IN THE JOY OF THIS COMFORT?**

**A.** Three things: first, how great my sin and misery are; second, how I am set free from all my sins and misery; third, how I am to thank God for such deliverance.

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## **PART I: MISERY**

### **LORD'S DAY 2**

Q.3. HOW DO YOU COME TO KNOW YOUR MISERY?

A. The law of God tells me.

Q.4. WHAT DOES GOD'S LAW REQUIRE OF US?

A. Christ teaches us this in summary in Matthew 22: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. All the Law and the Prophets hang on these commandments.

Q.5. CAN YOU LIVE UP TO ALL THIS PERFECTLY?

A. No. I have a natural tendency to hate God and my neighbor.

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LORD'S DAY 3

Q.6. DID GOD CREATE PEOPLE SO WICKED AND PERVERSE?

A. No. God created them good and in his own image, that is, in true righteousness and holiness, so that they might truly know God their Creator, love him with all their heart, and live with him in eternal happiness for his praise and glory.

Q.7. THEN WHERE DOES THIS CORRUPT HUMAN NATURE COME FROM?

A. From the fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise. This fall has so poisoned our nature that we are born sinner - corrupt from conception on.

Q.8. BUT ARE WE SO CORRUPT THAT WE ARE TOTALLY UNABLE TO DO ANY GOOD AND INCLINED TOWARD ALL EVIL?

A. Yes, unless we are born again, by the Spirit of God.

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## LORD'S DAY 4

Q.9. BUT DOESN'T GOD DO US INJUSTICE BY REQUIRING IN HIS LAW WHAT WE ARE UNABLE TO DO?

A. No, God created humans with the ability to keep the law. They, however, tempted by the devil, in reckless disobedience robbed themselves and all their descendants of these gifts.

Q.10. WILL GOD PERMIT SUCH DISOBEDIENCE AND REBELLION TO GO UNPUNISHED?

A. Certainly not. He is terribly angry about the sin we are born with as well as the sins we personally commit. As a just judge he punishes them now and in eternity. He has declared: "Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.

Q.11. BUT ISN'T GOD ALSO MERCIFUL?

A. God is certainly merciful, but he is also just. His justice demands that sin, committed against his supreme majesty, be punished with the supreme penalty - eternal punishment of body and soul.

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## PART II: DELIVERANCE

## LORD'S DAY 5

Q.12. ACCORDING TO GOD'S RIGHTEOUS JUDGMENT WE DESERVE PUNISHMENT BOTH IN THIS WORLD AND FOREVER AFTER: HOW THEN CAN WE ESCAPE THIS PUNISHMENT AND RETURN TO GOD'S FAVOR?

A. God requires that his justice be satisfied. Therefore the claims of his justice must be paid in full, either by ourselves or another.

Q.13. CAN WE PAY THIS DEBT OURSELVES?

A. Certainly not. Actually, we increase our guilt every day.

Q.14. CAN ANOTHER CREATURE - ANY AT ALL - PAY THIS DEBT FOR US?

A. No. To begin with, God will not punish another creature for what a human is guilty of. Besides, no mere creature can bear the weight of God's eternal anger against sin and release others from it.

Q.15. WHAT KIND OF MEDIATOR AND DELIVERER SHOULD WE LOOK FOR THEN?

A. One who is truly human and truly righteous, yet more powerful than all creatures, that is, on who is also true God.

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LORD'S DAY 6

Q.16. WHY MUST HE BE TRULY HUMAN AND TRULY RIGHTEOUS?

A. God's justice demands that human nature, which has sinned, must pay for its sin; but a sinner could never pay for others.

Q.17. WHY MUST HE ALSO BE TRUE GOD?

A. So that, by the power of his divinity, he might bear the weight of God's anger in his humanity and earn for us and restore to us righteousness and life.

Q.18. AND WHO IS THIS MEDIATOR - TRUE GOD AND AT THE SAME TIME TRULY HUMAN AND TRULY RIGHTEOUS?

A. Our Lord Jesus Christ, who was given us to set us completely free and to make us right with God.

Q.19. HOW DO YOU COME TO KNOW THIS?

A. The holy gospel tells me. God himself began to reveal the gospel already in Paradise; later he proclaimed it by the holy patriarchs and prophets, and portrayed it by the sacrifices and other ceremonies of the law; finally he fulfilled it through His own dear Son.

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LORD'S DAY 7

Q.20. ARE ALL SAVED THROUGH CHRIST JUST AS ALL WERE LOST THROUGH ADAM?

A. No. Only those are saved who by true faith are grafted into Christ and accept all his blessings.

Q.21. WHAT IS TRUE FAITH?

A. True faith is not only a knowledge and conviction that everything God reveals in his Word is true; it is also a deep-rooted assurance, created in my by the Holy Spirit through the gospel, that, out of sheer grace earned for us by Christ, not only others, but I too have had my sins forgiven, have been made forever right with God, and have been granted salvation.

Q.22. WHAT THEN MUST A CHRISTIAN BELIEVE?

A. Everything God promises us in the gospel. That gospel is summarized for us in the articles of our Christian faith - a creed beyond doubt, and confessed throughout the world.

Q.23. WHAT ARE THESE ARTICLES?

A. I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended to

heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

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## LORD'S DAY 8

Q.24. HOW ARE THESE ARTICLES DIVIDED?

A. Into three parts: God the Father and our creation; God the Son and our deliverance; God the Holy Spirit and our sanctification.

Q.25. SINCE THERE IS BUT ONE GOD, WHY DO YOU SPEAK OF THREE: FATHER, SON, AND HOLY SPIRIT?

A. Because that is how God has revealed himself in his Word: these three distinct persons are the one, true, eternal God.

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## GOD THE FATHER

### LORD'S DAY 9

Q.26. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE WHEN YOU SAY, "I BELIEVE IN GOD THE FATHER ALMIGHTY, CREATOR OF HEAVEN AND EARTH"?

A. That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who out of nothing created heaven and earth and everything in them, who still upholds and rules them by his eternal counsel and providence, is my God and Father because of Christ His Son. I trust him so much that I do not doubt he will provide whatever I need body and soul, and he will turn to my good whatever adversity he sends me in this sad

world. He is able to do this because he is almighty God; he desires to do this because he is a faithful Father.

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## LORD'S DAY 10

Q.27. WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND BY THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD?

A. Providence is the almighty and ever present power of God by which he upholds, as with his hand, heaven and earth and all creatures, and so rules them that leaf and blade, rain and drought, fruitful and lean years, food and drink, health and sickness, prosperity and poverty - all things, in fact, come to us not by chance but from his fatherly hand.

Q.28. HOW DOES THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD'S CREATION AND PROVIDENCE HELP US?

A. We can be patient when things go against us, thankful when things go well, and for the future we can have good confidence in our faithful God and Father that nothing will separate us from his love. All creatures are so completely in his hand that without his will they can neither move nor be moved.

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## GOD THE SON

### LORD'S DAY 11

Q.29. WHY IS THE SON OF GOD CALLED "JESUS", MEANING "SAVIOR"?

A. Because he saves us from our sins. Salvation cannot be found in anyone else; it is futile to look for any salvation elsewhere.

**Q.30. DO THOSE WHO LOOK FOR THEIR SALVATION AND SECURITY IN SAINTS, IN THEMSELVES, OR ELSEWHERE REALLY BELIEVE IN THE ONLY SAVIOR JESUS?**

**A.** No. Although they boast of being his, by their deeds they deny the only savior and deliverer, Jesus. Either Jesus is not a perfect savior, or those who in true faith accept this savior have in him all they need for their salvation.

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## **LORD'S DAY 12**

**Q.31. WHY IS HE CALLED "CHRIST," MEANING "ANOINTED"?**

**A.** Because he has been ordained by God the Father and has been anointed with the Holy Spirit to be our chief prophet and teacher who perfectly reveals to us the secret counsel and will of God for our deliverance; our only high priest who has set us free by the one sacrifice of his body, and who continually pleads our cause with the Father; and our eternal king, who governs us by his Word and Spirit, and who guards us and keeps us in the freedom he has won for us.

**Q.32. BUT WHY ARE YOU CALLED A CHRISTIAN?**

**A.** Because by faith I am a member of Christ and so I share in his anointing. I am anointed to confess his name, to present myself as a living sacrifice of thanks, to strive with a good conscience against sin and the devil in this life, and afterward to reign with Christ over all creation for all eternity.

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## **LORD'S DAY 13**

**Q.33. WHY IS HE CALLED GOD'S "ONLY SON" WHEN WE ALSO ARE GOD'S CHILDREN?**

**A.** Because Christ alone is the eternal, natural Son of God. We,

however, are adopted children of God - adopted by grace through Christ.

Q.34. WHY DO YOU CALL HIM "OUR LORD"?

A. Because - not with gold or silver, but with his precious blood - he has set us free from sin and from the tyranny of the devil, and has bought us, body and soul, to be his very own.

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LORD'S DAY 14

Q.35. WHAT DOES IT MEAN THAT HE "WAS CONCEIVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT AND BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY"?

A. That the eternal Son of God, who is and remains true and eternal God, took to himself, through the working of the Holy Spirit, the flesh and blood of the virgin Mary, a truly human nature so that he might become David's true descendent, like his brothers in every way except for sin.

Q.36. HOW DOES THE HOLY CONCEPTION AND BIRTH OF CHRIST BENEFIT YOU?

A. He is our mediator, and with his innocence and perfect holiness here moves from God's sight my sin - mine since I was conceived.

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LORD'S DAY 15

Q.37. WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND BY THE WORD "SUFFERED"?

A. That during his whole life on earth, but especially at the end, Christ sustained in body and soul the anger of God against the sin of the whole human race. This he did in order that, by his suffering as the only atoning sacrifice, he might set us free, body and soul, from

eternal condemnation, and gain for us God's grace, righteousness, and eternal life.

Q.38. WHY DID HE SUFFER "UNDER PONTIUS PILATE" AS JUDGE?

A. So that he, though innocent, might be condemned by a civil judge, and so free us from the severe judgment of God that was to fall on us.

Q.39. IS IT SIGNIFICANT THAT HE WAS "CRUCIFIED" INSTEAD OF DYING SOME OTHER WAY?

A. Yes. This death convinces me that he shouldered the curse which lay on me, since death by crucifixion was accursed by God.

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#### LORD'S DAY 16

Q.40. WHY DID CHRIST HAVE TO GO ALL THE WAY TO DEATH?

A. Because God's justice and truth demand it: only the death of God's Son could pay for our sin.

Q.41. WHY WAS HE "BURIED"?

A. His burial testifies that he really died.

Q.42. SINCE CHRIST HAS DIED FOR US, WHY DO WE HAVE TO DIE?

A. Our death does not pay the debt of our sins. Rather, it puts an end to our sinning and is our entrance into eternal life.

Q.43. WHAT FURTHER ADVANTAGE DO WE RECEIVE FROM CHRIST'S SACRIFICE AND ON THE CROSS?

A. Through Christ's death our old selves are crucified, put to death, and buried with him, so that the evil desires of the flesh may no



longer rule us, but that instead we may dedicate ourselves as an offering of gratitude to him.

Q.44. WHY DOES THE CREED ADD, "HE DESCENDED INTO HELL"?

A. To assure me in times of personal crisis and temptation that Christ my Lord, by suffering unspeakable anguish, pain, and terror of soul, especially on the cross but also earlier, has delivered me from the anguish and torment of hell.

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LORD'S DAY 17

Q.45. HOW DOES CHRIST'S RESURRECTION BENEFIT US?

A. First, by his resurrection he has overcome death, so that he might make us share in the righteousness he won for us by his death. Second, by his power we too are already now raised to a new life. Third, Christ's resurrection is a guarantee of our glorious resurrection.

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LORD'S DAY 18

Q.46. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY SAYING "HE ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN"?

A. That Christ, while his disciples watched, was lifted up from the earth to heaven and will be there for our good until he comes again to judge the living and the dead.

Q.47. BUT ISN'T CHRIST WITH US UNTIL THE END OF THE WORLD AS HE PROMISED US?

A. Christ is truly human and truly God. In his human nature Christ is not now on earth; but in his divinity, majesty, grace, and Spirit he is not absent from us for a moment.

Q.48. IF HIS HUMANITY IS NOT PRESENT WHEREVER HIS DIVINITY IS, THEN AREN'T THE TWO NATURES OF CHRIST SEPARATED FROM EACH OTHER?

A. Certainly not. Since divinity is not limited and is present everywhere, it is evident that Christ's divinity is surely beyond the bounds of the humanity he has taken on, but at the same time his divinity is in and remains personally united to his humanity.

Q.49. HOW DOES CHRIST'S ASCENSION TO HEAVEN BENEFIT US?

A. First, he pleads our cause in heaven the presence of his Father. Second, we have our own flesh in heaven - a guarantee that Christ our head will take us, his members, to himself in heaven. Third, he sends us his Spirit to us on earth as a further guarantee. By the Spirit's power we make the goal of our lives, not earthly things, but the things above where Christ is, sitting at God's right hand.

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## LORD'S DAY 19

Q.50. WHY THE NEXT WORDS: "AND IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD"?

A. Christ ascended to heaven, there to show that he is head of his church, and that the Father rules all things through him.

Q.51. HOW DOES THIS GLORY OF CHRIST OUR HEAD BENEFIT US? A. First, through his Holy Spirit he pours out his gifts from heaven upon his members. Second, by his power he defends us and keeps us safe from all our enemies.

Q.52. HOW DOES CHRIST'S RETURN "TO JUDGE THE LIVING AND THE DEAD" COMFORT YOU?

A. In all distress and persecution I turn my eyes to the heavens and

confidently await as judge the very One who has already stood trial in my place before God and so has removed the whole curse from me. All his enemies and mine he will condemn to everlasting punishment: but me and all his chosen ones he will take along with him into the joy and the glory of heaven.

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## GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

### LORD'S DAY 20

Q.53. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE CONCERNING "THE HOLY SPIRIT"?

A. First, he,, as well as the Father and the Son, is eternal God. Second, he has been given to me personally, so that, by true faith, he makes me share in Christ and all his blessings, comforts me, and remains with me forever.

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### LORD'S DAY 21

Q.54. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE CONCERNING "THE HOLY CATHOLIC CHURCH"?

A. I believe that Son of God through his Spirit and Word, out of the entire human race, from the beginning of the world to its end, gathers, protects, and preserves for himself a community chosen for eternal life and united in true faith. And of this community I am and always will be a living a member.

Q.55. WHAT DO YOU UNDERSTAND BY "THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS"?

A. First, that believers one and all, as members of this community, share in Christ and in all his treasures and gifts. Second, that each

member should consider it a duty to use these gifts readily and cheerfully for the service and enrichment of the other members.

Q.56. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE CONCERNING "THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS"?

A. I believe that God, because of Christ's atonement, will never hold against me any of my sins nor my sinful nature which I need to struggle against all my life. Rather, in his grace God grants me the righteousness of Christ to free me forever from judgment.

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LORD'S DAY 22

Q.57. HOW DOES "THE RESURRECTION OF THE BODY" COMFORT YOU?

A. Not only my soul will be taken immediately after this life to Christ its head, but even my very flesh, raised by the power of Christ, will be reunited with my soul and made like Christ's glorious body.

Q.58. HOW DOES THE ARTICLE CONCERNING "LIFE EVERLASTING" COMFORT YOU?

A. Even as I already now experience in my heart the beginning of eternal joy, so after this life I will have perfect blessedness such as no eye has seen, no ear has heard, no human heart has ever imagined: a blessedness in which to praise God eternally.

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LORD'S DAY 23

Q.59. WHAT GOOD DOES IT DO YOU, HOWEVER, TO BELIEVE ALL THIS?

A. In Christ I am right with God and heir to life eternal.

**Q.60. HOW ARE YOU RIGHT WITH GOD?**

A. Only by true faith in Jesus Christ. Even though my conscience accuses me of having grievously sinned against all God's commandments and of never having kept any one of them, and even though I am still inclined toward all evil, nevertheless, without my deserving it all, out of sheer grace, God grants and credits to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ, as if I had never sinned nor been a sinner, as if I had been as perfectly obedient as Christ was obedient for me. All I need to do is to accept this gift of God with a believing heart.

**Q.61. WHY DO YOU SAY THAT BY FAITH ALONE YOU ARE RIGHT WITH GOD?**

A. It is not because of any value my faith has that God is pleased with me. Only Christ's satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness make me right with God. And I can receive this righteousness and make it mine in no other way than by faith alone.

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**LORD'S DAY 24**

**Q.62. WHY CAN'T THE GOOD WE DO MAKE US RIGHT WITH GOD, OR AT LEAST HELP MAKE US RIGHT WITH HIM?**

A. Because the righteousness which can pass God's scrutiny must be entirely perfect and must in every way measure up to the divine law. Even the very best we do in this life is imperfect and stained with sin.

**Q.63. HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT THE GOOD WE DO DOESN'T EARN ANYTHING WHEN GOD PROMISES TO REWARD IT IN THIS LIFE AND THE NEXT?**

A. This reward is not earned; it is a gift of grace.

Q.64. BUT DOESN'T THIS TEACHING MAKE PEOPLE INDIFFERENT AND WICKED?

A. No. It is impossible for those grafted into Christ by true faith not to produce fruits of gratitude.

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## THE HOLY SACRAMENTS

### LORD'S DAY 25

Q.65. IT IS BY FAITH ALONE THAT WE SHARE IN CHRIST AND ALL HIS BLESSINGS: WHERE THEN DOES THAT FAITH COME FROM?

A. The Holy Spirit produces it in our hearts by the preaching of the holy gospel, and confirms it through our use of the holy sacraments.

Q.66. WHAT ARE SACRAMENTS?

A. Sacraments are holy signs and seals for us to see. they were instituted by God so that by our use of them he might make us understand more clearly the promise of the gospel, and might put his seal on that promise. And this is God's gospel promise: to forgive our sins and give us eternal life by grace alone because of Christ's one sacrifice finished on the cross.

Q.67. ARE BOTH THE WORD AND THE SACRAMENTS THEN INTENDED TO FOCUS OUR FAITH ON THE SACRIFICE OF JESUS CHRIST ON THE CROSS AS THE ONLY GROUND OF OUR SALVATION?

A. Right!. In the gospel the Holy Spirit teaches us and through the holy sacraments he assures us that our entire salvation rests on Christ's one sacrifice for us on the cross.

Q.68. HOW MANY SACRAMENTS DID CHRIST INSTITUTE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT?

A. Two: baptism and the Lord's Supper.

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BAPTISM

LORD'S DAY 26

Q.69. HOW DOES BAPTISM REMIND YOU AND ASSURE YOU THAT CHRIST'S ONE SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS IS FOR YOU PERSONALLY?

A. In this way: Christ instituted this outward washing with and with it gave the promise that, as surely as water washes away the dirt from the body, so certainly his blood and his Spirit wash away my soul's impurity, in other words, all my sins.

Q.70. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE WASHED WITH CHRIST'S BLOOD AND SPIRIT?

A. To be washed with Christ's blood means that God, by grace, has forgiven my sins because of Christ's blood poured out for me in his sacrifice on the cross. To be washed with Christ's Spirit means that the Holy Spirit has renewed me and set me apart to be a member of Christ so that more and more I become dead to sin and increasingly live a holy and blameless life.

Q.71. WHERE DOES CHRIST PROMISE THAT WE ARE WASHED WITH HIS BLOOD AND SPIRIT AS SURELY AS WE ARE WASHED WITH THE WATER OF BAPTISM?

A. In the institution of baptism where he says: "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be

condemned." This promise is repeated when Scripture calls baptism the washing of rebirth and the washing away of sins.

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## LORD'S DAY 27

Q.72. DOES THIS OUTWARD WASHING WITH WATER ITSELF WASH AWAY SINS?

A. No, Jesus Christ's blood and the Holy Spirit cleanse us from all sins.

Q.73. WHY THEN DOES THE HOLY SPIRIT CALL BAPTISM THE WASHING OF REBIRTH AND THE WASHING AWAY OF SINS?

A. God has good reason for these words. He wants to teach us that the blood and Spirit of Christ wash away our sins just as water washes away dirt from our bodies. But more important, he wants to assure us, by this divine pledge and sign, that the washing away of our sins spiritually is as real as physical washing with water.

Q.74. SHOULD INFANTS, TOO, BE BAPTIZED?

A. Yes. Infants as well as adults are God's covenant and are his people. They, no less than adults, are promised the forgiveness of sin through Christ's blood and the Holy Spirit who produces faith. Therefore, by baptism, the mark of the covenant, infants should be received into the Christian church and should be distinguished from the children of unbelievers. This was done in the Old Testament by circumcision, which was replaced in the New Testament by baptism.

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## THE LORD'S SUPPER

### LORD'S DAY 28



**Q.75. HOW DOES THE LORD'S SUPPER REMIND YOU AND ASSURE YOU THAT YOU SHARE IN CHRIST'S ONE SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS AND IN ALL HIS GIFTS?**

A. In this way: Christ has commanded me and all believers to eat this broken bread, and to drink this cup. With this command he gave his promise: First, as surely as I see with my eyes the bread of the Lord broken for me and the cup given to me, so surely his body was offered and broken for me and his blood poured out for me on the cross. Second, as surely as I receive from the hand of the one who serves, and taste with my mouth the bread and cup of the Lord, given me as sure signs of Christ's body and blood, so surely he nourishes and refreshes my soul for eternal life with his crucified body and poured-out blood.

**Q.76. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO EAT THE CRUCIFIED BODY OF CHRIST AND TO DRINK HIS Poured-OUT BLOOD?**

A. It means to accept with a believing heart the entire suffering and death of Christ and by believing to receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life. But it means more. Through the Holy Spirit, who lives both in Christ and in us, we are united more and more to Christ's blessed body. And so, although he is in heaven and we are on earth, we are flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone. And we forever live on and are governed by one Spirit, as members of our body are by one soul.

**Q.77. WHERE DOES CHRIST PROMISE TO NOURISH AND REFRESH BELIEVERS WITH HIS BODY AND BLOOD AS SURELY AS THEY EAT THIS BROKEN BREAD AND DRINK THIS CUP?**

A. In the institution of the Lord's Supper: "The Lord Jesus on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, 'this is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.' In the same way, after supper he took the cup,

saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.' For whenever you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." This promise is repeated by apostle Paul in these words: "Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all partake of the one loaf."

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## LORD'S DAY 29

**Q.78. ARE THE BREAD AND WINE CHANGED INTO THE REAL BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST?**

A. No. Just as the water of baptism is not changed into Christ's blood and does not itself wash away sins but is simply God's sign and assurance, so too the bread of the Lord's Supper is not changed into the actual body of Christ even though it is called the body of Christ in keeping with the nature and language of sacraments.

**Q.79. WHY THEN DOES CHRIST CALL THE BREAD HIS BODY AND THE CUP HIS BLOOD, OR THE NEW COVENANT IN HIS BLOOD? (PAUL USES THE WORDS, A PARTICIPATION IN CHRIST'S BODY AND BLOOD.)**

A. Christ has good reason for these words. He wants to teach us that as bread and wine nourish our temporal life, so too his crucified body and poured-out blood truly nourish our souls for eternal life. But more important, he wants to assure us, by this visible sign and pledge, that we, through the HOly Spirit's work, share in his true body and blood as surely as our mouths receive these holy signs in his remembrance, and that all of his suffering and obedience are as definitely ours as if we personally had suffered and paid for our sins.

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## LORD'S DAY 30

**Q.80. HOW DOES THE LORD'S SUPPER DIFFER FROM THE ROMAN CATHOLIC MASS?**

A. The Lord's Supper declares to us that our sins have been completely forgiven through the one sacrifice of Jesus Christ which he himself finished on the cross once for all. It also declares to us that the Holy Spirit grafts us into Christ, who with his very body is now in heaven at the right hand of the Father where he wants us to worship him. But the Mass teaches that the living and the dead do not have their sins forgiven through the suffering of Christ unless Christ is still offered for them daily by the priests. It also teaches that Christ is bodily present in the form of bread and wine where Christ is therefore to be worshiped. Thus the Mass is basically nothing but a denial of the one sacrifice and suffering of Jesus Christ and a condemnable idolatry.

**Q.81. WHO ARE TO COME TO THE LORD'S TABLE?**

A. Those who are displeased with themselves because of their sins, but who nevertheless trust that their sins are pardoned and that their continuing weakness is covered by the suffering and death of Christ, and who also desire more and more to strengthen their faith and to lead a better life. Hypocrites and those who are unrepentant, however, eat and drink judgment on themselves.

**Q.82. ARE THOSE TO BE ADMITTED TO THE LORD'S SUPPER WHO SHOW BY WHAT THEY SAY AND DO THAT THEY ARE UNBELIEVING AND UNGODLY?**

A. No, that would dishonor God's covenant and bring down God's anger upon the entire congregation. Therefore, according to the instruction of Christ and his apostles, the Christian church is duty-

bound to exclude such people, by the official use of the keys of the kingdom, until they reform their lives.

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## LORD'S DAY 31

### Q.83. WHAT ARE THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM?

A. The preaching of the holy gospel and Christian discipline toward repentance. Both preaching and discipline open the kingdom of heaven to believers and close it to unbelievers.

### Q.84. HOW DOES PREACHING THE GOSPEL OPEN AND CLOSE THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN?

A. According to the command of Christ: The kingdom of heaven is opened by proclaiming and publically declaring to all believers, each and every one, that, as often as they accept the gospel promise in true faith, God, because of what Christ has done, truly forgives all their sins. The kingdom of heaven is closed, however, by proclaiming and publicly declaring to unbelievers and hypocrites that, as long as they do not repent, the anger of God and eternal condemnation rest on them. God's judgment, both in this life and in the life to come, is based on this gospel testimony.

### Q.85. HOW IS THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN CLOSED AND OPENED BY CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINE?

A. According to the command of Christ: Those who, though called Christians, profess unchristian teachings or live unchristian lives, and after repeated and loving counsel refuse to abandon their errors and wickedness, and after being reported to the church, that is, to its officers, fail to respond also to their admonition - such persons the officers exclude from the Christian fellowship by withholding the sacraments from them, and God himself excludes them from the kingdom of Christ. Such persons, when promising and

demonstrating genuine reform, are received again as members of Christ and of his church.

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## GRATITUDE

### LORD'S DAY 32

Q.86. WE HAVE BEEN DELIVERED FROM OUR MISERY BY GOD'S GRACE ALONE THROUGH CHRIST AND NOT BECAUSE WE HAVE EARNED IT: WHY THEN MUST WE STILL DO GOOD?

A. To be sure, Christ has redeemed us by his blood. But we do good because Christ by his Spirit is also renewing us to be like himself, so that in all our living we may show that we are thankful to God for all he has done for us, and so that he may be praised through us. And we do good so that we may be assured of our faith by its fruits, and so that by our godly living our neighbors may be won over to Christ.

Q.87. CAN THOSE BE SAVED WHO DO NOT TURN TO GOD FROM THE UNGRATEFUL AND IMPENITENT WAYS?

A. By no means. Scripture tells us that no unchaste person, no idolater, adulterer, thief, no covetous person, no drunkard, slanderer, robber, or the like is going to inherit the kingdom of God.

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### LORD'S DAY 33

Q.88. WHAT IS INVOLVED IN GENUINE REPENTANCE OR CONVERSION?

A. Two things: the dying-away of the old self and the coming-to-life of the new.

Q.89. WHAT IS THE DYING-AWAY OF THE OLD SELF?

A. It is to be genuinely sorry for sin, to hate it more and more, and to

run away from it.

Q.90. WHAT IS THE COMING-TO-LIFE OF THE NEW SELF?

A. It is wholehearted joy in God through Christ and a delight to do every kind of good as God wants us to.

Q.91. WHAT DO WE DO THAT IS GOOD?

A. Only that which arises out of true faith, conforms to God's law, and is done for his glory; and not that which is based on what we think is right or on established human tradition.

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LORD'S DAY 34

Q.92. WHAT DOES THE LORD SAY IN HIS LAW?

A. God spoke all theses words:

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. You shall have no other gods before me.

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin the fathers to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate Me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

You shall misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name.

#### THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy. Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you, nor your son or daughter, nor your manservant or maidservant, nor your animals, nor the alien within your gates. For in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea, and all that is in them, but he rested on the seventh day. Therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

#### THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

#### THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not murder.

#### THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not commit adultery.

#### THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not steal.

#### THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

#### THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor.

Q.93. HOW ARE THESE COMMANDMENTS DIVIDED?

A. Into two tables. The first has four commandments, teaching us

what our relation to God should be. The second has six commandments, teaching us what we owe our neighbor.

Q.94. WHAT DOES THE LORD REQUIRE IN THE FIRST COMMANDMENT?

A. That I, not wanting to endanger my very salvation, avoid and shun all idolatry, magic, superstitious rites, and prayer to saints or to other creatures. That I sincerely acknowledge the only true God, trust him for every good thing humbly and patiently, love him, fear him, and honor him with all my heart. In short, that I give up anything rather than go against his will in any way.

Q.95. WHAT IS IDOLATRY?

A. Idolatry is having or inventing something in which one trusts in place of or alongside of the only true God, who has revealed himself in his Word.

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## LORD'S DAY 35

Q.96. WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR US IN THE SECOND COMMANDMENT?

A. That we in no way make any image of God nor worship him in any other way than he has commanded in his Word.

Q.97. MAY WE THEN NOT MAKE ANY IMAGE AT ALL?

A. God can not and may not be visibly portrayed in any way. Although creatures may be portrayed, yet God forbids making or having such images if one's intention is to worship them or to serve God through them.

Q.98. BUT MAY NOT IMAGES BE PERMITTED IN THE CHURCHES AS TEACHING AIDS FOR THE UNLEARNED?



A. No, we shouldn't try to be wiser than God. He wants his people instructed by the living preaching of his Word - not by idols that cannot even talk.

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## LORD'S DAY 36

Q.99. WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR US IN THE THIRD COMMANDMENT?

A. That we neither blaspheme nor misuse the name of God by cursing, perjury, or unnecessary oaths, nor share in such horrible sins by being silent bystanders. In a word, it requires that we use the holy name of God only with reverence and awe, so that we may properly confess him, pray to him, and praise him in everything we do and say.

Q.100. IS BLASPHEMY OF GOD'S NAME BY SWEARING AND CURSING REALLY SUCH A SERIOUS SIN THAT GOD IS ANGRY ALSO WITH THOSE WHO DO NOT DO ALL THEY CAN TO HELP PREVENT IT AND FORBID IT?

A. Yes, indeed. No sin is greater, no sin makes God more angry than blaspheming his name. That is why he commanded the death penalty for it.

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## LORD'S DAY 37

Q.101. BUT MAY WE SWEAR AN OATH IN GOD'S NAME IF WE DO IT REVERENTLY?

A. Yes, when the government demands it, or when necessity requires it, in order to maintain and promote truth and trustworthiness for God's glory and our neighbor's good. Such oaths are approved in

God's Word and were rightly used by Old and New Testament believers.

Q.102. MAY WE SWEAR BY SAINTS OR OTHER CREATURES?

A. No. A legitimate oath means calling upon God as the one who knows my hearts to witness to my truthfulness and to punish me if I swear falsely. No creature is worthy of such honor.

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### LORD'S DAY 38

Q.103. WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR YOU IN THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT?

A. First, that the gospel ministry and education for it be maintained, and that, especially on the festive day of rest, I regularly attend the assembly of God's people to learn what God's Word teaches, to participate in the sacraments, to pray to God publicly, and to bring Christian offerings for the poor. Second, that every day of my life I rest from my evil ways, let the Lord work in me through his Spirit, and so begin already in this life the eternal Sabbath.

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### LORD'S DAY 39

Q.104. WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR YOU IN THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT?

A. That I honor, love, and be loyal to my father and mother and all those in authority over me; that I obey and submit to them, as is proper, when they correct and punish me; and also that I be patient with their failings - for through them God chooses to rule us.

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### LORD'S DAY 40

Q.105. WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR YOU IN THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT?

A. I am not to belittle, insult, hate, or kill my neighbor - not by my thoughts, my words, my look or gesture, and certainly not by actual deeds - and I am not to be party to this in others; rather, I am to put away all desire for revenge. I am not to harm or recklessly endanger myself either. Prevention of murder is also why government is armed with the sword.

Q.106. DOES THIS COMMANDMENT REFER ONLY TO KILLING?

A. By forbidding murder God teaches us that he hates the root of murder: envy, hatred, anger, vindictiveness. In God's sight all such are murder.

Q.107. IS IT ENOUGH THEN THAT WE DO NOT KILL OUR NEIGHBOR IN ANY SUCH WAY?

A. No. By condemning envy, hatred, and anger God tells us to love our neighbor as ourselves, to be patient, peace-loving, gentle, merciful, and friendly to them, to protect them from harm as much as we can, and to do good even to our enemies.

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LORD'S DAY 41

Q.108. WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR US IN THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT?

A. God condemns all unchastity. We should therefore thoroughly detest it and, married or single, live decent and chaste lives.

Q.109. DOES GOD, IN THIS COMMANDMENT, FORBID ONLY SUCH SCANDALOUS SINS AS ADULTERY?

A. We are temples of the Holy Spirit, body and soul, and God wants both to be kept clean and holy. That is why he forbids everything

which incites unchastity, whether it be actions, looks, talk, thoughts, or desires.

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## LORD'S DAY 42

Q.110. WHAT DOES GOD FORBID IN THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT?

A. He forbids not only outright theft and robbery, punishable by law. But in God's sight theft also includes cheating and swindling our neighbor by schemes made to appear legitimate, such as: inaccurate measurements of weight, size, or volume; fraudulent merchandising; counterfeit money; excessive interest; or any other means forbidden by God. In addition he forbids all greed and pointless squandering of his gifts.

Q.111. WHAT DOES GOD REQUIRE OF YOU IN THIS COMMANDMENT?

A. That I do whatever I can for my neighbor's good, that I treat others as I would like them to treat me, and that I work faithfully so that I may share with those in need.

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## LORD'S DAY 43

Q.112. WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR YOU IN THE NINTH COMMANDMENT?

A. God's will is that I never give false testimony against anyone, twist no one's words, not gossip or slander, nor join in condemning anyone without a hearing or without a just cause. Rather, in court and everywhere else, I should avoid lying and deceit of every kind; these are devices the devil himself uses, and they would call down on me God's intense anger. I should love the truth, speak it candidly,

and openly acknowledge it. And I should do what I can to guard and advance my neighbor's good name.

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#### LORD'S DAY 44

Q.113. WHAT IS GOD'S WILL FOR YOU IN THE TENTH COMMANDMENT?

A. That not even the slightest thought or desire contrary to any one of God's commandments should ever arise in my heart. Rather, with all my heart I should always hate sin and take pleasure in whatever is right.

Q.114. BUT CAN THOSE CONVERTED TO GOD OBEY THESE COMMANDMENTS PERFECTLY?

A. No. In this life even the holiest have only a small beginning of this obedience. Nevertheless, with all seriousness of purpose, they do begin to live according to all, not only some, of God's commandments.

Q.115. NO ONE IN THIS LIFE CAN OBEY THE TEN COMMANDMENTS PERFECTLY: WHY THEN DOES GOD WANT THEM PREACHED SO POINTEDLY?

A. First, so that the longer we live the more we may come to know our sinfulness and the more eagerly look to Christ for forgiveness of sins and righteousness. Second, so that, while praying to God for the grace of the Holy Spirit, we may never stop striving to be renewed more and more after God's image, until after this life we reach our goal: perfection.

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#### PRAYER

## LORD'S DAY 45

### Q.116. WHY DO CHRISTIANS NEED TO PRAY?

A. Because prayer is the most important part of the thankfulness God requires of us. And also because God gives his grace and Holy Spirit only to those who pray continually and groan inwardly, asking God for these gifts and thanking him for them.

### Q.117. HOW DOES GOD WANT US TO PRAY SO THAT HE WILL LISTEN TO US?

A. First, we must pray from the heart to no other than the one true God, who has revealed himself in his Word, asking for everything he has commanded us to ask for. Second, we must acknowledge our need and misery, hiding nothing, and humble ourselves in his majestic presence. Third, we must rest on this unshakable foundation: even though we do not deserve it, God will surely listen to our prayer because of Christ our Lord. That is what he promised us in his Word.

### Q.118. WHAT DID GOD COMMAND US TO PRAY FOR?

A. Everything we need, spiritually and physically, as embraced in the prayer Christ our Lord himself taught us.

### Q.119. WHAT IS THIS PRAYER?

A. Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

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## LORD'S DAY 46

Q.120. WHY DID CHRIST COMMAND US TO CALL GOD "OUR FATHER"? A. At the very beginning of our prayer Christ wants to kindle in us what is basic to our prayer - the childlike awe and trust that God through Christ has become our Father. Our fathers do not refuse us the things of life; God our Father will even less refuse to give us what we ask in faith.

Q.121. WHY THE WORDS "IN HEAVEN"?

A. These words teach us not to think of God's heavenly majesty as something earthly, and to expect everything for body and soul from his almighty power.

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LORD'S DAY 47

Q.122. WHAT DOES THE FIRST REQUEST MEAN?

A. "Hallowed be your name" means, help us to really know you, to bless, worship, and praise you for all your works, and for all that shines forth from the: your almighty power, wisdom, kindness, justice, mercy, and truth. And it means, help us to direct all our living - what we think, say, and do - so that you name will never be blasphemed because of us but always honored and praised.

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LORD'S DAY 48

Q.123. WHAT DOES THE SECOND REQUEST MEAN?

A. "Your kingdom come" means, rule us by your Word and Spirit in such a way that more and more we submit to you. Keep your church strong, and add to it. Destroy the devil's work; destroy every force which revolts against you and every conspiracy against your Word. Do this until your kingdom is so complete and perfect that in it you are all in all.

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## LORD'S DAY 49

Q.124. WHAT DOES THE THIRD REQUEST MEAN?

A. "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" means, help us and all people to reject our own wills and to obey your will without any back talk. Your will alone is good. Help us one and all to carry out the work we are called to, as willingly and faithfully as the angels in heaven.

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## LORD'S DAY 50

Q.125. WHAT DOES THE FOURTH REQUEST MEAN? A. "Give us today our daily bread" means, do take care of all our physical needs so that we come to know that you are the only source of everything good, and that neither our work and worry nor your gifts can do us any good without your blessing. And so help us to give up our trust in creatures and to put trust in you alone.

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## LORD'S DAY 51

Q.126. WHAT DOES THE FIFTH REQUEST MEAN? A. "Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors" means, because of Christ's blood, do not hold against us, poor sinners that we are, any of the sins we do or the evil that constantly clings to us. Forgive us just as we are fully determined, as evidence of your grace in us, to forgive our neighbors.

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## LORD'S DAY 52



Q.127. WHAT DOES THE SIXTH REQUEST MEAN?

A. "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one" means, by ourselves we are too weak to hold our own even for a moment. And our sworn enemies - the devil, the world, and our own flesh - never stop attacking us. And so, Lord, uphold us and make us strong with the strength of your Holy Spirit, so that we may not go down to defeat in this spiritual struggle, but may firmly resist our enemies until we finally win the complete victory.

Q.128. WHAT DOES YOUR CONCLUSION TO THIS PRAYER

MEAN? A. "For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever" means, we have made all these requests of you because, as our all-powerful king, you not only want to, but are able to give us all that is good; and because your holy name, and not we ourselves, should receive all the praise, forever.

Q.129. WHAT DOES THAT LITTLE WORD "AMEN" EXPRESS?

A. "Amen" means, this is sure to be! It is even more sure that God listens to my prayer, than that I really desire what I pray for.

## **THE THIRTY-NINE ARTICLES OF RELIGION (CHURCH OF ENGLAND)**

*As established by the Bishops, the Clergy, and the Laity of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America, in Convention, on the twelfth day of September, in the Year of our Lord, 1801.*

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## I. Of Faith in the Holy Trinity.

There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body, parts, or passions; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the Maker, and Preserver of all things both visible and invisible. And in the unity of this Godhead there be three Persons, of one substance, power, and eternity; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

## II. Of the Word or Son of God, which was made very Man.

The Son, which is the Word of the Father, begotten from everlasting of the Father, the very and eternal God, and of one substance with the Father, took Man's nature in the womb of the blessed Virgin, of her substance: so that two whole and perfect Natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood, were joined together in one Person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God, and very Man; who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men.

## III. Of the going down of Christ into Hell.

As Christ died for us, and was buried; so also it is to be believed, that he went down into Hell.

## IV. Of the Resurrection of Christ.

Christ did truly rise again from death, and took again his body, with flesh, bones, and all things appertaining to the perfection of Man's nature; wherewith he ascended into Heaven, and there sitteth, until he return to judge all Men at the last day.

## V. Of the Holy Ghost.

The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory, with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God.

## VI. Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation.

Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of the Faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. In the name of the Holy Scripture we do understand those canonical Books of the Old and New Testament, of whose authority was never any doubt in the Church.

### Of the Names and Number of the Canonical Books

- Genesis,
- Exodus,
- Leviticus,
- Numbers,
- Deuteronomy,
- Joshua,
- Judges,
- Ruth,
- The First Book of Samuel,
- The Second Book of Samuel,
- The First Book of Kings,
- The Second Book of Kings,
- The First Book of Chronicles,
- The Second Book of Chronicles,
- The First Book of Esdras,
- The Second Book of Esdras,
- The Book of Esther,

- The Book of Job,
- The Psalms,
- The Proverbs,
- Ecclesiastes or Preacher,
- Cantica, or Songs of Solomon,
- Four Prophets the greater,
- Twelve Prophets the less.

And the other Books (as Hierome saith) the Church doth read for example of life and instruction of manners; but yet doth it not apply them to establish any doctrine; such are these following:

- The Third Book of Esdras,
- The Fourth Book of Esdras,
- The Book of Tobias,
- The Book of Judith,
- The rest of the Book of Esther,
- The Book of Wisdom,
- Jesus the Son of Sirach,
- Baruch the Prophet,
- The Song of the Three Children,
- The Story of Susanna,
- Of Bel and the Dragon,
- The Prayer of Manasses,
- The First Book of Maccabees,
- The Second Book of Maccabees.

All the Books of the New Testament, as they are commonly received, we do receive, and account them Canonical.

VII. Of the Old Testament.

The Old Testament is not contrary to the New: for both in the Old and New Testament everlasting life is offered to Mankind by Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and Man, being both God and Man. Wherefore they are not to be heard, which feign that the old Fathers did look only for transitory promises. Although the Law given from God by Moses, as touching Ceremonies and Rites, do not bind Christian men, nor the Civil precepts thereof ought of necessity to be received in any commonwealth; yet notwithstanding, no Christian man whatsoever is free from the obedience of the Commandments which are called Moral.

#### VIII. Of the Creeds.

The Nicene Creed, and that which is commonly called the Apostles' Creed, ought thoroughly to be received and believed: for they may be proved by most certain warrants of Holy Scripture.

*The original Article given Royal assent in 1571 and reaffirmed in 1662, was entitled, "Of the Three Creeds; and began as follows, "The Three Creeds, Nicene Creed, Athanasius's Creed, and that which is commonly called the Apostles' Creed..."*

#### IX. Of Original or Birth Sin.

Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam, (as the Pelagians do vainly talk;) but it is the fault and corruption of the Nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam; whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit; and therefore in every person born into this world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation. And this infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated; whereby the lust of the flesh, called in Greek, *\*fro/nhma sarko/s\**, (which some

do expound the wisdom, some sensuality, some the affection, some the desire, of the flesh), is not subject to the Law of God. And although there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized; yet the Apostle doth confess, that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin.

#### X. Of Free Will.

The condition of Man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and good works, to faith, and calling upon God. Wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will, and working with us, when we have that good will.

#### XI. Of the Justification of Man.

We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ by Faith, and not for our own works or deservings. Wherefore, that we are justified by Faith only, is a most wholesome Doctrine, and very full of comfort, as more largely expressed in the Homily of Justification.

#### XII. Of Good Works.

Albeit that Good Works, which are the fruits of Faith, and follow after Justification, cannot put away our sins, and endure the severity of God's judgment; yet are they pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively Faith; insomuch that by them a lively Faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by the fruit.

#### XIII. Of Works before Justification.

Works done before the grace of Christ, and the Inspiration of the Spirit, are not pleasant to God, forasmuch as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ; neither do they make men meet to receive grace, or (as the School-authors say) deserve grace of congruity: yea rather, for that they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not but they have the nature of sin.

#### XIV. Of Works of Supererogation.

Voluntary Works besides, over and above, God's Commandments, which they call Works of Supererogation, cannot be taught without arrogancy and impiety: for by them men do declare, that they not only render unto God as much as they are bound to, but that they do more for his sake, than of bounden duty is required: whereas Christ saith plainly, When ye have done all that are commanded to you, say, We are unprofitable servants.

#### XV. Of Christ alone without Sin.

Christ in the truth of our nature was made like unto us in all things, sin only except, from which he was clearly void, both in his flesh, and in his spirit. He came to be the Lamb without spot, who, by sacrifice of himself once made, should take away the sins of the world; and sin (as Saint John saith) was not in him. But all we the rest, although baptized, and born again in Christ, yet offend in many things; and if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

#### XVI. Of Sin after Baptism.

Not every deadly sin willingly committed after Baptism is sin against the Holy Ghost, and unpardonable. Wherefore the grant of repentance is not be denied to such as fall into sin after Baptism.

After we have received the Holy Ghost, we may depart from grace given, and fall into sin, and by the grace of God we may arise again, and amend our lives. And therefore they are to be condemned, which say, they can no more sin as long as they live here, or deny the place of forgiveness to such as truly repent.

## XVII. Of Predestination and Election

Predestination to Life is the everlasting purpose of God, whereby (before the foundations of the world were laid) he hath constantly decreed by his counsel secret to us, to deliver from curse and damnation those whom he hath chosen in Christ out of mankind, and to bring them by Christ to everlasting salvation, as vessels made to honour. Wherefore, they which be endued with so excellent a benefit of God, be called according to God's purpose by his Spirit working in due season: they through Grace obey the calling: they be justified freely: they be made sons of God by adoption: they be made like the image of his only- begotten Son Jesus Christ: they walk religiously in good works, and at length, by God's mercy, they attain to everlasting felicity.

As the godly consideration of Predestination, and our Election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, and unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh, and their earthly members, and drawing up their mind to high and heavenly things, as well because it doth greatly establish and confirm their faith of eternal Salvation to be enjoyed through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God: So, for curious and carnal persons, lacking the Spirit of Christ, to have continually before their eyes the sentence of God's Predestination, is a most dangerous downfall, whereby the Devil doth thrust them either into desperation, or into



wretchedness of most unclean living, no less perilous than desperation.

Furthermore, we must receive God's promises in such wise, as they be generally set forth to us in Holy Scripture: and, in our doings, that Will of God is to be followed, which we have expressly declared unto us in the word of God.

#### XVIII. Of obtaining eternal Salvation only by the Name of Christ

They also are to be had accursed that presume to say, That every man shall be saved by the Law or Sect which he profeseth, so that he be diligent to frame his life according to that Law, and the light of Nature. For Holy Scripture doth set out unto us only the Name of Jesus Christ, whereby men must be saved.

#### XIX. Of the Church.

The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.

As the Church of Jerusalem, Alexandria, and Antioch, have erred; so also the Church of Rome hath erred, not only in their living and manner of Ceremonies, but also in matters of Faith.

#### XX. Of the Authority of the Church.

The Church hath power to decree Rites or Ceremonies, and authority in Controversies of Faith: and yet it is not lawful for the Church to ordain anything that is contrary to God's Word written, neither may it so expound one place of Scripture, that it be repugnant to another. Wherefore, although the Church be a witness and a keeper of Holy

Writ, yet, as it ought not to decree any thing against the same, so besides the same ought not to enforce any thing to be believed for necessity of Salvation.

#### XXI. Of the Authority of General Councils.

[The Twenty-first of the former Articles is omitted; because it is partly of a local and civil nature, and is provided for, as to the remaining parts of it, in other Articles.]

*The original 1571, 1662 text of this Article, omitted in the version of 1801, reads as follows: "General Councils may not be gathered together without the commandment and will of Princes. And when they be gathered together, (forasmuch as they be an assembly of men, whereof all be not governed with the Spirit and Word of God,) they may err, and sometimes have erred, even in things pertaining unto God. Wherefore things ordained by them as necessary to salvation have neither strength nor authority, unless it may be declared that they be taken out of holy Scripture."*

#### XXII. Of Purgatory.

The Romish Doctrine concerning Purgatory, Pardons, Worshipping and Adoration, as well of Images as of Relics, and also Invocation of Saints, is a fond thing, vainly invented, and grounded upon no warranty of Scripture, but rather repugnant to the Word of God.

#### XXIII. Of Ministering in the Congregation

It is not lawful for any man to take upon him the office of public preaching, or ministering the Sacraments in the Congregation, before he be lawfully called, and sent to execute the same. And those we ought to judge lawfully called and sent, which be chosen and

called to this work by men who have public authority given unto them in the Congregation, to call and send Ministers into the Lord's vineyard.

XXIV. Of Speaking in the Congregation in such a Tongue as the people understandeth.

It is a thing plainly repugnant to the Word of God, and the custom of the Primitive Church, to have public Prayer in the Church, or to minister the Sacraments, in a tongue not understood of the people.

XXV. Of the Sacraments.

Sacraments ordained of Christ be not only badges or tokens of Christian men's profession, but rather they be certain sure witnesses, and effectual signs of grace, and God's good will towards us, by the which he doth work invisibly in us, and doth not only quicken, but also strengthen and confirm our Faith in him.

There are two Sacraments ordained of Christ our Lord in the Gospel, that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord.

Those five commonly called Sacraments, that is to say, Confirmation, Penance, Orders, Matrimony, and Extreme Unction, are not to be counted for Sacraments of the Gospel, being such as have grown partly of the corrupt following of the Apostles, partly are states of life allowed in the Scriptures; but yet have not like nature of Sacraments with Baptism, and the Lord's Supper, for that they have not any visible sign or ceremony ordained of God.

The Sacraments are not ordained of Christ to be gazed upon, or to be carried about, but that we should duly use them. And in such only as worthily receive the same, they have a wholesome effect or

operation:but they that receive them unworthily, purchase to themselves damnation, as Saint Paul saith.

XXVI. Of the Unworthiness of the Ministers, which hinders not the effect of the Sacraments.

Although in the visible Church the evil be ever mingled with the good, and sometimes the evil have chief authority in the Ministration of the Word and Sacraments, yet forasmuch as they do not the same in their own name, but in Christ's, and do minister by his commission and authority, we may use their Ministry, both in hearing the Word of God, and in receiving the Sacraments. Neither is the effect of Christ's ordinance taken away by their wickedness, nor the grace of God's gifts diminished from such as by faith, and rightly, do receive the Sacraments ministered unto them; which be effectual, because of Christ's institution and promise, although they be ministered by evil men.

Nevertheless, it appertaineth to the discipline of the Church, that inquiry be made of evil Ministers, and that they be accused by those that have knowledge of their offences; and finally, being found guilty, by just judgment be deposed.

XVII. Of Baptism

Baptism is not only a sign of profession, and mark of difference, whereby Christian men are discerned from others that be not christened, but it is also a sign of Regeneration or New-Birth, whereby, as by an instrument, they that receive Baptism rightly are grafted into the Church; the promises of the forgiveness of sin, and of our adoption to be the sons of God by the Holy Ghost, are visibly signed and sealed; Faith is confirmed, and Grace increased by virtue of prayer unto God.

The Baptism of young Children is in any wise to be retained in the Church, as most agreeable with the institution of Christ.

#### XVIII. Of the Lord's Supper.

The Supper of the Lord is not only a sign of the love that Christians ought to have among themselves one to another; but rather it is a Sacrament of our Redemption by Christ's death: insomuch that to such as rightly, worthily, and with faith, receive the same, the Bread which we break is a partaking of the Body of Christ; and likewise the Cup of Blessing is a partaking of the Blood of Christ.

Transubstantiation (or the change of the substance of Bread and Wine) in the Supper of the Lord, cannot be proved by Holy Writ; but is repugnant to the plain words of Scripture, overthroweth the nature of a Sacrament, and hath given occasion to many superstitions.

The Body of Christ is given, taken, and eaten, in the Supper, only after an heavenly and spiritual manner. And the mean whereby the Body of Christ is received and eaten in the Supper, is Faith.

The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper was not by Christ's ordinance reserved, carried about, lifted up, or worshipped.

#### XXIX. Of the Wicked, which eat not the Body of Christ in the use of the Lord's Supper.

The Wicked, and such as be void of a lively faith, although they do carnally and visibly press with their teeth (as Saint Augustine saith) the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ; yet in no wise are they partakers of Christ: but rather, to their condemnation, do eat and drink the sign or Sacrament of so great a thing.

#### XXX. Of both Kinds.

The Cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the Lay-people: for both the parts of the Lord's Sacrament, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be ministered to all Christian men alike.

XXXI. Of the one Oblation of Christ finished upon the Cross.

The Offering of Christ once made in that perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction, for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin, but that alone. Wherefore the sacrifices of Masses, in the which it was commonly said, that the Priest did offer Christ for the quick and the dead, to have remission of pain or guilt, were blasphemous fables, and dangerous deceits.

XXXII. Of the Marriage of Priests.

Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, are not commanded by God's Law, either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage: therefore it is lawful for them, as for all other Christian men, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve better to godliness.

XXXIII. Of excommunicate Persons, how they are to be avoided.

That person which by open denunciation of the Church is rightly cut off from the unity of the Church, and excommunicated, ought to be taken of the whole multitude of the faithful, as an Heathen and Publican, until he be openly reconciled by penance, and received into the Church by a Judge that hath the authority thereunto.

XXXIV. Of the Traditions of the Church.

It is not necessary that the Traditions and Ceremonies be in all places one, or utterly like; for at all times they have been divers, and

may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's Word. Whosoever, through his private judgment, willingly and purposely, doth openly break the Traditions and Ceremonies of the Church, which be not repugnant to the Word of God, and be ordained and approved by common authority, ought to be rebuked openly, (that others may fear to do the like,) as he that offendeth against the common order of the Church, and hurteth the authority of the Magistrate, and woundeth the consciences of the weak brethren.

Every particular or national Church hath authority to ordain, change, and abolish, Ceremonies or Rites of the Church ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying.

#### XXXV. Of the Homilies.

The Second Book of Homilies, the several titles whereof we have joined under this Article, doth contain a godly and wholesome Doctrine, and necessary for these times, as doth the former Book of Homilies, which were set forth in the time of Edward the Sixth; and therefore we judge them to be read in Churches by the Ministers, diligently and distinctly, that they may be understood of the people.

#### Of the Names of the Homilies

1. Of the right Use of the Church.
2. Against Peril of Idolatry.
3. Of repairing and keeping clean of Churches.
4. Of good Works: first of Fasting.
5. Against Gluttony and Drunkenness.
6. Against Excess of Apparel.
7. Of Prayer.

8. Of the Place and Time of Prayer.
9. That Common Prayers and Sacraments ought to be ministered in a known tongue.
10. Of the reverend Estimation of God's Word.
11. Of Alms-doing.
12. Of the Nativity of Christ.
13. Of the Passion of Christ.
14. Of the Resurrection of Christ.
15. Of the worthy receiving of the Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Christ.
16. Of the Gifts of the Holy Ghost.
17. For the Rogation-days
18. Of the State of Matrimony.
19. Of Repentance.
20. Against Idleness.
21. Against Rebellion.

[This Article is received in this Church, so far as it declares the Book of Homilies to be an explication of Christian doctrine, and instructive in piety and morals. But all references to the constitution and laws of England are considered as inapplicable to the circumstances of this Church; which also suspends the order for the reading of said Homilies in churches, until a revision of them may be conveniently made, for the clearing of them, as well from obsolete words and phrases, as from the local references.]

#### XXXVI. Of Consecration of Bishops and Ministers.

The Book of Consecration of Bishops, and Ordering of Priests and Deacons, as set forth by the General Convention of this Church in 1792, doth contain all things necessary to such Consecration and Ordering; neither hath it any thing that, of itself, is superstitious and



ungodly. And, therefore, whosoever are consecrated or ordered according to said Form, we decree all such to be rightly, orderly, and lawfully consecrated and ordered.

*The original 1571, 1662 text of this Article reads as follows: "The Book of Consecration of Archbishops and Bishops, and Ordering of Priests and Deacons, lately set forth in the time of Edward the Sixth, and confirmed at the same time by authority of Parliament, doth contain all things necessary to such Consecration and Ordering; neither hath it any thing, that of itself is superstitious and ungodly. And therefore whosoever are consecrated or ordered according to the Rites of that Book, since the second year of the forenamed King Edward unto this time, or hereafter shall be consecrated or ordered according to the same Rites; we decree all such to be rightly, orderly, and lawfully consecrated and ordered."*

#### XXXVII. Of the Power of the Civil Magistrates.

The Power of the Civil Magistrate extendeth to all men, as well Clergy as Laity, in all things temporal; but hath no authority in things purely spiritual. And we hold it to be the duty of all men who are professors of the Gospel, to pay respectful obedience to the Civil Authority, regularly and legitimately constituted.

*The original 1571, 1662 text of this Article reads as follows: "The King's Majesty hath the chief power in this Realm of England, and other his Dominions, unto whom the chief Government of all Estates of this Realm, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Civil, in all causes doth appertain, and is not, nor ought to be, subject to any foreign Jurisdiction. Where we attribute to the King's Majesty the chief government, by which Titles we understand the minds of some slanderous folks to be offended; we give not our Princes the ministering either of God's Word, or of the Sacraments, the which*

*thing the Injunctions also lately set forth by Elizabeth our Queen do most plainly testify; but that only prerogative, which we see to have been given always to all godly Princes in holy Scriptures by God himself; that is, that they should rule all estates and degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be Ecclesiastical or Temporal, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil-doers.*

*"The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this Realm of England.*

*"The Laws of the Realm may punish Christian men with death, for heinous and grievous offenses.*

*"It is lawful for Christian men, at the commandment of the Magistrate, to wear weapons, and serve in the wars."*

XXXVIII. Of Christian Men's Goods, which are not common.

The Riches and Goods of Christians are not common, as touching the right, title, and possession of the same; as certain Anabaptists do falsely boast. Notwithstanding, every man ought, of such things as he possesseth, liberally to give alms to the poor, according to his ability.

XXXIX. Of a Christian Man's Oath.

As we confess that vain and rash Swearing is forbidden Christian men by our Lord Jesus Christ, and James his Apostle, so we judge, that Christian Religion doth not prohibit, but that a man may swear when the Magistrate requireth, in a cause of faith and charity, so it be done according to the Prophet's teaching in justice, judgment, and truth.

# **WESTMINSTER CONFSSION OF FAITH (1647)**

This confession was produced by the Westminster Assembly of Divines, which had been created by the English Parliament in 1643 to settle various theological and ecclesiastical issues in the British Isles. It was presented to Parliament in 1646 and with scripture proofs in 1647. It was essentially an English Puritan document that didn't take hold in England but was embraced enthusiastically in Presbyterian Scotland and so later the English-speaking Presbyterian world as well. It covers the spectrum of theological topics and is similar to the Belgic Confession.

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## **CHAPTER I - OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURE**

I. Although the light of nature, and the works of creation and providence, do so far manifest the goodness, wisdom, and power of God, as to leave men inexcusable; yet are they not sufficient to give that knowledge of God, and of his will, which is necessary unto salvation; therefore it pleased the Lord, at sundry times, and in divers manners, to reveal himself, and to declare that his will unto his Church; and afterwards for the better preserving and propagating of the truth, and for the more sure establishment and comfort of the Church against the corruption of the flesh, and the malice of Satan and of the world, to commit the same wholly unto writing; which maketh the Holy Scripture to be most necessary those former ways of God's revealing his will unto his people being now ceased.

II. Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written,

are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testaments, which are these:

#### Of the Old Testament

Genesis 1 Kings Ecclesiastes Obadiah Exodus 2 Kings The Song of Songs Jonah Leviticus 1 Chronicles Isaiah Micah Numbers 2 Chronicles Jeremiah Nahum Deuteronomy Ezra Lamentations Habakkuk Joshua Nehemiah Ezekiel Zephaniah Judges Esther Daniel Haggai Ruth Job Hosea Malachi 1 Samuel Psalms Joel 2 Samuel Proverbs Amos

#### Of the New Testament

Matthew Ephesians Hebrews Mark Philippians James Luke Colossians 1 Peter John 1 Thessalonians 2 Peter Acts 2 Thessalonians 1 John Romans 1 Timothy 2 John 1 Corinthians 2 Timothy 3 John 2 Corinthians Titus Jude Galatians Philemon Revelation

All which are given by inspiration of God, to be the rule of faith and life.

III. The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of the Scripture; and therefore are of no authority in the Church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or made use of, than other human writings.

IV. The authority of the Holy Scripture, for which it ought to be believed, and obeyed, dependeth not upon the testimony of any man or church; but wholly upon God (who is truth itself), the author thereof: and therefore it is to be received, because it is the Word of God.

V. We may be moved and induced by the testimony of the Church to

an high and reverent esteem of the Holy Scripture. And the heavenliness of the matter, the efficacy of the doctrine, the majesty of the style, the consent of all the parts, the scope of the whole (which is to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of man's salvation, the many other incomparable excellencies, and the entire perfection thereof, are arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God: yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth and divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit bearing witness by and with the Word in our hearts.

VI. The whole counsel of God, concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith, and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture; unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men. Nevertheless we acknowledge the inward illumination of the Spirit of God to be necessary for the saving understanding of such things as are revealed in the Word; and that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.

VII. All things in Scripture are not alike plain in themselves, nor alike clear unto all; yet those things which are necessary to be known, believed, and observed, for salvation, are so clearly propounded and opened in some place of Scripture or other, that not only the learned, but the unlearned, in a due use of the ordinary means, may attain unto a sufficient understanding of them.

VIII. The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language

of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which at the time of the writing of it was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and by his singular care and providence kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic; so as in all controversies of religion that Church is finally to appeal unto them. But because these original tongues are not known to all the people of God who have right unto, and interest in, the Scriptures, and are commanded, in the fear of God, to read and search them, therefore they are to be translated into the language of every people unto which they come, that the Word of God dwelling plentifully in all, they may worship him in an acceptable manner, and, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, may have hope.

IX. The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture, is the Scripture itself; and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it may be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly.

X. The Supreme Judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture.

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## CHAPTER II - OF GOD AND OF THE HOLY TRINITY

I. There is but one only living and true God, who is infinite in being and perfection, a most pure spirit, invisible, without body, parts, or passions, immutable, immense, eternal, incomprehensible, almighty; most wise, most holy, most free, most absolute, working all things according to the counsel of his own immutable and most righteous

will, for his own glory; most loving, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness and truth, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin; the rewarder of them that diligently seek him; and withal most just and terrible in his judgments; hating all sin, and who will by no means clear the guilty.

II. God hath all life, glory, goodness, blessedness, in and of himself; and is alone in and unto himself all-sufficient, not standing in need of any creatures which he hath made, nor deriving any glory from them, but only manifesting his own glory in, by, unto, and upon them: he is the alone fountain of all being, of whom, through whom, and to whom, are all things; and hath most sovereign dominion over them, to do by them, for them, or upon them, whatsoever himself pleaseth. In his sight all things are open and manifest; his knowledge is infinite, infallible, and independent upon the creature; so as nothing is to him contingent or uncertain. He is most holy in all his counsels, in all his works, and in all his commands. To him is due from angels and men, and every other creature, whatsoever worship, service, or obedience he is pleased to require of them.

III. In the unity of Godhead there be three Persons of one substance, power, and eternity; God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. The Father is of none, neither begotten nor proceeding; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father; the Holy Ghost eternally proceeding from the Father and the Son.

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## CHAPTER III - OF GOD'S ETERNAL DECREES

I. God from all eternity did by the most wise and holy counsel of his own will, freely and unchangeably ordain whatsoever comes to pass; yet so as thereby neither is God the author of sin; nor is violence

offered to the will of the creatures, nor is the liberty or contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established.

II. Although God knows whatsoever may or can come to pass, upon all supposed conditions; yet hath he not decreed anything because he foresaw it as future, or as that which would come to pass, upon such conditions.

III. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of his glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others fore-ordained to everlasting death.

IV. These angels and men, thus predestinated and fore-ordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished.

V. Those of mankind that are predestinated unto life, God, before the foundation of the world was laid, according to his eternal and immutable purpose, and the secret counsel and good pleasure of his will, hath chosen in Christ, unto everlasting glory, out of his free grace and love alone, without any foresight of faith or good works, or perseverance in either of them, or any other thing in the creature, as conditions, or causes moving him thereunto; and all to the praise of his glorious grace.

VI. As God hath appointed the elect unto glory, so hath he, by the eternal and most free purpose of his will, fore-ordained all the means thereunto. Wherefore they who are elected being fallen in Adam are redeemed by Christ, are effectually called unto faith in Christ by his Spirit working in due season; are justified, adopted, sanctified, and kept by his power through faith unto salvation. Neither are nay other redeemed by Christ, effectually called, justified, adopted, sanctified,



and saved, but the elect only.

VII. The rest of mankind, God was pleased, according to the unsearchable counsel of his own will, whereby he extendeth or withholdeth mercy as he pleaseth, for the glory of his sovereign power over his creatures, to pass by, and to ordain them to dishonour and wrath for their sin, to the praise of his glorious justice.

VIII. The doctrine of this high mystery of predestination is to be handled with special prudence and care, that men attending the will of God revealed in his Word, and yielding obedience thereunto, may, from the certainty of their effectual vocation, be assured of their eternal election. So shall this doctrine afford matter of praise, reverence, and admiration of God; and of humility, diligence, and abundant consolation to all that sincerely obey the gospel.

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#### CHAPTER IV - OF CREATION

I. It pleased God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the manifestation of the glory of his eternal power, wisdom, and goodness, in the beginning, to create or make of nothing the world, and all things therein, whether visible or invisible, in the space of six days, and all very good.

II. After God had made all other creatures, he created man, male and female, with reasonable and immortal souls, endued with knowledge, righteousness, and true holiness after his own image, having the law of God written in their hearts, and power to fulfill it; and yet under a possibility of transgressing, being left to the liberty of their own will, which was subject unto change. Besides this law written in their

hearts, they received a command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; which while they kept they were happy in their communion with God, and had dominion over the creatures.

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## CHAPTER V - OF PROVIDENCE

I. God, the great Creator of all things, doth uphold, direct, dispose, and govern all creatures, actions, and things, from the greatest even to the least, by his most wise and holy providence, according to his infallible foreknowledge, and the free and immutable counsel of his own will, to the praise of the glory of his wisdom, power, justice, goodness, and mercy.

II. Although in relation to the foreknowledge and decree of God, the first cause, all things come to pass immutably and infallibly, yet, by the same providence, he ordereth them to fall out according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently.

III. God, in his ordinary providence, maketh use of means, yet is free to work without, above, and against them, at his pleasure.

IV. The almighty power, unsearchable wisdom, and infinite goodness of God, so far manifest themselves in his providence, that it extendeth itself even to the first Fall, and all other sins of angels and men, and that not by a bare permission, but such as hath joined with it a most wise and powerful bounding, and otherwise ordering and governing of them, in a manifold dispensation, to his own holy ends; yet so, as the sinfulness thereof proceedeth only from the creature, and not from God; who being most holy and righteous, neither is nor can be the author or approver of sin.

V. The most wise, righteous, and gracious God, doth often-times leave for a season his own children to manifold temptations and the corruption of their own hearts, to chastise them for their former sins, or to discover unto them the hidden strength of corruption and deceitfulness of their hearts, that they be humbled; and to raise them to a more close and constant dependence for their support upon himself, and to make them more watchful against all future occasions of sin, and for sundry other just and holy ends.

VI. As for those wicked and ungodly men who God, as a righteous judge, for former sins, doth blind and harden; from them he not only withholdeth his grace, whereby they might have been enlightened in their understandings, and wrought upon in their hearts; but sometimes also withdraweth the gifts which they had; and exposeth them to such objects as their corruption makes occasion of sin; and withal, giveth them over to their own lusts, the temptations of the world, and the power of Satan; whereby it cometh to pass that they harden themselves, even under those means which God useth for the softening of other.

VII. As the providence of God doth, in general, reach to all creatures; so, after a most special manner, it taketh care of his Church, and disposeth all things to the good thereof.

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## CHAPTER VI - OF THE FALL OF MAN, OF SIN, AND OF THE PUNISHMENT THEREOF

I. Our first parents, being seduced by the subtlety and temptation of Satan, sinned in eating the forbidden fruit. This their sin God was pleased, according to his wise and holy counsel, to permit, having purposed to order it to his own glory.

II. By this sin they fell from their original righteousness and communion with God, and so became dead in sin, and wholly defiled in all the faculties and parts of soul and body.

III. They being the root of all mankind, the guilt of this sin was imputed, and the same death in sin and corrupted nature conveyed to all their posterity, descending from them by ordinary generation.

IV. From this original corruption, whereby we are utterly indisposed, disabled, and made opposite to all good, and wholly inclined to all evil, do proceed all actual transgressions.

V. This corruption of nature, during this life, doth remain in those that are regenerated: and although it be through Christ pardoned and mortified, yet both itself, and all the motions thereof, are truly and properly sin.

VI. Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal.

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## CHAPTER VII - OF GOD'S COVENANT WITH MAN

I. The distance between God and the creature is so great, that although reasonable creatures do owe obedience unto him as their Creator, yet they could never have any fruition of him as their blessedness and reward, but by some voluntary condescension of God's part, which he hath been pleased to express by way of

covenant.

II. The first covenant made with man was a covenant of works, wherein life was promised to Adam; and in him to his posterity, upon condition of perfect and personal obedience.

III. Man, by his fall, having made himself incapable of life by that covenant, the Lord was pleased to make a second, commonly called the covenant of grace; wherein he freely offereth unto sinners life and salvation by Jesus Christ; requiring of them faith in him, that they may be saved, and promising to give unto all those that are ordained unto eternal life his Holy Spirit, to make the willing, and able to believe.

IV. This covenant of grace is frequently set forth in Scripture by the name of a testament, in reference to the death of Jesus Christ the Testator, and to the everlasting inheritance, with all things belonging to it, therein bequeathed.

V. This covenant was differently administered in the time of the law, and in the time of the gospel: under the law, it was administered by promises, prophecies, sacrifices, circumcision, the paschal lamb, and other types and ordinances delivered to the people of the Jews, all foreshadowing Christ to come; which were, for that time, sufficient and efficacious, through the operation of the Spirit, to instruct and build up the elect in faith in the promised Messiah, by whom they had full remission of sins, and eternal salvation; and is called the old testament.

VI. Under the gospel, when Christ, the substance, was exhibited, the ordinances in which this covenant is dispensed are the preaching of the Word, and the administration of the sacraments of Baptism and

the Lord's Supper: which, though fewer in number, and administered with more simplicity, and less outward glory, yet, in them, it is held forth in more fulness, evidence and spiritual efficacy, to all nations, both Jews and Gentiles; and is called the new testament. There are not therefore two covenants of grace, differing in substance, but one and the same, under various dispensations.

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## CHAPTER VIII - OF CHRIST THE MEDIATOR

I. It pleased God, in his eternal purpose, to choose and ordain the Lord Jesus, his only begotten Son, to be the Mediator between God and man, the Prophet, Priest, and King, the Head and Savior of his church, the Heir of all things, and Judge of the world: unto whom he did from all eternity give a people, to be his seed, and to be by him in time redeemed, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified.

II. The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father, did, when the fulness of time was come, take upon him man's nature, with all the essential properties, and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin; being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance. So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion. Which person is very God, and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man.

III. The Lord Jesus, in his human nature thus united to the divine, was sanctified, and anointed with the Holy Spirit, above measure, having in him all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge; in whom it pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell; to the end that,

being holy, harmless, undefiled, and full of grace and truth, he might be thoroughly furnished to execute the office of a mediator, and surety. Which office he took not unto himself, but was thereto called by his Father, who put all power and judgment into his hand, and gave him commandment to execute the same.

IV. This office the Lord Jesus did most willingly undertake; which that he might discharge, he was made under the law, and did perfectly fulfil it; endured most grievous torments immediately in his soul, and most painful sufferings in his body; was crucified, and died, was buried, and remained under the power of death, yet saw no corruption. On the third day he arose from the dead, with the same body in which he suffered, with which also he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth at the right hand of his Father, making intercession, and shall return, to judge men and angels, at the end of the world.

V. The Lord Jesus, by his perfect obedience, and sacrifice of himself which he, through the eternal Spirit, once offered up unto God, hath fully satisfied the justice of his Father; and purchased, not only reconciliation, but an everlasting inheritance in the kingdom of heaven, for all those whom the Father hath given unto him.

VI. Although the work of redemption was not actually wrought by Christ till after his incarnation, yet the virtue, efficacy, and benefits thereof were communicated unto the elect, in all ages successively from the beginning of the world, in and by those promises, types, and sacrifices, wherein he was revealed, and signified to be the seed of the woman which should bruise the serpent's head; and the Lamb slain from the beginning of the world; being yesterday and today the same, and forever.

VII. Christ, in the work of mediation, acts according to both natures,

by each nature doing that which is proper to itself; yet, by reason of the unity of the person, that which is proper to one nature is sometimes in Scripture attributed to the person denominated by the other nature.

VIII. To all those for whom Christ hath purchased redemption, he doth certainly and effectually apply and communicate the same; making intercession for them, and revealing unto them, in and by the Word, the mysteries of salvation; effectually persuading them by his Spirit to believe and obey, and governing their hearts by his Word and Spirit; overcoming all their enemies by his almighty power and wisdom, in such manner, and ways, as are most consonant to his wonderful and unsearchable dispensation.

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## CHAPTER IX - OF FREE WILL

I. God hath endued the will of man with that natural liberty, that it is neither forced, nor, by any absolute necessity of nature, determined to good, or evil.

II. Man, in his state of innocency, had freedom, and power to will and to do that which was good and well pleasing to God; but yet, mutably, so that he might fall from it.

III. Man, by his fall into a state of sin, hath wholly lost all ability of will to any spiritual good accompanying salvation: so as, natural man, being altogether averse from that good, and dead in sin, is not able, by his own strength, to convert himself, or to prepare himself thereunto.

IV. When God converts a sinner, and translates him into the state of



grace, he freeth him from his natural bondage under sin; and, by his grace alone, enables him freely to will and to do that which is spiritually good; yet so, as that by reason of his remaining corruption, he doth not perfectly, nor only, will that which is good, but doth also will that which is evil

V. The will of man is made perfectly and immutably free to good alone, in the state of glory only.

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## CHAPTER X - OF EFFECTUAL CALLING

I. All those whom God hath predestinated unto life, and those only, he is pleased, in his appointed and accepted time, effectually to call, by his Word and Spirit, out of that state of sin and death, in which they are by nature, to grace and salvation, by Jesus Christ; enlightening their minds of spiritually and savingly to understand the things of God, taking away their heart of stone, and giving unto them a heart of flesh; renewing their wills, and, by his almighty power, determining them to that which is good, and effectually drawing them to Jesus Christ: yet so, as they come most freely, being made willing by his grace.

II. This effectual call of God's free and special grace alone, not from anything at all foreseen in man, who is altogether passive therein, until, being quickened and renewed by the Holy Spirit, he is thereby enabled to answer this call, and to embrace the grace offered and conveyed in it.

III. Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated, and saved by Christ, through the Spirit, who worketh when, and where, and how he pleaseth: so also are all other elect persons who are incapable of

being outwardly called by the ministry of the Word.

IV. Others, not elected, although they may be called by the ministry of the Word, and may have some common operations of the Spirit, yet they never truly come unto Christ, and therefore cannot be saved: much less can men, not professing the Christian religion, be saved in any other way whatsoever, be they never so diligent to frame their lives according to the light of nature, and the laws of that religion they do profess. And, to assert and maintain that they may, is very pernicious, and to be detested.

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## CHAPTER XI - OF JUSTIFICATION

I. Those whom God effectually calleth, he also freely justifieth: not by infusing righteousness into them, but by pardoning their sins, and by accounting and accepting their persons as righteous; not for anything wrought in them, or done by them, but for Christ sake alone; nor by imputing faith itself, the act of believing, or any other evangelical obedience to them, as their righteousness; but by imputing the obedience and satisfaction of Christ unto them, they receiving and resting on him and his righteousness, by faith; which faith they have not of themselves, it is the gift of God.

II. Faith, thus receiving and resting on Christ and his righteousness, is the alone instrument of justification: yet is it not alone in the person justified, but is ever accompanied with all other saving graces, and is no dead faith, but worketh by love.

III. Christ, by his obedience and death, did fully discharge the debt of all those that are thus justified, and did make a proper, real, and full satisfaction to his Father's justice in their behalf. Yet, inasmuch as he

was given by the Father for them; and his obedience and satisfaction accepted in their stead; and both, freely, not for anything in them; their justification is only of free grace; that both the exact justice and rich grace of God might be glorified in the justification of sinners.

IV. God did, from all eternity, decree to justify all the elect, and Christ did, in the fulness of time, die for their sins, and rise again for their justification: nevertheless, they are not justified, until the Holy Spirit doth, in due time, actually apply Christ unto them.

V. God doth continue to forgive the sins of those that are justified; and, although they can never fall from the state of justification, yet they may, by their sins, fall under God's fatherly displeasure, and not have the light of his countenance restored unto them, until they humble themselves, confess their sins, beg pardon, and renew their faith and repentance.

VI. The justification of believers under the old testament was, in all these respects, one and the same with the justification of believers under the new testament.

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## CHAPTER XII - OF ADOPTION

I. All those that are justified, God vouchsafeth, in and for his only Son Jesus Christ, to make partakers of the grace of adoption, by which they are taken into the number, and enjoy the liberties and privileges of the children of God, have his name put upon them, receive the spirit of adoption, have access to the throne of grace with boldness, are enabled to cry, Abba, Father, are pitied, protected, provided for, and chastened by him, as by a Father: yet never cast off,

but sealed to the day of redemption; and inherit the promises, as heirs of everlasting salvation.

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## CHAPTER XIII - OF SANCTIFICATION

I. They, who are once effectually called, and regenerated, having a new heart, and a new spirit created in them, are further sanctified, really and personally, through the virtue of Christ's death and resurrection, by his Word and spirit dwelling in them: the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, and the sever lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified; and they more and more quickened and strengthened in all saving graces, to the practice of true holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.

II. This sanctification is throughout, in the whole man; yet imperfect in this life, there abiding still some remnants of corruption in every part; whence ariseth a continual and irreconcilable war, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh.

III. In which war, although the remaining corruption, for a time, may much prevail; yet, through the continual supply of strength from the sanctifying Spirit of Christ, the regenerate part doth overcome; and so, the saints grow in grace, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.

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## CHAPTER XIV - OF SAVING FAITH

I. The grace of faith, whereby the elect are enabled to believe to the saving of their souls, is the work of the Spirit of Christ in their hearts, and is ordinarily wrought by the ministry of the Word, by which also, and by the administration of the sacraments, and prayer, it is increased and strengthened.

II. By this faith, a Christian believeth to be true whatsoever is revealed in the Word, for the authority of God himself speaking therein; and acteth differently upon that which each particular passage thereof containeth; yielding obedience to the commands, trembling at the threatenings, and embracing the promises of God for this life, and that which is to come. But the principal acts of saving faith are accepting, receiving, and resting upon Christ alone for justification, sanctification, and eternal life, by virture of the covenant of grace.

III. This faith is different in degrees, weak or strong; may be often and many ways assailed, and weakened, but gets the victory: growing up in many to the attainment of a full assurance, through Christ, who is both the author and finisher of our faith.

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## CHAPTER XV - OF REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE

I. Repentance unto life is an evangelical grace, the doctrine whereof is to be preached by every minister of the gospel, as well as that of faith in Christ.

II. by it, a sinner, out of the sight and sense not only of the danger, but also of the filthiness and odiousness of his sins, as contrary to the holy nature, and righteous law of God; and upon the apprehension of his mercy in Christ to such as are penitent, so grieves for, and hates his sins, as to turn from them all unto God, purposing and endeavoring to walk with him in all the ways of his commandments.

III. Although repentance be not to be resting in, as any satisfaction for sin, or any cause of the pardon thereof, which is the act of God's

free grace in Christ; yet it is of such necessity to all sinners, that none may expect pardon without it.

IV. As there is no sin so small, but it deserves damnation; so there is no sin so great, that it can bring damnation upon those who truly repent.

V. Men ought not to content themselves with a general repentance, but it is every man's duty to endeavor to repent of his particular sins, particularly.

VI. As every man is bound to make private confession of his sins to God, praying for the pardon thereof; upon which, and the forsaking of them, he shall find mercy; so, he that scandalizeth his brother, or the church of Christ, ought to be willing, by a private or public confession, and sorrow for his sin, to declare his repentance to those that are offended, who are thereupon to be reconciled to him, and in love to receive him.

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## CHAPTER XVI - OF GOOD WORKS

I. Good works are only such as God hath commanded in his holy Word, and not such as, without the warrant thereof, are devised by men, out of blind zeal, or upon any pretense of good intention.

II. These good works, done in obedience to God's commandments, are the fruits and evidences of a true and lively faith: and by them believers manifest their thankfulness, strengthen their assurance, edify their brethren, adorn the profession of the gospel, stop the mouths of the adversaries, and glorify God, whose workmanship they are, created in Christ Jesus thereunto, that, having their fruit unto

holiness, they may have the end, eternal life.

III. Their ability to do good works is not at all of themselves, but wholly from the Spirit of Christ. And that they may be enabled thereunto, beside the graces they have already received, there is required an actual influence of the same Holy Spirit, to work in them to will, and to do, of his good pleasure: yet are they not hereupon to grow negligent, as if they were not bound to perform any duty unless upon a special motion of the Spirit; but they ought to be diligent in stirring up the grace of God that is in them.

IV. They who, in their obedience, attain to the greatest height which is possible in this life, are so far from being able to supererogate, and to do more than God requires, as that they fall short of much which in duty they are bound to do.

V. We cannot by our best works merit pardon of sin, or eternal life at the hand of God, by reason of the great disproportion that is between them and the glory to come; and the infinite distance that is between us and God, whom, by them, we can neither profit, nor satisfy for the debt of our former sins, but when we have done all we can, we have done but our duty, and are unprofitable servants: and because, as they are good, they proceed from his Spirit; and as they are wrought by us, they are defiled, and mixed with so much weakness and imperfection, that they cannot endure the severity of God's judgment.

VI. Notwithstanding, the persons of believers being accepted through Christ, their good works also are accepted in him; not as though they were in this life wholly unblamable and unreprouable in God's sight; but that he, looking upon them in his Son, is pleased to accept and reward that which is sincere, although accompanied with many

weaknesses and imperfections.

VII. Works done by unregenerate men, although for the matter of them they may be things which God commands; and or good use both to themselves and others: yet, because they proceed not from an heart purified by faith; nor are done in a right manner, according to the Word; nor to a right end, the glory of God, they are therefore sinful, and cannot please God, or make a man meet to receive grace from God: and yet, their neglect of them is more sinful and displeasing unto God.

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## CHAPTER XVII - OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

I. They, whom God hath accepted in his Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by his Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.

II. This perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election, flowing from the free and unchangeable love of God the Father; upon the efficacy of the merit and intercession of Jesus Christ, the abiding of the Spirit, and of the seed of God within them, and the nature of the covenant of grace: from all which ariseth also the certainty and infallibility thereof.

III. Nevertheless, they may, through the temptations of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins; and, for a time, continue therein: whereby they incur God's displeasure, and grieve his Holy Spirit, come to be deprived of some



measure of their graces and comforts, have their hearts hardened, and their consciences wounded; hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves.

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## CHAPTER XVIII - OF THE ASSURANCE OF GRACE AND SALVATION

I. Although hypocrites and other unregenerate men may vainly deceive themselves with false hopes and carnal presumptions of being in the favor of God, and estate of salvation (which hope of theirs shall perish): yet such as truly believe in the Lord Jesus, and love him in sincerity, endeavoring to walk in all good conscience before him, may, in this life, be certainly assured that they are in the state of grace, and may rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, which hope shall never make them ashamed.

II. This certainty is not a bare conjectural and probable persuasion grounded upon a fallible hope; but an infallible assurance of faith founded upon the divine truth of the promises of salvation, the inward evidence of those graces unto which these promises are made, the testimony of the Spirit of adoption witnessing with our spirits that we are the children of God, which Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance, whereby we are sealed to the day of redemption.

III. This infallible assurance doth not so belong to the essence of faith, but that a true believer may wait long, and conflict with many difficulties before he be partaker of it: yet, being enable by the Spirit to know the things which are freely given him of God, he may, without extraordinary revelation, in the right use of ordinary means, attain thereunto. And therefore it is the duty of everyone to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure, that thereby his heart

may be enlarged in peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, in love and thankfulness to God, and in strength and cheerfulness in the duties of obedience, the proper fruits of this assurance; so far is it from inclining men to looseness.

IV. True believers may have the assurance of their salvation divers ways shaken, diminished, and intermitted; as, by negligence in preserving of it, by falling into some special sin which woundeth the conscience and grieveth the Spirit; by some sudden or vehement temptation, by God's withdrawing the light of his countenance, and suffering even such as fear him to walk in darkness and to have no light: yet are they never utterly destitute of that seed of God, and life of faith, that love of Christ and the brethren, that sincerity of heart, and conscience of duty, out of which, by the operation of the Spirit, this assurance may, in due time, be revived; and by the which, in the meantime, they are supported from utter despair.

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## CHAPTER XIX - OF THE LAW OF GOD

I. God gave to Adam a law, as a covenant of works, by which he bound him and all his posterity to personal, entire, exact, and perpetual obedience, promised life upon the fulfilling, and threatened death upon the breach of it, and endued him with power and ability to keep it.

II. This law, after his fall, continued to be a perfect rule of righteousness; and, as such, was delivered by God upon Mount Sinai, in ten commandments, and written in two tables: the four first commandments containing our duty towards God; and the other six, our duty to man.

III. Beside this law, commonly called moral, God was pleased to give to the people of Israel, as a church under age, ceremonial laws, containing several typical ordinances, partly of worship, prefiguring Christ, his graces, actions, sufferings, and benefits; and partly, holding forth divers instructions of moral duties. All which ceremonial laws are now abrogated, under the new testament.

IV. To them also, as a body politic, he gave sundry judicial laws, which expired together with the state of that people; not obliging any other now, further than the general equity thereof may require.

V. The moral law doth forever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof; and that, not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator, who gave it. Neither doth Christ, in the Gospel, any way dissolve, but much strengthen this obligation.

VI. Although true believers be not under the law, as a covenant of works, to be thereby justified, or condemned; yet is it of great use to them, as well as to other; in that, as rule of life informing them of the will of God, and their duty, it directs and binds them to walk accordingly; discovering also the sinful pollutions of their nature, hearts, and lives; so as, examining themselves thereby, they may come to further conviction of, humiliation for, and hatred against sin, together with a clearer sight of the need they have of Christ, and the perfection of his obedience. It is likewise of use to the regenerate, to restrain their corruptions, in that it forbids sin: and the threatenings of it serve to show what even their sins deserve; and what afflictions, in this life, they may expect for them, although freed from the curse thereof threatened in the law. The promises of it, in like manner, show them God's approbation of obedience, and what blessings they may expect upon the performance thereof: although

not as due to them by the law as a covenant of works. So as, a man's doing good, and refraining from evil, because the law encourageth to the one, and deterreth from the other, is no evidence of his being under the law; and, not under grace.

VII. Neither are the forementioned uses of the law contrary to the grace of the gospel, but do sweetly comply with it; the Spirit of Christ subduing and enabling the will of man to do that freely, and cheerfully, which the will of God, revealed in the law, requireth to be done.

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## CHAPTER XX - OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY AND LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE

I. The liberty which Christ hath purchased for believers under the gospel consists in their freedom from the guilt of sin, the condemning wrath of God, the curse of the moral law; and, in their being delivered from this present evil world, bondage to Satan, and dominion of sin; from the evil of afflictions, the sting of death, the victory of the grave, and everlasting damnation; as the sting of death, the victory of the grave, and everlasting damnation; as also, in their free access to God, and their yielding obedience unto him, not out of slavish fear, but a childlike love and willing mind. All which were common also to believers under the law. But, under the new testament, the liberty of Christians is further enlarged, in their freedom from the yoke of the ceremonial law, to which the Jewish church was subjected; and in greater boldness of access to the throne of grace, and in fuller communications of the free Spirit of God, than believers under the law did ordinarily partake of.

II. God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the

doctrines and commandments of men, which are, in anything, contrary to his Word; or beside it, if matter of faith, or worship. So that, to believe such doctrines, or to obey such commands, out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience: and the requiring of an implicit faith, and an absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience, and reason also.

III. They who, upon pretense of Christian liberty, do practice any sin, or cherish any lust, do thereby destroy the end of Christian liberty, which is, that being delivered out of the hands of our enemies, we might serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.

IV. And because the powers which God hath ordained, and the liberty which Christ hath purchased, are not intended by God to destroy, but mutually to uphold and preserve one another, they who, upon pretense of Christian liberty, shall oppose any lawful power, or the lawful exercise of it, whether it be civil or ecclesiastical, resist the ordinance of God. And, for their publishing of such opinions, or maintaining of such practices, as are contrary to the light of nature, or to the known principles of Christianity (whether concerning faith, worship, or conversation), or to the power of godliness; or, such erroneous opinions or practices, as either in their own nature, or in the manner of publishing or maintaining them, are destructive to the external peace and order which Christ hath established in the church, they may lawfully be called to account, and proceeded against, by the censures of the church.

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CHAPTER XXI - OF RELIGIOUS WORSHIP AND THE SABBATH DAY

I. The light of nature showeth that there is a God, who hath lordship and sovereignty over all, is good, and doth good unto all, and is therefore to be feared, loved, praised, called upon, trusted in, and served, with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the might. But the acceptable way of worshiping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited by his own revealed will, that he may not be worshiped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the holy Scripture.

II. Religious worship is to be given to God, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and to him alone; not to angels, saints, or any other creature: and, since the fall, not without a Mediator; nor in the mediation of any other but of Christ alone.

III. Prayer, with thanksgiving, being one special part of religious worship, is by God required of all men: and, that it may be accepted, it is to be made in the name of the Son, by the help of his Spirit, according to his will, with understanding, reverence, humility, fervency, faith, love, and perseverance; and, if vocal, in a known tongue.

IV. Prayer is to be made for things lawful; and for all sorts of men living, or that shall live hereafter: but not for the dead, nor for those of whom it may be known that they have sinned the sin unto death.

V. The reading of the Scriptures with godly fear, the sound preaching and conscionable hearing of the Word, in obedience unto God, with understanding, faith, and reverence, singing of psalms with grace in the heart; as also, the due administration and worthy receiving of the sacraments instituted by Christ, are all parts of the ordinary religious worship of God: beside religious oaths, vows, solemn fastings, and

thanksgivings upon special occasions, which are, in their several times and seasons, to be used in an holy and religious manner.

VI. Neither prayer, nor any other part of religious worship, is now, under the gospel, either tied unto, or made more acceptable by any place in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed: but God is to be worshiped everywhere, in spirit and in truth; as, in private family daily, and in secret, each one by himself; so, more solemnly in the public assemblies, which are not carelessly or wilfully to be neglected, or forsaken, when God, by his Word or providence, calleth thereunto.

VII. As it is the law of nature, that, in general, a due proportion of time be set apart for the worship of God; so, in his Word, by a positive, moral, and perpetual commandment binding all men in all ages, he hath particularly appointed one day in seven, for a sabbath, to be kept holy unto him: which, from the beginning of the world to the resurrection of Christ, was the last day of the week; and, from the resurrection of Christ, was changed into the first day of the week, which, in Scripture, is called the Lord's day, and is to be continued to the end of the world, as the Christian sabbath.

VIII. This sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest, all the day, from their own works, words, and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations, but also are taken up, the whole time, in the public and private exercises of his worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy.

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## CHAPTER XXII - OF LAWFUL OATHS AND VOWS

I. A lawful oath is a part of religious worship, wherein, upon just occasion, the person swearing solemnly calleth God to witness what he asserteth, or promiseth, and to judge him according to the truth or falsehood of what he sweareth.

II. The name of God only is that by which men ought to swear, and therein it is to be used with all holy fear and reverence. Therefore, to swear vainly, or rashly, by that glorious and dreadful Name; or to swear at all by any other thing, is sinful, and to be abhorred. Yet, as in matters of weight and moment, an oath is warranted by the Word of God under the new testament as well as under the old; so a lawful oath, being imposed by lawful authority, in such matters, ought to be taken.

III. Whosoever taketh an oath ought duly to consider the weightiness of so solemn an act, and therein to avouch nothing but what he is fully persuaded is the truth: neither may any man bind himself by oath to anything but what is good and just, and what he believeth so to be, and what he is able and resolved to perform.

IV. An oath is to be taken in the plain and common sense of the words, without equivocation, or mental reservation. It cannot oblige to sin; but in anything not sinful, being taken, it binds to performance, although to a man's own hurt. Nor is it to be violated, although made to heretics, or infidels.

V. A vow is of the like nature with a promissory oath, and ought to be made with the like religious care, and to be performed with the like faithfulness.

VI. It is not to be made to any creature, but to God alone: and, that it may be accepted, it is to be made voluntarily, out of faith, and



conscience of duty, in way of thankfulness for mercy received, or for the obtaining of what we want, whereby we more strictly bind ourselves to necessary duties; or, to other things, so far and so long as they may fitly conduce thereunto.

VII. No man may vow to do anything forbidden in the Word of God, or what would hinder any duty therein commanded, or which is not in his own power, and for the performance whereof he hath no promise of ability from God. In which respects, popish monastical vows of perpetual single life, professed poverty, and regular obedience, are so far from being degrees of higher perfection, that they are superstitious and sinful snares, in which no Christian may entangle himself.

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## CHAPTER XXIII - OF THE CIVIL MAGISTRATE

I. God, the supreme Lord and King of all the world, hath ordained civil magistrates, to be, under him, over the people, for his own glory, and the public good: and, to this end, hath armed them with the power of the sword, for the defense and encouragement of them that are good, and for the punishment of evil doers.

II. It is lawful for Christians to accept and execute the office of a magistrate, when called thereunto: in the managing whereof, as they ought especially to maintain piety, justice, and peace, according to the wholesome laws of each commonwealth; so, for that end, they may lawfully, now under the new testament, wage war, upon just and necessary occasion.

III. Civil magistrates may not assume to themselves the administration of the Word and sacraments; or the power of the keys

of the kingdom of heaven; or, in the least, interfere in matters of faith. Yet, as nursing fathers, it is the duty of civil magistrates to protect the church of our common Lord, without giving the preference to any denomination of Christians above the rest, in such a manner that all ecclesiastical persons whatever shall enjoy the full, free, and unquestioned liberty of discharging every part of their sacred functions, without violence or danger. And, as Jesus Christ hath appointed a regular government and discipline in his church, no law of any commonwealth should interfere with, let, or hinder, the due exercise thereof, among the voluntary member of any denomination of Christians, according to their own profession and belief. It is the duty of civil magistrates to protect the person and good name of all their people, in such an effectual manner as that no person be suffered, either upon pretense or religion or of infidelity, to offer any indignity, violence, abuse, or injury to any other person whatsoever: and to take order, that all religious and ecclesiastical assemblies be held without molestation or disturbance.

IV. It is the duty of people to pray for magistrates, to honor their persons, to pay them tribute or other dues, to obey their lawful commands, and to be subject to their authority, for conscience' sake. Infidelity, or difference in religion, doth not make void the magistrates' just and legal authority, nor free the people from their due obedience to them: from which ecclesiastical persons are not exempted, much less hath the pope any power and jurisdiction over them in their dominions, or over any of their people; and, least of all, to deprive them of their dominions, or lives, if he shall judge them to be heretics, or upon any other pretense whatsoever.

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## CHAPTER XXIV - OF MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

I. Marriage is to be between one man and one woman: neither is it lawful for any man to have more than one wife, nor for any woman to have more than one husband, at the same time.

II. Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife, for the increase of mankind with legitimate issue, and of the church with an holy seed; and for preventing of uncleanness.

III. It is lawful for all sorts of people to marry, who are able with judgment to give their consent. Yet it is the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord. And therefore such as profess the true reformed religion should not marry with infidels, papists, or other idolaters: neither should such as are godly be unequally yoked, by marrying with such as are notoriously wicked in their life, or maintain damnable heresies.

IV. Marriage ought not to be within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity forbidden by the Word. Nor can such incestuous marriages ever be made lawful by any law of man or consent of parties, so as those persons may live together as man and wife.

V. Adultery or fornication committed after a contract, being detected before marriage, giveth just occasion to the innocent party to dissolve that contract. In the case of adultery after marriage, it is lawful for the innocent party to sue out a divorce: and, after the divorce, to marry another, as if the offending party were dead.

VI. Although the corruption of man be such as is apt to study arguments unduly to put asunder those whom God hath joined together in marriage: yet, nothing but adultery, or such wilful desertion as can no way be remedied by the church, or civil magistrate, is cause sufficient of dissolving the bond of marriage:

wherein, a public and orderly course of proceeding is to be observed; and the persons concerned in it not left to their own wills, and discretion, in their own case.

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## CHAPTER XXV - OF THE CHURCH

I. The catholic or universal church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

II. The visible church, which is also catholic or universal under the gospel (not confined to one nation, as before under the law), consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion; and of their children: and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation.

III. Into this catholic visible church Christ hath given the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world: and doth, by his own presence and Spirit, according to his promise, make them effectual thereunto.

IV. This catholic church hath been sometimes more, sometimes less visible. And particular churches, which are members thereof, are more or less pure according as the doctrine of the gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them.

V. The purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and

error; and some have so degenerated, as to become no churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan. Nevertheless, there shall be always a church on earth, to worship God according to his will.

VI. There is no other head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor can the pope of Rome, in any sense, be head thereof.

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## CHAPTER XXVI - OF THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

I. All saints, that are united to Jesus Christ their head, by his Spirit, and by faith, have fellowship with him in his graces, sufferings, death, resurrection, and glory: and, being united to one another in love, they have communion in each other's gifts and graces, and are obliged to the performance of such duties, public and private, as do condueto their mutual good, both in the inward and outward man.

II. Saints by profession are bound to maintain an holy fellowship and communion in the worship of God, and in performing such other spiritual services as tend to their mutual edification; as also in relieving each other in outward things, according to their several abilities and necessities. Which communion, as God offereth opportunity, is to be extended unto all those who, in every place, call upon the name of the Lord Jesus.

III. This communion which the saints have with Christ, doth not make them in any wise partakers of the substance of his Godhead; or to be equal with Christ in any respect: either of which to affirm is impious and blasphemous. Nor doth their communion one with another, as saints, take away, or infringe the title or propriety which each man hath in his goods and possessions.

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## CHAPTER XXVII - OF THE SACRAMENTS

I. Sacraments are holy signs and seals of the covenant of grace, immediately instituted by God, to represent Christ, and his benefits; and to confirm our interest in him: as also, to put a visible difference between those that belong unto the church, and the rest of the world; and solemnly to engage them to the service of God in Christ, according to his Word.

II. There is, in every sacrament, a spiritual relation, or sacramental union, between the sign and the thing signified: whence it comes to pass, that the names and effects of the one are attributed to the other.

III. The grace which is exhibited in or by the sacraments rightly used, is not conferred by any power in them; neither doth the efficacy of a sacrament depend upon the piety or intention of him that doth administer it: but upon the work of the Spirit, and the word of institution, which contains, together with a precept authorizing the use thereof, a promise of benefit to worthy receivers.

IV. There be only two sacrament ordained by Christ our Lord in the gospel; that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord: neither of which may be dispensed by any, but by a minister of the Word lawfully ordained.

V. The sacraments of the old testament, in regard of the spiritual things thereby signified and exhibited, were, for substance, the same with those of the new.

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## CHAPTER XXVIII - OF BAPTISM

I. Baptism is a sacrament of the new testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, not only for the solemn admission of the party baptized into the visible church; but also, to be unto him a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins, and of his giving up unto God, through Jesus Christ, to walk in newness of life. Which sacrament is, by Christ's own appointment, to be continued in his church until the end of the world.

II. The Outward element to be used in this sacrament is water, wherewith the party is to be baptized, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, by a minister of the gospel, lawfully called thereunto.

III. Dipping of the person into the water is not necessary; but Baptism is rightly administered by pouring, or sprinkling water upon the person.

IV. Not only those that do actually profess faith in and obedience unto Christ, but also the infants of one, or both, believing parents, are to be baptized.

V. Although it be a great sin to contemn or neglect this ordinance, yet grace and salvation are not so inseparably annexed unto it, as that no person can be regenerated, or saved, without it; or, that all that are baptized are undoubtedly regenerated.

VI. The efficacy of Baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered; yet, notwithstanding, by the right use of this ordinance, the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited, and conferred, by the Holy Ghost, to such (whether of age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of

God's own will, in his appointed time.

VII. The sacrament of Baptism is but once to be administered unto any person.

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## CHAPTER XXIX - OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

I. Our Lord Jesus, in the night wherein he was betrayed, instituted the sacrament of his body and blood, called the Lord's Supper, to be observed in his church, unto the end of the world, for the perpetual remembrance of the sacrifice of himself in his death; the sealing all benefits thereof unto true believers, their spiritual nourishment and growth in him, their further engagement in and to all duties which they owe unto him; and, to be a bond and pledge of their communion with him, and with each other, as members of his mystical body.

II. In this sacrament, Christ is not offered up to his Father; nor any real sacrifice made at all, for remission of sins of the quick or dead; but only a commemoration of that one offering up of himself, by himself, upon the cross once for all: and a spiritual oblation of all possible praise unto God, for the same: so that the popish sacrifice of the mass (as they call it) is most abominably injurious to Christ's one, only sacrifice, the alone propitiation for all the sins of his elect.

III. The Lord Jesus hath, in this ordinance, appointed his ministers to declare his word of institution to the people; to pray, and bless the elements of bread and wine, and thereby to set them apart from a common to an holy use; and to take and break the bread, to take the cup, and (they communicating also themselves) to give both to the communicants; but to none who are not then present in the congregation.



IV. Private masses, or receiving this sacrament by a priest, or any other, alone; as likewise, the denial of the cup to the people, worshipping the elements, the lifting them up, or carrying them about, for adoration, and the reserving them for any pretended religious use; are all contrary to the nature of this sacrament, and to the institution of Christ.

V. The outward elements in this sacrament, duly set apart to the uses ordained by Christ, have such relation to him crucified, as that, truly, yet sacramentally only, they are sometimes called by the name of the things they represent, to wit, the body and blood of Christ; albeit, in substance and nature, they still remain truly and only bread and wine, as they were before.

VI. That doctrine which maintains a change of the substance of bread and wine, into the substance of Christ's body and blood (commonly called transubstantiation) by consecration of a priest, or by any other way, is repugnant, not to Scripture alone, but even to common sense, and reason; overthroweth the nature of the sacrament, and hath been, and is, the cause of manifold superstitions; yea, of gross idolatries.

VII. Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements, in this sacrament, do then also, inwardly by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporally but spiritually, receive, and feed upon, Christ crucified, and all benefits of his death: the body and blood of Christ being then, not corporally or carnally, in, with, or under the bread and wine; yet, as really, but spiritually, present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses.

VIII. Although ignorant and wicked men receive the outward elements in this sacrament; yet, they receive not the thing signified thereby; but, by their unworthy coming thereunto, are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord, to their own damnation. Wherefore, all ignorant and ungodly persons, as they are unfit to enjoy communion with him, so are they unworthy of the Lord's table; and cannot, without great sin against Christ, while they remain such, partake of these holy mysteries, or be admitted thereunto.

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## CHAPTER XXX - OF CHURCH CENSURES

I. The Lord Jesus, as king and head of his church, hath therein appointed a government, in the hand of church officers, distinct from the civil magistrate.

II. To these officers the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed; by virtue whereof, they have power, respectively, to retain, and remit sins; to shut that kingdom against the impenitent, both by the Word, and censures; and to open it unto penitent sinners, by the ministry of the gospel; and by absolution from censures, as occasion shall require.

III. Church censures are necessary, for the reclaiming and gaining of offending brethren, for deterring of others from the like offenses, for purging out of that leaven which might infect the whole lump, for vindicating the honor of Christ, and the holy profession of the gospel, and for preventing the wrath of God, which might justly fall upon the church, if they should suffer his covenant, and the seals thereof, to be profaned by notorious and obstinate offenders.

VI. For the better attaining of these ends, the officers of the church

are to proceed by admonition; suspension from the sacrament of the Lord's Supper for a season; and by excommunication from the church; according to the nature of the crime, and demerit of the person.

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## CHAPTER XXXI - OF SYNODS AND COUNCILS

I. For the better government, and further edification of the church, there ought to be such assemblies as are commonly called synods or councils: and it belongeth to the overseers and other rulers of the particular churches, by virtue of their office, and the power which Christ hath given them for edification and not for destruction, to appoint such assemblies; and to convene together in them, as often as they shall judge it expedient for the good of the church.

II. It belongeth to synods and councils, ministerially to determine controversies of faith, and cases of conscience; to set down rules and directions for the better ordering of the public worship of God, and government of his church; to receive complaints in cases of maladministration, and authoritatively to determine the same: which decrees and determinations, if consonant to the Word of God, are to be received with reverence and submission; not only for their agreement with the Word, but also for the power whereby they are made as being an ordinance of God appointed thereunto in his Word.

III. All synods or councils, since the apostles' times, whether general or particular, may err; and many have erred. Therefore they are not to be made the rule of faith, or practice; but to be used as a help in both.

IV. Synods and councils are to handle, or conclude nothing, but that

which is ecclesiastical: and are not to intermeddle with civil affairs which concern the commonwealth, unless by way of humble petition in cases extraordinary; or, by way of advice, for satisfaction of conscience, if they be thereunto required by the civil magistrate.

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## CHAPTER XXXII - OF THE STATE OF MAN AFTER DEATH, AND OF THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD

I. The bodies of men, after death, return to dust, and see corruption: but their souls, which neither die nor sleep, having an immortal subsistence, immediately return to God who gave them: the souls of the righteous, being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God, in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies. And the souls of the wicked are cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day. Beside these two places, for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none.

II. At the last day, such as are found alive shall not die, but be changed: and all the dead shall be raised up, with the selfsame bodies, and none other (although with different qualities), which shall be united again to their souls forever.

III. The bodies of the unjust shall, by the power of Christ, be raised to dishonor: the bodies of the just, by his Spirit, unto honor; and be made conformable to his own glorious body.

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## CHAPTER XXXIII - OF THE LAST JUDGMENT

I. God hath appointed a day, wherein he will judge the world, in righteousness, by Jesus Christ, to whom all power and judgment is given of the Father. In which day, not only the apostate angels shall be judged, but likewise all persons that have lived upon earth shall appear before the tribunal of Christ, to give an account of their thoughts, words, and deeds; and to receive according to what they have done in the body, whether good or evil.

II. The end of God's appointing this day is for the manifestation of the glory of his mercy, in the eternal salvation of the elect; and of his justice, in the damnation of the reprobate, who are wicked and disobedient. For then shall the righteous go into everlasting life, and receive that fulness of joy and refreshing, which shall come from the presence of the Lord; but the wicked who know not God, and obey not the gospel of Jesus Christ, shall be cast into eternal torments, and be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power.

III. As Christ would have us to be certainly persuaded that there shall be a day of judgment, both to deter all men from sin; and for the greater consolation of the godly in their adversity: so will he have that day unknown to men, that they may shake off all carnal security, and be always watchful, because they know not at what hour the Lord will come; and may be ever prepared to say, Come Lord Jesus, come quickly, Amen.

**CANONS OF DORT**  
**Synod of Dordrecht**  
**November 13, 1618 - May 9, 1619**

FIRST HEAD OF DOCTRINE. DIVINE ELECTION AND  
REPROBATION

FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 1. As all men have sinned in Adam, lie under the curse, and are deserving of eternal death, God would have done no injustice by leaving them all to perish and delivering them over to condemnation on account of sin, according to the words of the apostle: "that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God." (Rom 3:19). And: "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God," (Rom 3:23). And: "For the wages of sin is death." (Rom 6:23).

FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 2. but in this the love of God was manifested, that He "sent his one and only Son into the world, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." (1 John 4:9, John 3:16).

FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 3. And that men may be brought to believe, God mercifully sends the messengers of these most joyful tidings to whom He will and at what time He pleases; by whose ministry men are called to repentance and faith in Christ crucified. "How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can they preach unless they are sent?" (Rom 10:14-15).

FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 4. The wrath of God abides upon those who believe not this gospel. But such as receive it and embrace Jesus the

Savior by a true and living faith are by Him delivered from the wrath of God and from destruction, and have the gift of eternal life conferred upon them.

FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 5. The cause or guilt of this unbelief as well as of all other sins is no wise in God, but in man himself; whereas faith in Jesus Christ and salvation through Him is the free gift of God, as it is written: "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God" (Eph 2:8). Likewise: "For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him" (Phil 1:29)

FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 6. That some receive the gift of faith from God, and others do not receive it, proceeds from God's eternal decree. "For now unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18 A.V.). "who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will" (Eph 1:11). According to which decree He graciously softens the hearts of the elect, however obstinate, and inclines them to believe; while He leaves the non-elect in His just judgment to their own wickedness and obduracy. And herein is especially displayed the profound, the merciful, and at the same time the righteous discrimination between men equally involved in ruin; or that decree of election and reprobation, revealed in the Word of God, which, though men of perverse, impure, and unstable minds wrest it to their own destruction, yet to holy and pious souls affords unspeakable consolation.

FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 7. Election is the unchangeable purpose of God, whereby, before the foundation of the world, He has out of mere grace, according to the sovereign good pleasure of His own will, chosen from the whole human race, which had fallen through their own fault from the primitive state of rectitude into sin and

destruction, a certain number of persons to redemption in Christ, whom He from eternity appointed the Mediator and Head of the elect and the foundation of salvation. This elect number, though by nature neither better nor more deserving than others, but with them involved in one common misery, God has decreed to give to Christ to be saved by Him, and effectually to call and draw them to His communion by His Word and Spirit; to bestow upon them true faith, justification, and sanctification; and having powerfully preserved them in the fellowship of His son, finally to glorify them for the demonstration of His mercy, and for the praise of the riches of His glorious grace; as it is written "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves." (Eph 1:4-6). And elsewhere: "And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified." (Rom 8:30).

**FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 8.** There are not various decrees of election, but one and the same decree respecting all those who shall be saved, both under the Old and New Testament; since the Scripture declares the good pleasure, purpose, and counsel of the divine will to be one, according to which He has chosen us from eternity, both to grace and to glory, to salvation and to the way of salvation, which He has ordained that we should walk therein (Eph 1:4, 5; 2:10).

**FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 9.** This election was not founded upon foreseen faith and the obedience of faith, holiness, or any other good quality or disposition in man, as the prerequisite, cause, or condition of which it depended; but men are chosen to faith and to the obedience of faith, holiness, etc. Therefore election is the fountain of



every saving good, from which proceed faith, holiness, and the other gifts of salvation, and finally eternal life itself, as its fruits and effects, according to the testimony of the apostle: "For he chose us (not because we were, but) in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight." (Eph 1:4).

FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 10. The good pleasure of God is the sole cause of this gracious election; which does not consist herein that out of all possible qualities and actions of men God has chosen some as a condition of salvation, but that He was pleased out of the common mass of sinners to adopt some certain persons as a peculiar people to Himself, as it is written: "Yet, before the twins were born or had done anything good or bad--in order that God's purpose in election might stand: not by works but by him who calls--she (Rebekah) was told, 'The older will serve the younger.' Just as it is written: 'Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.'" (Rom 9:11-13). "When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed." (Acts 13:48).

FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 11. And as God Himself is most wise, unchangeable, omniscient, and omnipotent, so the election made by Him can neither be interrupted nor changed, recalled, or annulled; neither can the elect be cast away, nor their number diminished.

FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 12. The elect in due time, though in various degrees and in different measures, attain the assurance of this their eternal and unchangeable election, not by inquisitively prying into the secret and deep things of God, but by observing in themselves with a spiritual joy and holy pleasure the infallible fruits of election pointed out in the Word of God - such as, a true faith in Christ, filial fear, a godly sorrow for sin, a hungering and thirsting after righteousness, etc.

FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 13. The sense and certainty of this election afford to the children of God additional matter for daily humiliation before Him, for adoring the depth of His mercies, for cleansing themselves, and rendering grateful returns of ardent love to Him who first manifested so great love towards them. The consideration of this doctrine of election is so far from encouraging remissness in the observance of the divine commands or from sinking men in carnal security, that these, in the just judgment of God, are the usual effects of rash presumption or of idle and wanton trifling with the grace of election, in those who refuse to walk in the ways of the elect.

FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 14. As the doctrine of election by the most wise counsel of God was declared by the prophets, by Christ Himself, and by the apostles, and is clearly revealed in the Scriptures both of the Old and the New Testament, so it is still to be published in due time and place in the Church of God, for which it was peculiarly designed, provided it be done with reverence, in the spirit of discretion and piety, for the glory of God's most holy Name, and for enlivening and comforting His people, without vainly attempting to investigate the secret ways of the Most High (Acts 20:27; Rom 11:33f; 12:3; Heb 6:17f).

FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 15. What peculiarly tends to illustrate and recommend to us the eternal and unmerited grace of election is the express testimony of sacred Scripture that not all, but some only, are elected, while others are passed by in the eternal decree; whom God, out of His sovereign, most just, irreprehensible, and unchangeable good pleasure, has decreed to leave in the common misery into which they have willfully plunged themselves, and not to bestow upon them saving faith and the grace of conversion; but, permitting them in His just judgment to follow their own ways, at last, for the declaration of His justice, to condemn and punish them forever, not only on

account of their unbelief, but also for all their other sins. And this is the decree of reprobation, which by no means makes God the Author of sin (the very thought of which is blasphemy), but declares Him to be an awful, irreprehensible, and righteous Judge and Avenger thereof.

FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 16. Those in whom a living faith in Christ, and assured confidence of soul, peace of conscience, an earnest endeavor after filial obedience, a glorying in God through Christ, is not as yet strongly felt, and who nevertheless make use of the means which God has appointed for working these graces in us, ought not to be alarmed at the mention of reprobation, nor to rank themselves among the reprobate, but diligently to persevere in the use of means, and with ardent desires devoutly and humble to wait for a season of richer grace. Much less cause to be terrified by the doctrine of reprobation have they who, though they seriously desire to be turned to God, to please Him only, and to be delivered from the body of death, cannot yet reach that measure of holiness and faith to which they aspire; since a merciful God has promised that He will not quench the smoking flax, nor break the bruised reed. But this doctrine is justly terrible to those who, regardless of God and of the Savior Jesus Christ, have wholly given themselves up to the cares of the world and the pleasures of the flesh, so long as they are not seriously converted to God.

FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 17. Since we are to judge of the will of God from His Word, which testifies that the children of believers are holy, not by nature, but in virtue of the covenant of grace, in which they together with the parents are comprehended, godly parents ought not to doubt the election and salvation of their children whom it pleases God to call out of this life in their infancy (Gen 17:7; Acts 2:39; 1 Cor 7:14).

FIRST HEAD: ARTICLE 18. To those who murmur at the free grace of election and the just severity of reprobation we answer with the apostle "But who are you, O man, to talk back to God?" (Rom 9:20), and quote the language of our Savior: "Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own?" (Matt 20:15). And therefore, with holy adoration of these mysteries, we exclaim in the words of the apostle: "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! 'Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?' 'Who has ever given to God, that God should repay him?' For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen." (Rom 11:33-36).

## REJECTION OF ERRORS

The true doctrine concerning election and reprobation having been explained, the Synod rejects the errors of those:

FIRST HEAD: PARAGRAPH 1. Who teach: That the will of God to save those who would believe and would persevere in faith and in the obedience of faith is the whole and entire decree of election, and that nothing else concerning this decree has been revealed in God's Word.

For these deceive the simple and plainly contradict the Scriptures, which declare that God will not only save those who will believe, but that He has also from eternity chosen certain particular persons to whom, above others, He will grant in time, both faith in Christ and perseverance; as it is written "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. (John 17:6). "and all who were appointed for eternal life believed. (Acts 13:48)". And "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. (Eph 1:4)."

FIRST HEAD: PARAGRAPH 2. Who teach: That there are various kinds of election of God unto eternal life: the one general and indefinite, the other particular and definite; and that the latter in turn is either incomplete, revocable, non-decisive, and conditional, or complete, irrevocable, decisive, and absolute. Likewise: That there is one election unto faith and another unto salvation, so that election can be unto justifying faith, without being a decisive election unto salvation.

For this is a fancy of men's minds, invented regardless of the Scriptures, whereby the doctrine of election is corrupted, and this golden chain of our salvation is broken: "And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. (Rom 8:30)."

FIRST HEAD: PARAGRAPH 3. Who teach: That the good pleasure and purpose of God, of which Scripture makes mention in the doctrine of election, does not consist in this, that God chose certain persons rather than others, but in this, that He chose out of all possible conditions (among which are also the works of the law), or out of the whole order of things, that act of faith which from its very nature is undeserving, as well as it incomplete obedience, as a condition of salvation, and that He would graciously consider this in itself as a complete obedience and count it worthy of the reward of eternal life.

For by this injurious error the pleasure of God and the merits of Christ are made of none effect, and men are drawn away by useless questions from the truth of gracious justification and from the simplicity of Scripture, and this declaration of the apostle is charged as untrue: "who has saved us and called us to a holy life, not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace.

This grace was given us in Christ Jesus before the beginning of time (2 Tim 1:9)."

**FIRST HEAD: PARAGRAPH 4.** Who teach: That in the election unto faith this condition is beforehand demanded that man should use the light of nature aright, be pious, humble, meek, and fit for eternal life, as if on these things election were in any way dependent.

For this savors of the teaching of Pelagius, and is opposed to the doctrine of the apostle when he writes: "All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- not by works, so that no one can boast (Eph 2:3-9)."

**FIRST HEAD: PARAGRAPH 5.** Who teach: That the incomplete and non-decisive election of particular persons to salvation occurred because of a foreseen faith, conversion, holiness, godliness, which either began or continued for some time; but that the complete and decisive election occurred because of foreseen perseverance unto the end in faith, conversion, holiness, and godliness; and that this is the gracious and evangelical worthiness, for the sake of which he who is chosen is more worthy than he who is not chosen; and that therefore faith, the obedience of faith, holiness, godliness, and perseverance are not fruits of the unchangeable election unto glory, but are

conditions which, being required beforehand, were foreseen as being met by those who will be fully elected, and are causes without which the unchangeable election to glory does not occur.

This is repugnant to the entire Scripture, which constantly inculcates this and similar declarations: Election is "not by works but by him who calls (Rom 9:12)." "And all who were appointed for eternal life believed (Acts 13:48)." "For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight (Eph 1:4)." "You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name (John 15:16)." "And if by grace, then it is no longer by works (Rom 11:6)." "This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son (1 John 4:10)."

**FIRST HEAD: PARAGRAPH 6.** Who teach: That not every election unto salvation is unchangeable, but that some of the elect, any decree of God notwithstanding, can yet perish and do indeed perish.

By this gross error they make God be changeable, and destroy the comfort which the godly obtain out of the firmness of their election, and contradict the Holy Scripture, which teaches that the elect can not be led astray (Matt 24:24), that Christ does not lose those whom the Father gave him (John 6:39), and that God also glorified those whom he foreordained, called, and justified (Rom 8:30).

**FIRST HEAD: PARAGRAPH 7.** Who teach: That there is in this life no fruit and no consciousness of the unchangeable elect to glory, nor any certainty, except that which depends on a changeable and uncertain condition.

For not only is it absurd to speak of an uncertain certainty, but also contrary to the experience of the saints, who by virtue of the

consciousness of their election rejoice with the apostle and praise this favor of God (Eph 1); who according to Christ's admonition rejoice with his disciples that their names are written in heaven (Luke 10:20); who also place the consciousness of their election over against the fiery darts of the devil, asking: "Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? (Rom 8:33)."

FIRST HEAD: PARAGRAPH 8. Who teach: That God, simply by virtue of His righteous will, did not decide either to leave anyone in the fall of Adam and in the common state sin and condemnation, or to pass anyone by in the communication of grace which is necessary for faith and conversion.

For this is firmly decreed: "God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden (Rom 9:18)." And also this: "The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of heaven has been given to you, but not to them (Mat 13:11)." Likewise: "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure (Mat 11:25-26)."

FIRST HEAD: PARAGRAPH 9. Who teach: That the reason why God sends the gospel to one people rather than to another is not merely and solely the good pleasure of God, but rather the fact that one people is better and worthier than another to which the gospel is not communicated.

For this Moses denies, addressing the people of Israel as follows: "To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it. Yet the LORD set his affection on your forefathers and loved them, and he chose you, their descendants, above all the nations, as it is today (Deu 10:14-15)." And Christ said:



"Woe to you, Korazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes (Mat 11:21)."

## SECOND HEAD OF DOCTRINE. THE DEATH OF CHRIST, AND THE REDEMPTION OF MEN THEREBY

SECOND HEAD: ARTICLE 1. God is not only supremely merciful, but also supremely just. And His justice requires (as He has revealed Himself in His Word) that our sins committed against His infinite majesty should be punished, not only with temporal but with eternal punishments, both in body and soul; which we cannot escape, unless satisfaction be made to the justice of God.

SECOND HEAD: ARTICLE 2. Since, therefore, we are unable to make that satisfaction in our own persons, or to deliver ourselves from the wrath of God, He has been pleased of His infinite mercy to give His only begotten Son for our Surety, who was made sin, and became a curse for us and in our stead, that He might make satisfaction to divine justice on our behalf.

SECOND HEAD: ARTICLE 3. The death of the Son of God is the only and most perfect sacrifice and satisfaction for sin, and is of infinite worth and value, abundantly sufficient to expiate the sins of the whole world.

SECOND HEAD: ARTICLE 4. This death is of such infinite value and dignity because the person who submitted to it was not only begotten Son of God, of the same eternal and infinite essence with the Father and the Holy Spirit, which qualifications were necessary to constitute Him a Savior for us; and, moreover, because it was attended with a sense of the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin.

SECOND HEAD: ARTICLE 5. Moreover, the promise of the gospel is that whosoever believes in Christ crucified shall not perish, but have eternal life. This promise, together with the command to repent and believe, ought to be declared and published to all nations, and to all persons promiscuously and without distinction, to whom God out of His good pleasure sends the gospel.

SECOND HEAD: ARTICLE 6. And, whereas many who are called by the gospel do not repent nor believe in Christ, but perish in unbelief, this is not owing to any defect or insufficiency in the sacrifice offered by Christ upon the cross, but is wholly to be imputed to themselves.

SECOND HEAD: ARTICLE 7. But as many as truly believe, and are delivered and saved from sin and destruction through the death of Christ, are indebted for this benefit solely to the grace of God given them in Christ from everlasting, and not to any merit of their own.

SECOND HEAD: ARTICLE 8. For this was the sovereign counsel and most gracious will and purpose of God the Father that the quickening and saving efficacy of the most precious death of His Son should extend to all the elect, for bestowing upon them alone the gift of justifying faith, thereby to bring them infallibly to salvation; that is, it was the will of God that Christ by the blood of the cross, whereby He confirmed the new covenant, should effectually redeem out of every people, tribe, nation, and language, all those, and those only, who were from eternity chosen to salvation and given to Him by the Father; that He should confer upon them faith, which, together with all the other saving gifts of the Holy Spirit, He purchased for them by His death; should purge them from all sin, both original and actual, whether committed before or after believing; and having faithfully preserved them even to the end, should at last bring them, free from

every spot and blemish, to the enjoyment of glory in His own presence forever.

SECOND HEAD: ARTICLE 9. This purpose, proceeding from everlasting love towards the elect, has from the beginning of the world to this day been powerfully accomplished, and will henceforward still continue to be accomplished, notwithstanding all the ineffectual opposition of the gates of hell; so that the elect in due time may be gathered together into one, and that there never may be wanting a Church composed of believers, the foundation of which is laid in the blood of christ; which may stedfastly love and faithfully serve Him as its Savior (who, as a bridegroom for his bride, laid down His life for them upon the cross); and which may celebrate His praises here and through all eternity.

## REJECTION OF ERRORS

The true doctrine having been explained, the Synod rejects the errors of those:

SECOND HEAD: PARAGRAPH 1. Who teach: That God the Father has ordained His Son to the death of the cross without a certain and definite decree to save any, so that the necessity, profitableness, and worth of what christ merited by His death might have existed, and might remain in all its parts complete, perfect, and intact, even if the merited redemption had never in fact been applied to any person.

For this doctrine tends to the despising of the wisdom of the Father and of the merits of Jesus Christ, and is contrary to Scripture. For thus says our Savior: "I lay down my life for the sheep ... and I know them. (John 10:15, 27)." And the prophet Isaiah says concerning the Savior: "Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the LORD makes his life a guilt offering, he will

see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the LORD will prosper in his hand (Isa 53:10)." Finally, this contradicts the article of faith according to which we believe the catholic Christian Church.

SECOND HEAD: PARAGRAPH 2. Who teach: That it was not the purpose of the death of Christ that He should confirm the new covenant of grace through His blood, but only that He should acquire for the Father the mere right to establish with man such a covenant as He might please, whether of grace or of works.

For this is repugnant to Scripture which teaches that "Jesus has become the guarantee of a better covenant that is a new covenant ..." and that "it never takes effect while the one who made it is living. (Heb 7:22; 9:15, 17)."

SECOND HEAD: PARAGRAPH 3. Who teach: That Christ by His satisfaction merited neither salvation itself for any one, nor faith, whereby this satisfaction of Christ unto salvation is effectually appropriated; but that He merited for the Father only the authority or the perfect will to deal again with man, and to prescribe new conditions as He might desire, obedience to which, however, depended on the free will of man, so that it therefore might have come to pass that either none or all should fulfill these conditions.

For these adjudge too contemptuously of the death of Christ, in no wise acknowledge that most important fruit or benefit thereby gained and bring again out of the hell the Pelagian error.

SECOND HEAD: PARAGRAPH 4. Who teach: That the new covenant of grace, which God the Father, through the mediation of the death of Christ, made with man, does not herein consist that we by faith, in as much as it accepts the merits of Christ, are justified before God and saved, but in the fact that God, having revoked the

demand of perfect obedience of faith, regards faith itself and the obedience of faith, although imperfect, as the perfect obedience of the law, and does esteem it worthy of the reward of eternal life through grace.

For these contradict the Scriptures, being: "justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood (Rom 3:24-25)." And these proclaim, as did the wicked Socinus, a new and strange justification of man before God, against the consensus of the whole Church.

**SECOND HEAD: PARAGRAPH 5.** Who teach: That all men have been accepted unto the state of reconciliation and unto the grace of the covenant, so that no one is worthy of condemnation on account of original sin, and that no one shall be condemned because of it, but that all are free from the guilt of original sin.

For this opinion is repugnant to Scripture which teaches that we are by nature children of wrath (Eph 2:3).

**SECOND HEAD: PARAGRAPH 6.** Who use the difference between meriting and appropriating, to the end that they may instil into the minds of the imprudent and inexperienced this teaching that God, as far as He is concerned, has been minded to apply to all equally the benefits gained by the death of Christ; but that, while some obtain the pardon of sin and eternal life, and others do not, this difference depends on their own free will, which joins itself to the grace that is offered without exception, and that it is not dependent on the special gift of mercy, which powerfully works in them, that they rather than others should appropriate unto themselves this grace.

For these, while they feign that they present this distinction in a sound sense, seek to instil into the people the destructive poison of the Pelagian errors.

SECOND HEAD: PARAGRAPH 7. Who teach: That Christ neither could die, nor needed to die, and also did not die, for those whom God loved in the highest degree and elected to eternal life, since these do not need the death of Christ.

For the contradict the apostle, who declares, Christ: "loved me and gave himself for me (Gal 2:20)." Likewise: "Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died (Rom 8:33-34)", namely, for them; and the Savior who says: "I lay down my life for the sheep (John 10:15)." And: "My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends (John 15:12-13)."

THIRD AND FOURTH HEADS OF DOCTRINE. THE CORRUPTION OF MAN, HIS CONVERSION TO GOD, AND THE MANNER THEREOF

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 1. Man was originally formed after the image of God. His understanding was adorned with a true and saving knowledge of his Creator, and of spiritual things; his heart and will were upright, all his affections pure, and the whole man was holy. But, revolting from God by the instigation of the devil and by his own free will, he forfeited these excellent gifts; and in the place thereof became involved in blindness of mind, horrible darkness, vanity, and perverseness of judgment; became wicked, rebellious, and obdurate in heart and will, and impure in his affections.

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 2. Man after the fall begat children in his own likeness. A corrupt stock produced a corrupt offspring. Hence all the posterity of Adam, Christ only excepted, have derived corruption from their original parent, not by limitation, as the Pelagians of old asserted, but by the propagation of a vicious nature, in consequence of the just judgment of God.

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 3. Therefore all men are conceived in sin, and are by nature children of wrath, incapable of saving good, prone to evil, dead in sin, and in bondage thereto; and without the regenerating grace of the Holy Spirit, they are neither able nor willing to return to God, to reform the depravity of their nature, or to dispose themselves to reformation

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 4. There remain, however, in man since the fall, the glimmerings of natural light, whereby he retains some knowledge of God, or natural things, and of the difference between good and evil, and shows some regard for virtue and for good outward behavior. But so far is this light of nature from begin sufficient to bring him to a saving knowledge of God and to true conversion that he is incapable of using it aright even in things natural and civil. Nay further, this light, such as it is , man in various ways renders wholly polluted, and hinders in unrighteousness, by doing which he becomes inexcusable before God.

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 5. In the same light are we to consider the law of the decalogue, delivered by God to His peculiar people, the Jews, by the hands of Moses. For though it reveals the greatness of sin, and more and more convinces man thereof, yet, as it neither points out a remedy nor imparts strength to extricate him from his misery, but, being weak through the flesh, leaves the

transgressor under the curse, man cannot by this law obtain saving grace.

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 6. What, therefore, neither the light of nature nor the law could do, that God performs by the operation of the Holy Spirit through the word or ministry of reconciliation; which is the glad tidings concerning the Messiah, by means whereof it has pleased God to save such as believe, as well under the Old as under the New Testament.

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 7. This mystery of His will God reveals to but a small number under the Old Testament; under the New Testament (the distinction between various peoples having been removed) He reveals it to many. The cause of this dispensation is not to be ascribed to the superior worth of one nation above another, nor to their better use of the light of nature, but results wholly from the sovereign good pleasure and unmerited love of God. Hence they to whom so great and so gracious a blessing is communicated, above their desert, or rather notwithstanding their demerits, are bound to acknowledge it with humble and grateful hearts, and with the apostle to adore, but in no wise curiously to pry into, the severity and justice of God's judgments displayed in others to whom this grace is not given.

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 8. As many as are called by the gospel are unfeignedly called. For God has most earnestly and truly declared in His Word what is acceptable to Him, namely, that those who are called should come unto Him. He also seriously promises rest of soul and eternal life to all who come to Him and believe.

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 9. It is not the fault of the gospel, nor of Christ offered therein, nor of God, who calls men by



the gospel and confers upon them various gifts, that those who are called by the ministry of the Word refuse to come and be converted. The fault lies in themselves; some of whom when called, regardless of their danger, reject the Word of life; other, though they receive it, suffer it not to make a lasting impression on their heart; therefore, their joy, arising only from a temporary faith, soon vanishes, and they fall away; while others choke the seed of the Word by perplexing cares and the pleasures of this world, and produce no fruit. This our Savior teaches in the parable of the sower (Matt 13).

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 10. But that others who are called by the gospel obey the call and are converted is not to be ascribed to the proper exercise of free will, whereby one distinguishes himself above others equally furnished with grace sufficient for faith and conversion (as the proud heresy of Pelagius maintains); but it must be wholly ascribed to God, who, as He has chosen His own from eternity in Christ, so He calls them effectually in time, confers upon them faith and repentance, rescues them from the power of darkness, and translates them into the kingdom of His own Son; that they may show forth the praises of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light, and may glory not in themselves but in the Lord, according to the testimony of the apostles in various places.

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 11. But when God accomplishes His good pleasure in the elect, or works in them true conversion, He not only cause the gospel to be externally preached to them, and powerfully illuminates their minds by His Holy Spirit, that they may rightly understand and discern the things of the Spirit of God; but by the efficacy of the same regenerating Spirit He pervades the inmost recesses of man; He opens the closed and softens the hardened heart, and circumcises that which was uncircumcised;

infuses new qualities into the will, which, though heretofore dead, He quickens; from being evil, disobedient, and refractory, He renders it good, obedient, and pliable; actuates and strengthens it, that like a good tree, it may bring forth the fruits of good actions.

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 12. And this is that regeneration so highly extolled in Scripture, that renewal, new creation, resurrection from the dead, making alive, which God works in us without our aid. But this is in no wise effected merely by the external preaching of the gospel, by moral suasion, or such a mode of operation that, after God has performed His part, it still remains in the power of man to be regenerated or not, to be converted or to continue unconverted; but it is evidently a supernatural work, most powerful, and at the same time most delightful, astonishing, mysterious, and ineffable; not inferior in efficacy to creation or the resurrection from the dead, as the Scripture inspired by the Author of this work declares; so that all in whose heart God works in this marvelous manner are certainly, infallibly, and effectually regenerated, and do actually believe. Whereupon the will thus renewed is not only actuated and influenced by God, but in consequence of this influence becomes itself active. Wherefore also man himself is rightly said to believe and repent by virtue of that grace received.

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 13. The manner of this operation cannot be fully comprehended by believers in this life. Nevertheless, they are satisfied to know and experience that by this grace of God they are enabled to believe with the heart and to love their Savior.

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 14. Faith is therefore to be considered as the gift of God, not on account of its being offered by

God to man, to be accepted or rejected at his pleasure, but because it is in reality conferred upon him, breathed and infused into him; nor even because God bestows the power or ability to believe, and then expects that man should by the exercise of his own free will consent to the terms of salvation and actually believe in Christ, but because He who works in man both to will and to work, and indeed all things in all, produces both the will to believe and the act of believing also.

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 15. God is under no obligation to confer this grace upon any; for how can He be indebted to one who had no previous gifts to bestow as a foundation for such recompense? Nay, how can He be indebted to one who has nothing of his own but sin and falsehood? He, therefore, who becomes the subject of this grace owes eternal gratitude to God, and gives Him thanks forever. Whoever is not made partaker thereof is either altogether regardless of these spiritual gifts and satisfied with his own condition, or is in no apprehension of danger, and vainly boasts the possession of that which he has not. Further, with respect to those who outwardly profess their faith and amend their lives, we are bound, after the example of the apostle, to judge and speak of them in the most favorable manner; for the secret recesses of the heart are unknown to us. And as to others who have not yet been called, it is our duty to pray for them to God, who calls the things that are not as if they were. But we are in no wise to conduct ourselves towards them with haughtiness, as if we had made ourselves to differ.

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 16. But as man by the fall did not cease to be a creature endowed with understanding and will, nor did sin which pervaded the whole race of mankind deprive him of the human nature, but brought upon him depravity and spiritual death; so also this grace of regeneration does not treat men as senseless stocks and blocks, nor take away their will and it

properties, or do violence thereto; but is spiritually quickens, heals, corrects, and at the same time sweetly and powerfully bends it, that where carnal rebellion and resistance formerly prevailed, a ready and sincere spiritual obedience begins to reign; in which the true and spiritual restoration and freedom of our will consist. Wherefore, unless the admirable Author of every good work so deal with us, man can have no hope of being able to rise from his fall by his own free will, by which, in a state of innocence, he plunged himself into ruin.

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: ARTICLE 17. As the almighty operation of God whereby He brings forth and supports this our natural life does not exclude but require the use of means by which God, of His infinite mercy and goodness, has chosen to exert His influence, so also the aforementioned supernatural operation of God by which we are regenerated in no wise excludes or subverts the use of the gospel, which the most wise God has ordained to be the seed of regeneration and food of the soul. Wherefore, as the apostles and the teachers who succeeded them piously instructed the people concerning this grace of God, to His glory and to the abasement of all pride, and in the meantime, however, neglected not to keep them, by the holy admonitions of the gospel, under the influence of the Word, the sacraments, and ecclesiastical discipline; so even now it should be far from those who give or receive instruction in the Church to presume to tempt God by separating what He of His good pleasure has most intimately joined together. For grace is conferred by means of admonitions; and the more readily we perform our duty, the more clearly this favor of God, working in us, usually manifest itself, and the more directly His work is advanced; to whom alone all the glory, both for the means and for their saving fruit and efficacy, is forever due. Amen.

## REJECTION OF ERRORS

The true doctrine having been explained, the Synod rejects the errors of those:

**THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 1.** Who teach: That it cannot properly be said that original sin in itself suffices to condemn the whole human race or to deserve temporal and eternal punishment.

For these contradict the apostle, who declares: "Therefore, just as sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned (Rom 5:12)." And: "The judgment followed one sin and brought condemnation (Rom 5:16)." And "the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23)."

**THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 2.** Who teach: That the spiritual gifts or the good qualities and virtues, such as goodness, holiness, righteousness, could not belong to the will of man when he was first created, and that these, therefore, cannot have been separated therefrom in the fall.

For such is contrary to the description of the image of God which the apostle gives in Eph. 4:24, where he declares that it consists in righteousness and holiness, which undoubtedly belong to the will.

**THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 3.** Who teach: That in spiritual death the spiritual gifts are not separate from the will of man, since the will in itself has never been corrupted, but only hindered through the darkness of the understanding and the irregularity of the affection; and that, these hindrances having been removed, the will can then bring into operation its nature powers, that is, that the will of itself is able to will and to choose, or not to will and not to choose, all manner of good which may be presented to it.

This is an innovation and an error, and tends to elevate the powers of the free will, contrary to the declaration of the prophet: "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure (Jer 17:9)"; and of the apostle: "All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts (Eph 2:3)."

**THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 4.** Who teach: That the unregenerate man is not really nor utterly dead in sin, nor destitute of all powers unto spiritual good, but that he can yet hunger and thirst after righteousness and life, and offer the sacrifice of a contrite and broken spirit, which is pleasing to God.

For these things are contrary to the express testimony of Scripture: "you were dead in your transgressions and sins (Eph 2:1, 5)." And: "every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time. (Gen 6:5, 8:21)." Moreover, to hunger and thirst after deliverance from misery and after life, and to offer unto God the sacrifice of a broken spirit, is peculiar to the regenerate and those that are called blessed (Ps 51:17; Matt 5:6).

**THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 5.** Who teach: That the corrupt and natural man can so well use the common grace (by which they understand the light of nature), or the gifts still left him after the fall, that he can gradually gain by their good use a greater, that is, the evangelical or saving grace, and salvation itself; and that in this way God on His part shows Himself ready to reveal Christ unto all men, since He applies to all sufficiently and efficiently the means necessary to conversion.

For both the experience of all ages and the Scriptures testify that this is untrue. "He has revealed his word to Jacob, his laws and decrees to Israel. He has done this for no other nation; they do not know his

laws (Psa 147:19-20)." "In the past, he let all nations go their own way (Acts 14:16)." And: "Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to (Acts 16:6-7)."

**THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 6.** Who teach: That in the true conversion of man no new qualities, powers, or gifts can be infused by God into the will, and that therefore faith, through which we are first converted and because of which we are called believers, is not a quality or gift infused by God but only an act of man, and that it cannot be said to be a gift, except in respect of the power to attain to this faith.

For thereby they contradict the Holy Scriptures, which declare that God infuses new qualities of faith, of obedience, and of the consciousness of His love into our hearts: ""This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts (Jer 31:33)." And: "For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants (Isa 44:3)." And: "God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us (Rom 5:5)." This is also repugnant to the constant practice of the Church, which prays by the mouth of the prophet thus: "Restore me, and I will return (Jer 31:18)."

**THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 7.** Who teach: That the grace whereby we are converted to God is only a gentle advising, or (as others explain it) that this is the noblest manner of working in the conversion of man, and that this manner of working, which consists

in advising, is most in harmony with man's nature; and that there is no reason why this advising grace alone should not be sufficient to make the natural man spiritual; indeed, that God does not produce the consent of the will except through this manner of advising; and that the power of the divine working, whereby it surpasses the working of Satan, consists in this that God promises eternal, while Satan promise only temporal good.

But this is altogether Pelagian and contrary to the whole Scripture, which, besides this, teaches yet another and far more powerful and divine manner of the Holy Spirit's working in the conversion of man, as in Ezekiel: "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh (Ezek 36:26)."

**THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 8.** Who teach: That god in the regeneration of man does not use such powers of His omnipotence as potently and infallibly bend man's will to faith and conversion; but that all the works of grace having been accomplished, which God employs to convert man, man may yet so resist god and the Holy Spirit, when God intends man's regeneration and wills to regenerate him, and indeed that man often does so resist that he prevents entirely his regeneration, and that it therefore remains in man's power to be regenerated or not.

For this is nothing less than the denial of all that efficiency of God's grace in our conversion, and the subjecting of the working of Almighty God to the will of man, which is contrary to the apostles, who teach that we believe accord to the working of the strength of his might (Eph 1:19); and that God fulfills every desire of goodness and every work of faith with power (2 Th 1:11); and that "His divine



power has given us everything we need for life and godliness (2 Pet 1:3)."

THIRD AND FOURTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 9. Who teach: That grace and free will are partial causes which together work the beginning of conversion, and that grace, in order of working, does not precede the working of the will; that is, that God does not efficiently help the will of man unto conversion until the will of man moves and determines to do this.

For the ancient Church has long ago condemned this doctrine of the Pelagians according to the words of the apostle: "It does not, therefore, depend on man's desire or effort, but on God's mercy (Rom 9:16)." Likewise: "For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it (1 Cor 4:7)?" And: "for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose (Phil 2:13)."

#### FIFTH HEAD OF DOCTRINE. THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS

FIFTH HEAD: ARTICLE 1. Those whom God, according to His purpose, calls to the communion of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and regenerates by the Holy Spirit, He also delivers from the dominion and slavery of sin, though in this life He does not deliver them altogether from the body of sin and from the infirmities of the flesh.

FIFTH HEAD: ARTICLE 2. Hence spring forth the daily sins of infirmity, and blemishes cleave even to the best works of the saints. These are to them a perpetual reason to humiliate themselves before God and to flee for refuge to Christ crucified; to mortify the flesh more and more by the spirit of prayer and by holy exercises of piety;

and to press forward to the goal of perfection, until at length, delivered from this body of death, they shall reign with the Lamb of God in heaven.

FIFTH HEAD: ARTICLE 3. By reason of these remains of indwelling sin, and also because the temptations of the world and of Satan, those who are converted could not persevere in that grace if left to their own strength. But God is faithful, who, having conferred grace, mercifully confirms and powerfully preserves them therein, even to the end.

FIFTH HEAD: ARTICLE 4. Although the weakness of the flesh cannot prevail against the power of God, who confirms and preserves true believers in a state of grace, yet converts are not always so influenced and actuated by the Spirit of God as not in some particular instances sinfully to deviate from the guidance of divine grace, so as to be seduced by and to comply with the lusts of the flesh; they must, therefore, be constant in watching and prayer, that they may not be led into temptation. When these are great and heinous sins by the flesh, the world, and Satan, but sometimes by the righteous permission of God actually are drawn into these evils. This, the lamentable fall of David, Peter, and other saints described in Holy Scripture, demonstrates.

FIFTH HEAD: ARTICLE 5. By such enormous sins, however, they very highly offend God, incur a deadly guilt, grieve the Holy Spirit, interrupt the exercise of faith, very grievously wound their consciences, and sometimes for a while lose the sense of God's favor, until, when they change their course by serious repentance, the light of God's fatherly countenance again shines upon them.

FIFTH HEAD: ARTICLE 6. But God, who is rich in mercy, according to His unchangeable purpose of election, does not wholly withdraw

the Holy Spirit from His own people even in their grievous falls; nor suffers them to proceed so far as they lose the grace of adoption and forfeit the state of justification, or to commit the sin unto death or against the Holy Spirit; nor does He permit them to be totally deserted, and to plunge themselves into everlasting destruction.

FIFTH HEAD: ARTICLE 7. For in the first place, in these falls He preserves in them the incorruptible seed of regeneration from perishing or being totally lost; and again, by His Word and Spirit He certainly and effectually renews them to repentance, to a sincere and godly sorrow for their sins, that they may seek and obtain remission in the blood of the Mediator, may again experience the favor of a reconciled God, through faith adore His mercies, and henceforward more diligently work out their own salvation with fear and trembling.

FIFTH HEAD: ARTICLE 8. Thus it is not in consequence of their own merits or strength, but of God's free mercy, that they neither totally fall from faith and grace nor continue and perish finally in their backslidings; which, with respect to themselves is not only possible, but would undoubtedly happen; but with respect to God, it is utterly impossible, since His counsel cannot be changed nor His promise fail; neither can the call according to His purpose be revoked, nor the merit, intercession, and preservation of Christ be rendered ineffectual, nor the sealing of the Holy Spirit be frustrated or obliterated.

FIFTH HEAD: ARTICLE 9. Of this preservation of the elect to salvation and of their perseverance in the faith, true believers themselves may and do obtain assurance according to the measure of their faith, whereby they surely believe that they are and ever will continue true and living members of the Church, and that they have the forgiveness of sins and life eternal.

FIFTH HEAD: ARTICLE 10. This assurance, however, is not produced by any peculiar revelation contrary to or independent of the Word of God, but springs from faith in God's promises, which He has most abundantly revealed in His Word for our comfort; from the testimony of the Holy Spirit, witnessing with our spirit that we are children and heirs of God (Rom 8:16); and lastly, from a serious and holy desire to preserve a good conscience and to perform good works. And if the elect of God were deprived of this solid comfort that they shall finally obtain the victory, and of this infallible pledge of eternal glory, they would be of all men the most miserable.

FIFTH HEAD: ARTICLE 11. The Scripture moreover testifies that believers in this life have to struggle with various carnal doubts, and that under grievous temptations they do not always feel this full assurance of faith and certainty of persevering. But God, who is the Father of all consolation, does not suffer them to be tempted above that they are able, but will with the temptation make also the way of escape, that they may be able to endure it (1 Cor 10:13), and by the Holy Spirit again inspires them with the comfortable assurance of persevering.

FIFTH HEAD: ARTICLE 12. This certainty of perseverance, however, is so far from exciting in believers a spirit of pride, or of rendering them carnally secure, that on the contrary it is the real source of humility, filial reverence, true piety, patience in every tribulation, fervent prayers, constancy in suffering and in confessing the truth, and of solid rejoicing in God; so that the consideration of this benefit should serve as an incentive to the serious and constant practice of gratitude and good works, as appears from the testimonies of Scripture and the examples of the saints.

FIFTH HEAD: ARTICLE 13. Neither does renewed confidence of persevering produce licentiousness or a disregard of piety in those who are recovered from backsliding; but it renders them much more careful and solicitous to continue in the ways of the Lord, which He has ordained, that they who walk therein may keep the assurance of persevering; lest, on account of their abuse of His fatherly kindness, God should turn away His gracious countenance from them (to behold which is to the godly dearer than life, and the withdrawal of which is more bitter than death) and they in consequence thereof should fall into more grievous torments of conscience.

FIFTH HEAD: ARTICLE 14. And as it has pleased God, by the preaching of the gospel, to begin this work of grace in us, so He preserves, continues, and perfects it by the hearing and reading of His Word, by meditation thereon, and by the exhortations, threatenings, and promises thereof, and by the use of the sacraments.

FIFTH HEAD: ARTICLE 15. The carnal mind is unable to comprehend this doctrine of the perseverance of the saints and the certainty thereof, which God has most abundantly revealed in His Word, for the glory of His Name and the consolation of pious souls, and which He impresses upon the hearts of the believers. Satan abhors it, the world ridicules it, the ignorant and hypocritical abuse it, and the heretics oppose it. But the bride of Christ has always most tenderly loved and constantly defended it as an inestimable treasure; and God, against whom neither counsel nor strength can prevail, will dispose her so to continue to the end. Now to this one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be honor and glory forever. Amen.

REJECTION OF ERRORS

The true doctrine having been explained, the Synod rejects the errors of those:

**FIFTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 1.** Who teach: That the perseverance of the true believers is not a fruit of election, or a gift of God gained by the death of Christ, but a condition of the new covenant which (as they declare) man before his decisive election and justification must fulfil through his free will.

For the Holy Scripture testifies that this follows out of election, and is given the elect in virtue of the death, the resurrection, and the intercession of Christ: "What Israel sought so earnestly it did not obtain, but the elect did. The others were hardened (Rom 11:7)." Likewise: "He who did not spare His own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ (Rom 8:32-35)?"

**FIFTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 2.** Who teach: That God does indeed provide the believer with sufficient powers to persevere, and is ever ready to preserve these in him if he will do his duty; but that, though all though which are necessary to persevere in faith and which God will use to preserve faith are made us of, even then it ever depends on the pleasure of the will whether it will persevere or not.

For this idea contains outspoken Pelagianism, and while it would make men free, it make them robbers of God's honor, contrary to the prevailing agreement of the evangelical doctrine, which takes from man all cause of boasting, and ascribes all the praise for this favor to the grace of God alone; and contrary to the apostle, who declares that

it is God, "He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (1 Cor 1:8)."

FIFTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 3. Who teach: That the true believers and regenerate not only can fall from justifying faith and likewise from grace and salvation wholly and to the end, but indeed often do fall from this and are lost forever.

For this conception makes powerless the grace, justification, regeneration, and continued preservation by Christ, contrary to the expressed words of the apostle Paul: "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him (Rom 5:8-9)." And contrary to the apostle John: "No one who is born of God will continue to sin, because God's seed remains in him; he cannot go on sinning, because he has been born of God (1 John 3:9)." And also contrary to the words of Jesus Christ: "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all ; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand (John 10:28-29)."

FIFTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 4. Who teach: That true believers and regenerate can sin the sin unto death or against the Holy Spirit.

Since the same apostle John, after having spoken in the fifth chapter of his first epistle, vs. 16 and 17, of those who sin unto death and having forbidden to pray for them, immediately adds to this in vs. 18: "We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin (meaning a sin of that character); the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him (1 John 5:18)."

FIFTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 5. Who teach: That without a special revelation we can have no certainty of future perseverance in this

life.

For by this doctrine the sure comfort of the true believers is taken away in this life, and the doubts of the papist are again introduced into the Church, while the Holy Scriptures constantly deduce this assurance, not from a special and extraordinary revelation, but from the marks proper to the children of God and from the very constant promises of God. So especially the apostle Paul: "neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom 8:39)." And John declares: "Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us (1 John 3:24)."

**FIFTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 6.** Who teach: That the doctrine of the certainty of perseverance and of salvation from its own character and nature is a cause of indolence and is injurious to godliness, good morals, prayers, and other holy exercises, but that on the contrary it is praiseworthy to doubt.

For these show that they do not know the power of divine grace and the working of the indwelling Holy Spirit. And they contradict the apostle John, who teaches that opposite with express words in his first epistle: "Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure (1 John 3:2-3)." Furthermore, these are contradicted by the example of the saints, both of the Old and the New Testament, who though they were assured of their perseverance and salvation, were nevertheless constant in prayers and other exercises of godliness.



FIFTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 7. Who teach: That the faith of those who believe for a time does not differ from justifying and saving faith except only in duration.

For Christ Himself, in Matt 13:20, Luke 8:13, and in other places, evidently notes, beside this duration, a threefold difference between those who believe only for a time and true believers, when He declares that the former receive the seed on stony ground, but the latter in the good ground or heart; that the former are without root, but the latter have a firm root; that the former are without fruit, but that the latter bring forth their fruit in various measure, with constancy and steadfastness.

FIFTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 8. Who teach: That it is not absurd that one having lost his first regeneration is again and even often born anew.

For these deny by this doctrine the incorruptibleness of the seed of God, whereby we are born again; contrary to the testimony of the apostle Peter: "For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable (1 Pet 1:23)."

FIFTH HEAD: PARAGRAPH 9. Who teach: That Christ has in no place prayed that believers should infallibly continue in faith.

For the contradict Christ Himself, who says: "I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail (Luke 22:32)", and the evangelist John, who declares that Christ has not prayed for the apostles only, but also for those who through their word would believe: "Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name," and "My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one (John 17:11, 15, 20)."

## CONCLUSION

And this is the perspicuous, simple, an ingenuous declaration of the orthodox doctrine respecting the five articles which have been controverted in the Belgic Churches; and the rejection of the errors, with which they have for some time been troubled. This doctrine the Synod judges to be drawn from the Word of God, and to be agreeable to the confession of the Reformed Churches. Whence it clearly appears that some, whom such conduct by no means became, have violated all truth, equity, and charity, in wishing to persuade the public:

"That the doctrine of the Reformed Churches concerning predestination, and the points annexed to it, by its own genius and necessary tendency, leads off the minds of men from all piety and religion; that it is a opiate administered by the flesh and the devil; and the stronghold of Satan, where he lies in wait for all, and from which he wounds multitudes, and mortally strikes through many with the darts both of despair and security; that it makes God the author of sin, unjust, tyrannical, hypocritical; that it is noting more than interpolated Stoicism, Manicheism, Libertinism, Turcism; that it renders men carnally secure, since they are persuaded by it that noting can hinder the salvation of the elect, let them live as they please; and, therefore, that they may safely perpetrate every species of the most atrocious crimes; and that, if the reprobate should even perform truly all the works of the saints, their obedience would not in the least contribute tot their salvation; that the same doctrine teaches that God, by a mere arbitrary act of his will, without the least respect or view to any sin, has predestinated the greatest part of the world to eternal damnation, and has created them for this very purpose; that in the same manner in which the election is the fountain and cause of faith and good works, reprobation is the cause

of unbelief and impiety; that many children of the faithful are torn, guiltless, from their mothers' breasts, and tyrannically plunged into hell: so that neither baptism nor the prayers of the Church at their baptism can at all profit them;" and many other things of the same kind which the Reformed Churches not only do not acknowledge, but even detest with their whole soul.

Wherefore, this Synod of Dort, in the name of the Lord, conjures as many as piously call upon the name of our Savior Jesus Christ to judge of the faith of the Reformed Churches, not from the calumnies which on every side are heaped upon it, nor from the private expressions of a few among ancient and modern teachers, often dishonestly quoted, or corrupted and wrested to a meaning quite foreign to their intention; but from the public confessions of the Churches themselves, and from this declaration of the orthodox doctrine, confirmed by the unanimous consent of all and each of the members of the whole Synod. Moreover, the Synod warns calumniators themselves to consider the terrible judgment of God which awaits them, for bearing false witness against the confessions of so many Churches; for distressing the consciences of the weak; and for laboring to render suspected the society of the truly faithful.

Finally, this Synod exhorts all their brethren in the gospel of Christ to conduct themselves piously and religiously in handling this doctrine, both in the universities and churches; to direct it, as well in discourse as in writing, to the glory of the Divine name, to holiness of life, and to the consolation of afflicted souls; to regulate, by the Scripture, according to the analogy of faith, not only their sentiments, but also their language, and to abstain from all those phrases which exceed the limits necessary to be observed in ascertaining the genuine sense of the Holy Scriptures, and may

furnish insolent sophists with a just pretext for violently assailing, or even vilifying, the doctrine of the Reformed Churches.

May Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who, seated at the Father's right hand, gives gifts to men, sanctify us in the truth; bring to the truth those who err; shut the mouths of the calumniators of sound doctrine, and endue the faithful ministers of his Word with the spirit of wisdom and discretion, that all their discourses may tend to the glory of God, and the edification of those who hear them. Amen.

**Calvinist / Arminian Controversy**

## **Universal Atonement**

**by John L. Girardeau**

it is impossible to prove, that a scheme which provides for the possible salvation of all men more conspicuously displays the divine goodness than one which secures the certain salvation of some men. The words, atonement offered for all men, universal atonement, Christ died to save all men, Christ died for every soul of man, - these words are very attractive. They seem to breathe a philanthropy which is worthy of God. But let us not be imposed upon by the beauty or pomp of mere phrases. What is the exact meaning of the language? It is elliptical, and, to be understood, must be filled out. The meaning is, that atonement was offered for all men, that Christ died for all men, merely to make the salvation of all men possible: therefore the meaning is not what the language appears to imply - namely, that atonement was offered for all men to secure their salvation; that

Christ died to save all men. That is explicitly denied. It is the heresy of Universalism. Let it be noticed - attention is challenged to it - that, upon the Arminian scheme, the whole result of the atonement, of the death of Christ, of the mission of the Holy Ghost, is the salvability of all men - the possible salvation of all. Dispel the glamor from these charming words, and that is absolutely all that they mean.

But let us go on. What precisely is meant by the possible salvation of all men? It cannot mean the probable salvation of all men. If it did, the word probable would have been used; but facts would have contradicted the theory. Not even the Arminian would assert the probable salvation of all men, in consequence of the atonement. It is then only a possible salvation that is intended. Now what makes the salvation of all possible? It is granted, that all obstacles in the way of any sinner's return to God are, on God's side, removed. The Calvinist admits that, equally with the Arminian. Where then lies the difference? What does the Arminian mean by a salvation possible to all? He means a salvation that may be secured, if the human will consent to receive it. To give this consent it is persuaded by grace. But it is not constrained by grace to give it. It holds the decision of the question in its power. It may accept the offered salvation; it may not. The whole thing is contingent upon the action of the sinner's will. This is what makes the salvation of all men merely possible; and it inevitably follows that the destruction of all men is also possible.

I shall, with divine help, presently prove that a possible salvation, contingent upon the action of a sinner's will, is really an impossible salvation. But conceding now, for argument's sake, that there is such a thing as a merely possible salvation of all men, it is repeated, that it cannot be shown to exhibit the beneficence of God one whit more clearly than does the certain salvation of some men. Upon the Calvinistic scheme, the absolute certainty of the salvation of

countless multitudes of the race is provided for; on the Arminian, the certainty of the salvation of not one human being is provided for. But let it be admitted that although not provided for, yet in some way, the final result will in fact prove to be the certain salvation of countless multitudes. How can the Arminian show that these multitudes will exceed in number those which are saved upon the Calvinistic scheme? He can not. The human faculties have no data upon which they can institute such an equation. But until that is shown, it is impossible to see how his scheme more signally displays the saving goodness of God than the Calvinist's. One thing is clear: according to the Calvinistic doctrine, those who are saved will praise God's goodness for having saved them; and, according to the Arminian, they will praise his goodness for having made it possible for them to be saved. Which would be the directer tribute to the divine benevolence, it may be left to common sense to judge.

The Arminian, however, if he should candidly admit that his scheme labors under the difficulties which have been mentioned, will still reply, that it has, in regard to goodness, this advantage over the Calvinistic: that it makes possible the salvation of those whose salvation the Calvinistic scheme makes impossible. He charges, that while the Calvinistic scheme makes the salvation of some certain, it makes the destruction of some equally certain. The one scheme opens the door of hope to all; the other closes it against some. This, it is contended, cannot be shown to consist with the goodness of God. It is not intended to deny that this is a difficulty which the Calvinistic scheme has to carry. Its adherents are sufficiently aware of the awful mystery which hangs round this subject, and of the limitations upon their faculties, to deter them from arrogantly claiming to understand the whole case. The difficulty is this: If God can, on the ground of the all-sufficient merit of Christ, save those who actually perish, why does not his goodness lead him to save them? Why, if he know that,

without his efficacious grace, they will certainly perish, does he withhold from them that grace, and so seal the certainty of their destruction? These solemn questions the Calvinist professes his ability to answer only in the words of our blessed Lord: "Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight."

But should the Arminian, professing to decide how the Deity should proceed in relation to sinners, use this conceded difficulty for the purpose of showing that the Calvinist imputes malignity to God, it is fair, it is requisite, to prove that he has no right to press this objection - that it is incumbent on him to look to his own defences. What if it should turn out that he is oppressed by a still greater difficulty?

In the first place, the Evangelical Arminian admits that God perfectly foreknew all that will ever come to pass. Consequently, he admits that God foreknew what, and how many, human beings will finally perish. He must also admit that God foreknows that he will judge them at the last day, and that what God foreknows he will do on that day, he must have eternally purposed to do. The final condemnation, therefore, of a definite number of men is absolutely certain. The question is not now whether God makes it certain. Let us not leave the track. What is asserted the Arminian must admit is, that it is certain. Now this is very different from saying that God eternally knew that all men would perish, unless he should interpose to save them. For he foreknew his purpose to make such an interposition in behalf of some of the race, and so foreknew the absolute certainty of their final salvation. The case before us is, not that God knew that those who will actually perish would perish unless he interposed to save them. It is, that he foreknew that they will finally perish. But if this must be admitted - that God foreknew with certainty that some human beings will be, at the last day, adjudged by him to

destruction, then their destruction is certain. Now we crave to know how a provision of redemption which made their salvation possible can exercise any effect upon their destiny. Their destruction is to God's knowledge certain. How can the possibility of their salvation change that certainty? It cannot. Where, then, is the goodness to them of the redeeming provision? It is impossible to see.

Further, how can salvation be possible to those who are certain to be lost? How can their salvation be possible, if their destruction be certain? There is but one conceivable answer: it is, that although God foreknew that they would be lost, he also foreknew that they might be saved. That is to say, there was an extrinsic impossibility of their salvation created by God's certain foreknowledge, but an intrinsic possibility of their salvation growing out of their ability to avail themselves of the provision of redemption. It may be pleaded that their case is like that of Adam in innocence. God knew that he would fall, but he also knew that he might stand. This brings us to the next point, and that will take us down to one of the fundamental difficulties of the Arminian scheme.

In the second place, a possible salvation would be to a sinner an impossible salvation. Mere salvability would be to him inevitable destruction. It will be admitted, without argument, that a possible salvation is not, in itself, an actual salvation. That which may be is not that which is. Before a possible can become an actual salvation something needs to be done - a condition must be performed upon which is suspended its passage from possibility to actuality. The question is, What is this thing which needs to be done - what is this condition which must be fulfilled before salvation can become a fact to the sinner? The Arminian answer is: Repentance and faith on the sinner's part. He must consent to turn from his iniquities and accept Christ as his Saviour. The further question presses, By what agency



does the sinner perform this condition - by what power does he repent, believe, and so accept salvation? The answer to this question, whatever it may be, must indicate the agency, the power, which determines the sinner's repenting, believing and so accepting salvation. It is not enough to point out an agency, a power, which is, however potent, merely an auxiliary to the determining cause. It is the determining cause itself that must be given as the answer to the question. It must be a factor which renders, by virtue of its own energy, the final decision - an efficient cause which, by its own inherent causality, makes a possible salvation an actual and experimental fact. What is this causal agent which is the sovereign arbiter of human destiny? The Arminian answer to this last question of the series is, The sinner's will.[28](#) It is the sinner's will which, in the last resort, determines the question whether a possible, shall become an actual, salvation. This has already been sufficiently evinced in the foregoing remarks. But what need is there of argument to prove what any one, even slightly acquainted with Arminian theology, knows that it maintains? Indeed, it is one of the distinctive and vital features of that theology, contra-distinguishing it to the Calvinistic. The Calvinist holds that the efficacious and irresistible grace of God applies salvation to the sinner; the Arminian, that the grace of God although communicated to every man is inefficacious and resistible, and that the sinner's will uses it as merely an assisting influence in determining the final result of accepting a possible salvation and so making it actual. Grace does not determine the will; the will "improves" the grace and determines itself. Grace is the handmaid, the sinner's will the mistress. Let us suppose that in regard to the question whether salvation shall be accepted, there is a perfect equipoise between the motions of grace and the contrary inclinations of the sinner's will. A very slight added influence will destroy the equilibrium. Shall it be from grace or from the sinner's will? If from the former, grace determines the question, and the Calvinistic

doctrine is admitted. But that the Arminian denies. It must then be from the sinner's will; and however slight and inconsiderable this added influence of the will may be, it determines the issue. It is like the feather that alights upon one of two evenly balanced scales and turns the beam.

Moreover, this will of the sinner which discharges the momentous office of determining the question of salvation is his natural will. It cannot be a gracious will, that is, a will renewed by grace; for if it were, the sinner would be already in a saved condition. But the very question is, Will he consent to be saved? Now if it be not the will of a man already in a saved condition, it is the will of a man yet in an unsaved condition. It is the will of an unbelieving and unconverted man, that is, a natural man, and consequently must be a natural will. It is this natural will, then, which finally determines the question whether a possible salvation shall become an actual. It is its high office to settle the matter of practical salvation. In this solemn business, as in all others, it has an irrefragable autonomy. Not even in the critical transition from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son, can it be refused the exercise of its sacred and inalienable prerogative of contrary choice. At the supreme moment of the final determination of the soul "for Christ to live and die," the determination might be otherwise. The will may be illuminated, moved, assisted by grace, but not controlled and determined by it. To the last it has the power of resisting grace and of successfully resisting it. To it - I use the language reluctantly - the blessed Spirit of God is represented as sustaining the attitude of the persuasive orator of grace. He argues, he pleads, he expostulates, he warns, he beseeches the sinner's will in the melting accents of Calvary and alarms it with the thunders of judgment - but that is all. He cannot without trespassing upon its sovereignty renew and re-create and determine his will. This is no misrepresentation, no exaggeration, of

the Arminian's position. It is what he contends for. It is what he must contend for. It is one of the hinges on which his system turns. Take it away, and the system swings loosely and gravitates to an inevitable fall.

Now this is so palpably opposed to Scripture and the facts of experience, that Evangelical Arminians endeavor to modify it, so as to relieve it of the charge of being downright Pelagianism. That the attempt is hopeless, has already been shown. It is utterly vain to say, that grace gives ability to the sinner sufficient for the formation of that final volition which decides the question of personal salvation. Look at it. Do they mean, by this ability, regenerating grace? If they do, as regenerating grace unquestionably determines the sinner's will, they give up their position and adopt the Calvinistic. No; they affirm that they do not, because the Calvinistic position is liable to two insuperable objections: first, that it limits efficacious grace to the elect, denying it to others; secondly, that efficacious and determining, grace would contradict the laws by which the human will is governed. It comes back to this, then: that notwithstanding this imparted ability, the natural will is the factor which determines the actual relation of the soul to salvation. The admission of a gracious ability, therefore, does not relieve the difficulty. It is not an efficacious and determining influence; it is simply suasion. The natural will may yield to it or resist it. It is a vincible influence.

Now this being the real state of the case, according to the Arminian scheme, it is perfectly manifest that no sinner could be saved. There is no need of argument. It is simply out of the question, that the sinner in the exercise of his natural will can repent, believe in Christ, and so make a possible salvation actual. Let it be clearly seen that, in the final settlement of the question of personal religion, the Arminian doctrine is, that the will does not decide as determined by

the grace of God, but by its own inherent self-determining power, and the inference, if any credit is attached to the statements of Scripture, is forced upon us, that it makes the salvation of the sinner impossible. A salvation, the appropriation of which is dependent upon the sinner's natural will, is no salvation; and the Arminian position is that the appropriation of salvation is dependent upon the natural will of the sinner. The stupendous paradox is thus shown to be true - that a merely possible salvation is an impossible salvation.

If in reply to this argument the Arminian should say, that he does not hold that the merely natural will which is corrupt is the final determining agent, but that the will makes the final decision by reason of some virtue characterizing it, the rejoinder is obvious: first, this virtue must either be inherent in the natural will of the sinner, or be communicated by grace. If it be inherent in the natural will, it is admitted that it is the natural will itself, through a power resident in it, which determines to improve communicated grace and appropriate salvation; and that would confirm the charge that the Arminian makes the final decision to accept salvation depend upon the natural will, which would be to render salvation impossible. If this virtue in the will which determines it to make the final decision be communicated by grace, it is a part of the gracious ability imparted to the sinner; and then we would have a part of this communicated gracious ability improving another part - that is, gracious ability improving gracious ability. Now this would be absurd on any other supposition than that grace is the determining agent, and that supposition the Arminian rejects. To state the case briefly: either this virtue in the will which is the controlling element is grace or it is not. If it be grace, then grace is the determining element, and the Calvinistic doctrine is admitted. If it be not grace, then the will by its natural power is the determining element, and that is impossible,

- it is impossible for the natural will, which is itself sinful and needs to be renewed, to determine the question of practical salvation.

Let us put the matter in a different light. There must be some virtue in the natural man to lead him to improve grace - to use gracious ability. Now whence is this virtue? It must be either from God, or from himself. If it be from God, then the cause which determines the question of accepting salvation is from God, and the Calvinistic doctrine is admitted. If it be from himself, then it is the natural will which uses the gracious ability, and determines the appropriation of salvation; and that is impossible.

Further, the Arminian must admit either that the will makes the final decision in consequence of some virtue in it, or that it makes it without all virtue. If in consequence of some virtue, then as that virtue is distinguished from the grace it uses, it is merely natural, and the natural will is affirmed to be virtuous enough to decide the all-important question of salvation; which is contrary to the doctrine, maintained by Evangelical Arminians, that the natural man is depraved, and destitute of saving virtue. If the will makes the final decision without all virtue, then the natural will, as sinful, improves grace to the salvation of the soul, which is absurd and impossible. The Arminian is shut up to admit that it is the natural will of the sinner which improves grace and determines the question of personal salvation; and it is submitted, that such a position makes salvation impossible.

There is another mode of showing that, according to the distinctive principles of the Arminian system, salvation is impossible. The Scriptures unquestionably teach that salvation is by grace: "By grace ye are saved."<sup>29</sup> Not only so, but with equal clearness they teach that none can be saved except by grace; that no sinner can save himself:

"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 Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."<sup>30</sup> There is no need to argue this point, since it is admitted by Evangelical Arminians as well as by Calvinists. Their common doctrine is that no sinner can save himself. If his salvation depended upon his saving himself it would be impossible. But the distinctive doctrines of Arminianism - the doctrines which distinguish it from Calvinism - necessitate the inference that the sinner saves himself. This inference is illegitimate, the Arminian contends, because he holds that had not Christ died to make salvation possible and were not the Holy Spirit imparted to induce the sinner to embrace it, no man could be saved. This, however, is no proof of the illegitimacy of the inference from his doctrine that the sinner is after all his own saviour. The proof of the legitimacy of the inference is established in this way: According to Arminianism, sufficient grace is imparted to all men. Every man has, consequently, sufficient ability to repent, believe and embrace salvation. This sufficient grace or ability, therefore, is common to all men. But that it does not determine all men to be saved is proved by the fact that some are not saved. This the Arminian holds. Now, what makes the difference between the saved and the unsaved? Why is one man saved and another not saved? The answer to these questions is of critical importance and it must be rendered. What answer does the Arminian return? This: The reason is, that one man determines to improve the common grace and another does not. He cannot hold that grace makes the difference, for grace is the common possession of both. The specific difference of their cases is the respective determinations of their own wills, undetermined by grace. He therefore who determines to use the common gift cannot be saved by it, but by his determination to use it. If it be not that which saves

him, but the grace itself, then all who have the grace would be saved by it equally with him. No, it is not grace which saves him, but his use of grace. And as he might have determined not to use it, it is manifest that he is saved by the exercise of his own will; in other words that he saves himself. The saving factor is his will; he is his own saviour. This is made still plainer by asking the question, Why is another not saved, but ruined? He had the same sufficient grace with him who is saved. His own determination not to use it, it will be said, is the cause of his ruin - he therefore ruins himself. In the same way precisely the determination of the saved man to use it is the cause of his salvation - he, therefore, saves himself. Granted, that he could not be saved without grace; still, grace only makes his salvation possible. He must make it a fact; and beyond controversy, he who makes his salvation a fact accomplishes his salvation. He saves himself.

This reasoning conclusively evinces it to be a necessary consequence from the distinctive doctrines of Arminianism, that sinners are not saved by grace but by themselves in the use of grace; and as that position contradicts the plainest teachings of Scripture, the system which necessitates it makes salvation impossible.

To all this it will be replied, that the ability conferred by grace pervades the will itself, and enables, although it does not determine, it to make the final and saving decision. But this by no means mends the matter. Let it be admitted that the will is enabled by grace to decide; if it is not determined by it to the decision, then it follows that there is something in the will different from the gracious ability, which uses that ability in determining the result. What is that different element? It cannot be a gracious power. To admit that would be to contradict the supposition and to give up the question; for in that case it would be grace which determines the decision.

What can that be which differs from the gracious ability conferred and uses it, but the natural power of the sinner's will? But his will, apart from grace, is sinful and therefore disabled. So the Arminian admits. How, then, can a disabled thing use enabling grace? How can it determine to use that grace? Over and beyond the enabling power there is postulated a determining power. The enabling power is grace; over and beyond it is the determining power of the sinful will. The thing is inconceivable. Sin cannot use grace; inability cannot use ability; the dead cannot determine to use life. To say then that grace is infused into the will itself to enable it to form the final volition, which makes a possible salvation actual, does not remove the difficulty. If it does not determine the will, the will determines itself. The very essence of that self-determination is to use or not to use the enabling grace, and therefore must be something different from that grace. The determination is not from grace, but from nature. Again the impossibility of salvation is reached. A doctrine which assigns to grace a merely enabling influence, and denies it a determining power, makes the salvation of a sinner impossible. To say to a sinner, Use the natural strength of your will in determining to avail yourself of grace, would be to say to him, You cannot be saved. For if he answered from the depths of his consciousness, he would groan out the response, Alas, I have no such strength!

The truth is, that a thorough examination of the anthropology of the Arminian discloses the fact that, in the last analysis, it is not essentially different from that of the Socinian and Pelagian. It is cheerfully conceded that the Arminian soteriology is different from the Socinian and Pelagian. For the former professedly holds that the atonement of Christ was vicarious and that it rendered a perfect satisfaction to the retributive justice of God. But, according to it, the atonement did not secure salvation as a certain result to any human beings; and when it comes to the question how the sinner practically



avails himself of the salvation made only possible to all, the Arntinian answers it by saying, that the sinner in the exercise of his own self-determining power, which from its nature is contingent in its exercise, makes salvation his own. The connection between his soul and redemption is effected by his own decision, in the formation of which he is conscious that he might act otherwise - that he might make a contrary choice. There is no real difference between this position and that of the Socinian and Pelagian. The Arminian professes to attach more importance than they to the influence of supernatural grace, but, in the last resort, like them he makes the natural power of the sinner's will the determining cause of personal salvation. Every consideration, therefore, which serves to show the impossibility of salvation upon the anthropological scheme of Socinianism and Pelagianism leads to the conclusion that the same consequence is enforced by that of Arminianism. In both schemes it is nature, and not grace, which actually saves.

Still further, the distinctive doctrines of Arminianism not only make salvation impossible by denying that it is by grace, but also by implying that it is by works. Not that it is intended to say that Arminians in so many words affirm this. On the contrary, they endeavor to show that their system is not liable to this charge. We have, however, to deal with their system and the logical consequences which it involves. The question is, Do the peculiar tenets of the Arminian scheme necessitate the inference that salvation is by works? I shall attempt to prove that they do.

It must be admitted that a system, one of the distinctive doctrines of which is that sinners are in a state of legal probation, affirms salvation by works. The essence of a legal probation is that the subject of moral government is required to render personal obedience to law in order to his being justified. It is conceded on all

hands that Adam's probation was of such a character. He was required to produce a legal obedience. Had it been produced it would have been his own obedience. It makes no difference that he was empowered to render it by sufficient grace. A righteousness does not receive its denomination from the source in which it originates, but from its nature and the end which it contemplates. Had Adam stood, he would have been enabled by grace to produce obedience, but it would have been his own obedience, and it would have secured justification on its own account.

Now it will not be denied that Arminian divines assert that men are now in a state of probation. It would be unnecessary to adduce proof of this. They contend that, in consequence of the atonement offered by Christ for the race, all men become probationers. A chance is given them to secure salvation. The only question is, whether the probation which Arminians affirm for sinners be a legal probation. That it is, may be proved by their own statements. If they take the ground that the obedience to divine requirements may be rendered through the ability conferred by grace, and therefore the probation is not legal, the answer is obvious: the obedience exacted of Adam he was enabled by grace to render; but notwithstanding that fact, his probation was legal. That men now have grace enabling them to render obedience cannot disprove the legal character of their probation.

The argument has ramified into details, but it has not wandered from the thing to be proved, to wit, that a possible salvation is an impossible salvation. All the consequences which have been portrayed as damaging to the Arminian theory of a merely possible salvation flow logically from the fundamental position that sufficient ability is given to every man to make such a merely possible salvation actual to himself. One more consideration will be presented, and it

goes to the root of the matter. It is, that this ability which is affirmed to be sufficient to enable every man to make a possible salvation actual is, according to Arminian showing, itself a sheer impossibility. This may be regarded as an extraordinary assertion, but it is susceptible of proof as speedy as it is clear. The Evangelical Arminian not only admits the fact, but contends for it, that every man in his natural, fallen condition is spiritually dead - is dead in trespasses and sins. The problem for him to solve is, How can this spiritually dead man make his possible salvation an actual salvation? It must not be done by the impartation to him of efficacious and determining grace, for to admit that would be to give up the doctrine of a possible salvation and accept that of a decreed and certain salvation. Nor must it be done by regenerating grace, for two difficulties oppose that supposition: first, this regenerating grace would necessarily be efficacious and determining grace; and secondly, it could not with truth be maintained that every man is regenerated. A degree of grace, therefore, which is short of regenerating grace, must be conferred upon every man. What is that? Sufficient grace - that is to say, a degree of grace imparting ability sufficient to enable every man to make a possible salvation actually his own. Now, the argument is short: a degree of grace which does not regenerate, would be a degree of grace which would not bestow life upon, the spiritually dead sinner. If it did infuse spiritual life it would of course be regenerating grace; but it is denied to be regenerating grace. No other grace would be sufficient for the dead sinner but regenerating or life-giving grace. How could grace enable the dead sinner to perform living functions - to repent, to believe in Christ, to embrace salvation - without first giving him life? In a word, sufficient grace which is not regenerating grace is a palpable impossibility. An ability sufficient to enable the dead sinner to discharge living functions but not sufficient to make him live, is an impossibility. The Arminian is therefore shut up to a choice between two alternatives: either, he must confess sufficient

grace to be regenerating grace, and then he abandons his doctrine; or, he must maintain that grace is sufficient for a dead sinner which does not make him live, and then he asserts an impossibility.

If to this the Arminian reply, that the functions which sufficient grace enables the sinner to perform are not functions of spiritual life, it follows: first, that he contradicts his own position that grace imparts a degree of spiritual life to every man; and, secondly, that he maintains that a spiritually dead man discharges functions which cause him to live, which is infinitely absurd.

If, finally, he reply, that sufficient grace is life-giving and therefore regenerating grace, but that it is not efficacious, and does not determine the fact of the sinner's salvation, the rejoinder is obvious: No spiritually dead sinner can possibly be restored to life except by union with Jesus Christ, the source of spiritual life. To deny that position is to deny Christianity. But if that must be admitted, as union with Christ determines the present salvation of the sinner, sufficient grace which gives life determines the question of present salvation. Sufficient grace gives life by uniting the sinner to Christ, and union with Christ is salvation. Sufficient grace which is conceded to be regenerating, is therefore necessarily efficacious and determining, grace.

We are now prepared to estimate the force of the analogy which, under a preceding head, it was supposed that the Arminian may plead between the case of the sinner and that of Adam. Our first father had sufficient grace, but it was not efficacious grace. It did not determine his standing. It rendered it possible for him to stand, but it did not destroy the possibility of his falling. He had sufficient ability to perform holy acts; nevertheless, it was possible for him to sin. In like manner, it may be said, the sinner, in his natural

condition, has sufficient grace, but not efficacious grace. It renders it possible for him to accept salvation, but it does not destroy the possibility of his rejecting it. He has sufficient ability to repent and believe; yet, notwithstanding this, he may continue impenitent and unbelieving.

I admit the fact that Adam had sufficient grace to enable him to stand in holiness, and that it was possible for him either to stand or fall; but I deny that there is any real analogy between his case and that of the unregenerate sinner. It breaks down at a point of the most vital consequence. That point is the presence or absence of spiritual life. Adam, in innocence, was possessed of spiritual life - he was, spiritually considered, wholly alive. There was not imparted to him - to use an Arminian phrase - "a degree of spiritual life." Life reigned in all his faculties. There was no element of spiritual death in his being which was to be resisted and which in turn opposed the motions of spiritual life. Now let it even be supposed, with the Arminian, that a degree of spiritual life is given to the spiritually dead sinner, and it would necessarily follow that there is a degree of spiritual death which still remains in him. What conceivable analogy could exist between a being wholly alive spiritually and one partly alive and partly dead spiritually? What common relation to grace could be predicated of them? How is it possible to conceive that grace which would be sufficient for a wholly living man would also be sufficient for a partly dead man? Take then the Arminian conception of the case of the sinner in his natural condition, and it is obvious that there is no real analogy between it and that of Adam in innocence.

But it has already been shown that the impartation by grace of a degree of spiritual life to the sinner which does not involve his regeneration is impossible. Whatever grace and ability the Arminian

may claim for the sinner, if it fall short of regenerating grace, if it does not quicken him in Christ Jesus, no life is communicated by it. The sinner is still dead in trespasses and sins. The communicated grace may instruct him, but it does not raise him from the dead - it is didactic, but not life-giving. It is the suasion of oratory, not the energy of life. It operates upon the natural faculties and becomes a motive to the natural will. But it is precisely the natural will, pervaded by spiritual death, which must decide whether or not it will appropriate the spiritual inducements and make them its own. In a word, a dead man must determine whether he will yield to the persuasion to live or not.

The Arminian theory defies comprehension. To hold that sinners are not spiritually dead is to accept the Pelagian and Socinian heresy that the natural man is able to do saving works. This the Evangelical Arminian denies. He admits that the sinner is spiritually dead, and that in his own strength he can do no saving work. What then does grace accomplish for the sinner, for every sinner? The hypothesis put forth in answer to this question is a plait of riddles which no ingenuity can disentangle. First, the sinner is spiritually dead. Then, "a degree of spiritual life" is imparted to him enabling him to discharge spiritually living functions. Well then - one would of course infer - the sinner is now spiritually alive: he is regenerated, he is born again. No, says the Arminian, only "a portion of spiritual death is removed from him:"<sup>31</sup> he is not yet regenerated. What then can sufficient grace be but the degree of spiritual life which is communicated to the sinner? But this grace - this degree of spiritual life he is to improve. He may do so or he may refuse to do so. If he improve it, it follows that as spiritually dead he improves spiritual life, and what contradiction can be greater than that? If that is denied, it must be supposed, that as spiritually alive he improves this grace - this spiritual life, and then it would follow that as he may

resist it, he would, as spiritually alive resist spiritual life, which is absurd. What other supposition can be conceived, unless it be this: that he acts at the same time as equally dead and alive - that death and life co-operate in producing saving results, or in declining to produce them? But that is so absurd that no intelligent mind would tolerate it. Will it be said, that if he improve spiritual life he does it as spiritually alive, and if he resist it, he does it as spiritually dead? That would suppose that, in the case of successful resistance, spiritual death is too strong for spiritual life and overcomes it. How then could the vanquished life be said to be sufficient, or the insufficient grace to be sufficient grace? The spiritual life imparted is unable to overcome the spiritual death still existing, and yet it confers sufficient ability upon the sinner. The Arminian hypothesis is susceptible of no other fair construction than this: that the sinner, as spiritually dead, improves the degree of life given him by grace; that, as impenitent and unbelieving, he, by the exercise of his natural will, uses the imparted ability to repent and believe. Such ability is just no ability at all; for there is no power that could use it. It is like giving a crutch to a man lying on his back with the dead palsy, or like putting a bottle of aqua vita, in the coffin with a corpse.

Let us put the case in another form: The Arminian holds that the sinner is spiritually dead and consequently unable to do anything to save himself. But a degree of spiritual life is imparted to him to enable him to embrace salvation offered to him. It follows that now the sinner is neither wholly dead nor wholly alive: he is partly dead and partly alive. Now, either, first, his dead part uses his living part; or, secondly, his living part uses his dead part; or, thirdly, his living part uses itself and his dead part uses itself; or, fourthly, his living part uses both the living and dead part; or, fifthly, the living and dead part co-operate. The first supposition is inconceivable; for death cannot use life. The second supposition violates the Arminian

doctrine that it is life which is to be used, not life which uses death; and further, how is it possible for life to use death in performing saving functions? The third supposition involves the concurrent but contradictory acting of life and death, neither being dominant, so that the sinner ever remains partly alive and partly dead. No salvation is reached. The fourth supposition involves the causal and determining influence of the life imparted by grace, and, therefore, the abandonment of the Arminian and the adoption of the Calvinistic doctrine; for the whole man would be ruled by the life-giving grace. The fifth supposition is impossible; for it is impossible that life and death can co-operate to secure salvation.

Let the Arminian account of the unconverted sinner's condition be viewed in every conceivable way, and it is evident that there is no analogy between it and that of Adam in innocence. The sufficient grace or ability of the two cases is entirely different. In one case, there was total spiritual life, in the other there is partial spiritual life and partial spiritual death. They cannot be reduced to unity, nor can even similarity be predicated of them. Justification was possible to Adam, for, as a being totally alive, he had sufficient ability to secure it; but salvation, according to the Arminian supposition, is impossible to the sinner, for as a being partly dead, he has no sufficient ability to embrace it. It has already been conclusively shown that grace, to confer ability upon the spiritually dead, cannot be anything less than regenerating grace; and the bestowal of that upon the sinner, previously to his repentance and faith, the Arminian denies. An appeal to Adam's ability, in order to support the hypothesis of the sufficient ability of the unregenerate sinner, cannot avail to redeem that hypothesis from the charge of making a merely possible salvation impossible.



Let us now return for a moment to the argument employed under the preceding head. It was argued that God's foreknowledge, as conceded by the Arminian, that a definite number of human beings will be condemned at the last day, involves the absolute certainty of their condemnation, and that what God will do on that day he must have eternally purposed to do. How, it was asked, can the Arminian show that this certainty of the destruction of some men is consistent with the possibility of their salvation? It was supposed that in his attempt to show this, he might contend that although the divine foreknowledge created an extrinsic impossibility of their salvation - that is, an impossibility apprehended in the divine mind, yet there is an intrinsic possibility of their salvation - that is, a possibility growing out of their own relations to the scheme of redemption, and their ability to avail themselves of them. In short, he might contend that although God foreknows that some men will be lost, he also foreknows that these same men might be saved; and to fortify that view, he might appeal to the analogy of the case of Adam, the certainty of whose fall God foreknew, but the possibility of whose standing, so far as his intrinsic ability was concerned, he also foreknew. It has now been proved that there is no analogy between Adam's sufficient ability and that which the Arminian vainly arrogates for the unregenerate sinner; and that on the contrary, on the Arminian's own principles, the unregenerate sinner is endowed with no sufficient ability to appropriate a merely possible salvation. Upon those principles, therefore, at the same time that God foreknows the certainty of some men's destruction, he also foreknows the intrinsic impossibility of their salvation. The Arminian, consequently, has the case of the finally lost to harmonize with divine goodness, as well as the Calvinist, and is logically restrained from attacking the Calvinistic doctrine because of its alleged inconsistency with that attribute. The charge recoils, indeed, with redoubled force upon himself, for while the Calvinistic doctrine

provides for the certain salvation of some men, his doctrine makes the salvation of any man impossible. A scheme which professes to make the salvation of every man possible, but really makes the salvation of any man impossible, is not one which can glory in being peculiarly consistent with the goodness of God.

The Arminian impeaches the doctrine of unconditional election for representing God as worse than the devil, more false, more cruel, more unjust.<sup>32</sup> No recourse has been had to declamatory recrimination; but it has been proved by cold-blooded argument that the distinctive principles of Arminianism, in making the application of redemption to depend upon the self-determining power of a dead man's will, make the actual salvation of any sinner a sheer impossibility. How such a scheme magnifies the goodness of God can only be conceived by those who are able to comprehend how a dead man can use the means of life. The love of the Father in giving his Son, the love of the Son in obeying, suffering, dying for the salvation of sinners, the mission of the eternal Spirit to apply a salvation purchased by blood, - all this infinite wealth of means depends for efficacy upon the decision of a sinner's will, a decision which, without regenerating and determining grace, must, in accordance with the law of sin and death, be inevitably rendered against its employment.

The proposition will no doubt have been regarded as extraordinary, but it is now repeated as a conclusion established by argument, that a merely possible salvation such as the Arminian scheme enounces is to a sinner an impossible salvation. When the argument has been convicted of inconclusiveness, it may be time to resort to the weapons of the vanquished - strong and weighty words.

The objection against the Calvinistic doctrines of election and reprobation that they are inconsistent with the goodness of God has

now been examined, and it has been shown, first, that it is inapplicable, and secondly, that the Arminian is not the man to render it.

# **Arminian Theory of Redemption**

**by R. L. Dabney**

THE subjects which are now brought under discussion introduce us to the very center of the points which are debated between us and Arminians. I propose, therefore, for their further illustration, and because no better occasion offers, to consider here their scheme.

## **SOURCES OF THE ARMINIAN THEOLOGY**

The sources of Arminian Theology would be best found in the apology of Episcopius, Limborch's Christian Theology, and Knapp's Christian Theology. Among the English may be consulted, as a low Arminian, Daniel Whitby's Five Points; as high Arminians, Wesley's Doctrinal Tracts, and Watson's Theological Institutes. For refutation of Arminianism, see Stapfer, Vol. 4; Turretin; Hill, bk. 4, ch. 9.

## **I. A CONNECTED VIEW OF THE ARMINIAN TENETS:**

### **FIVE POINTS OF REMONSTRANTS AMBIGUOUS**

The five points handed in by the Arminians to the States General of Holland, in their celebrated Remonstrants, were so covertly worded as scarcely to disclose their true sentiments. The assertions concerning original Sin and Free will, were seemingly such as Calvinists could accept. The doctrine of common grace was but obscurely hinted; and the perseverance of Saints was only doubted. But their system soon developed itself into semi-Pelagianism, well polished and knit together. Discarding the order of the five points, I will exhibit the theory in its logical connection.

## LOGICAL SOURCE IN DOCTRINE OF INDIFFERENCY OF THE WILL. VIEW OF ORIGINAL SIN

1. Its starting point is the doctrine of indifference of the will, and a denial of total depravity, as held by Calvinists. According to the universal consent of Pelagians and Socinians, this self-determination of the will is held necessary to proper free agency and responsibility. Take Whitby as a type of the grosser Arminians. He thinks Adam was created liable, but not subject, to bodily death, and his immunity in Paradise was secured by his access to the Tree of Life. His sin made death and its attendant pains inevitable; and this his posterity inherit, according to the natural law, that like begets like. This has produced a set of circumstances, making all men so liable to sin, that, practically, none escape. But this results from no moral necessity or certainty of the will. Man has natural desires for natural good, but this concupiscentia is not sin till formed into a positive volition. But the sense of guilt and fear drives man from God, the pressure of earthly ills tends to earthly mindedness; man's pains make him querulous, envious, inordinate in desire; and above all, a general evil example misleads. So that all are, in fact, precipitated into sin, in virtue of untoward circumstances inherited from Adam. This is the only sense in which Adam is our federal head. This relation is not only illustrated by, but similar to that which exists between a bad parent and an unfortunate offspring now--in instance of the same natural law.

## WESLEYAN VIEW OF ORIGINAL SIN

But Wesley and Watson repudiate this, as too low; and teach a fall in Adam, prior to its reparation by common grace, going as far as moderate Calvinists. Watson, for instance (Vol. 2, p. 53 &c.,) says that imputation is considered by theologians as mediate and

immediate. Mediate imputation he says, is " our mortality of body and corruption of moral nature in virtue of our derivation from Adam." Immediate means "that Adam's sin is accounted ours in the sight of God, by virtue of our federal relation." This, the student will perceive, is a very different distinction from that drawn by the Reformed divines. Watson then repudiates the first statement as defective; and the latter as extreme. Here he evidently misunderstands us; for he proceeds to say, with Dr. Watts, that Adam did act as a public person; our federal head, and that the penal consequences of our sin (not the sin itself), are accounted to us, consisting of bodily ills and death, privation of God's indwelling, (which results in positive depravity) and eternal death. In this sense, says he, "we may safely contend for the imputation of Adam's sin."

But in defending against Pelagians, &c., the justice of this arrangement of God, he says it must be viewed in connection with that purpose of redemption towards the human race which co-existed in the divine mind, by which God purposed to purchase and bestow common grace on every fallen man thus repairing his loss in Adam. (The fatal objection to such a justification is, that then God would have been under obligations to provide man a Savior; and Christ's mission would not have been of pure grace).

## COMMON SUFFICIENT GRACE

2. This leads us to their next point: God having intended all along to repair the fall, and having immediately thereafter given a promise to our first parents, has ever since communicated to all mankind a common precedaneous sufficient grace, purchased for all by Christ's work. This is not sufficient to effect a complete redemption, but to enable, both naturally and morally, to fulfil the conditions for securing redeeming grace. This common grace consists in the

indifferency of man's will remaining notwithstanding his fall, the lights of natural conscience, good impulses enabling unregenerate men to do works of social virtue, the outward call of mercy made, as some Arminians suppose, even to heathens through reason, and some lower forms of universal spiritual influence. The essential idea and argument of the Arminian is, that God could not punish man justly for unbelief, unless He conferred on him both natural and moral ability to believe or not. They quote such Scripture as Ps. 81:13; Isa. 5:4; Luke 19:42; Rev. 3:20; Rom. 2:14; Jn. 1:9. So here we have, by a different track, the old conclusion of the semi-Pelagian. Man, then, decides the whole remaining difference, as to believing or not believing, by his use of this precedent grace, according to his own free will. God's purpose to produce different results indifferent men is wholly conditioned on the use which, He foresees, they will make of their common grace. To those who improve it, God stands pledged to give the crowning graces of regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. To the heathen even, who use their light aright, (unfavorable circumstance may make such instances rare), Christ will give gospel light and redeeming grace, in some inscrutable way.

### GRACE IN REGENERATION VINCIBLE

3. Hence, the operations of grace are at every stage vincible by man's will; to be otherwise, they must violate the conditions of moral agency. Even after regeneration, grace may be so resisted by free will, as to be dethroned from the soul, which then again becomes unrenewed.

### REDEMPTION GENERAL

4. The redeeming work of Christ was equally for all and every man of the human race, to make his sins pardonable on the condition of

faith, to purchase a common sufficient grace actually enjoyed by all, and the efficient graces of a complete redemption suspended on the proper improvement of common grace by free will. Christ's intention and provision are, therefore, the same to all. But as justice requires that the pardoned rebel shall believe and repent, to those who, of their own choice, refuse this, the provision remains forever ineffective.

## JUSTIFICATION

5. In the doctrine of justification, again, the lower and higher Arminians differ somewhat. Both define justification as consisting simply of pardon. According to the lower, this justification is only purchased by Christ in this, that He procured from God the admission of a lower Covenant, admitting faith and the Evangelical obedience flowing out of it, as a righteousness, in place of the perfect obedience of the Covenant of works. According to the higher, our faith (without the works its fruits) is imputed to us for righteousness, according, as they suppose, to Rom. 4:5. Both deny the proper imputation of Christ's active (as distinguished from His passive) obedience, and deny any imputation, except of the believer's own faith; although the higher Arminians, in making this denial, seem to misunderstand imputation as a transference of moral character.

## PERSONAL ELECTION CONDITIONAL

6. Hence, it will be easily seen, that their conception of election must be the following: The only absolute and unconditional decree which God has made from eternity, concerning man's salvation, is His resolve that unbelievers shall perish. This is not a predestinating of individuals, but the fixing of a General Principle. God does, indeed, (as they explain Rom. 9-11 chapters), providentially and sovereignly elect races to the enjoyment of certain privileges; but this is not an



election to salvation; for free-will may in any or each man of the race, abuse the privileges, and be lost. So far as God has an external purpose toward individuals, it is founded on His foresight, which He had from eternity, of the use they would make of their common grace. Some, He foresaw, would believe and repent, and therefore elected them to justification. Others, He foresaw, would not only believe and repent, but also persevere to the end; and these He elected to salvation.

A THOROUGHLY-KNIT SYSTEM, IF ITS PREMISES ARE GRANTED.

II. The refutation of the Arminian theory must be deferred, on some points, till we pass to other heads of divinity, as Justification and Final Perseverance. On the extent of the atonement enough has already been said. On the remaining points we shall now attempt to treat.

### COMMON SUFFICIENT GRACE REFUTED

1. In opposition to the assertion of a common sufficient grace, we remark, 1st. That there is no sufficient evidence of it in Scripture. The passages quoted above do, indeed, prove that God has done for all men under the gospel all that is needed to effect their salvation, if their own wills are not depraved. But they only express the fact that God's general benevolence would save all to whom the gospel comes, if they would repent; and that the obstacles to that salvation are now only in the sinners. But whether it is God's secret purpose to overcome that internal obstacle, in their own perverse wills, these texts do not say. It will be found, on examination, that they all refer merely to the external call, which we have proved, comes short of the effectual call; or that they are addressed to persons who, though

shortcoming, or even backsliding, are regarded as God's children already. Look and see.

#### DOCTRINE FALSE, IN FACT

2. The doctrine is false in fact; for how can grace be sufficient, where the essential outward call, even, is lacking? Rom. 10:14. God declares, in Scripture, He has given up many to evil. Acts 14:16; Rom. 1:21, 28; 9:18. Again: the doctrine is contradicted by the whole doctrine of God, concerning the final desertion of those who have grieved away the Holy Ghost. See Hos. 4:17; Gen.6:3; Heb. 6:1-6. Here is a class so deserted of grace, that their damnation becomes a certainty. Are they, therefore, no longer free, responsible and blameable ?

3. If we take the Arminian description of common sufficient grace, then many who have its elements most largely, an enlightened conscience, frequent compunctions, competent religious knowledge, amiability, and natural virtues, good impulses and resolutions, are lost; and some, who seem before to have very little of these, are saved. How is this? Again: the doctrine does not commend itself to experience; for this tells us that, among men, good intentions are more rare than good opportunities. We see that some men have vastly more opportunity vouchsafed them by God's providence than others. It would be strange if, contrary to the fact just stated, all those who have less opportunity should have better intentions than opportunities.

#### COMMON GRACE, IF SUFFICIENT, SAVES

4. We have sometimes illustrated the Wesleyan doctrine of grace thus: "All men in the 'slough of despond' in consequence of the fall. There is a platform, say Arminians, elevated an inch or two above the

surface of this slough, but yet firm, to which men must struggle in the exercise of their common sufficient grace alone, the platform of repentance and faith. Now, it is true, that from this platform man could no more climb to heaven without divine grace, than his feet could scale the moon. But God's grace is pledged to lift up to heaven all those who will so employ their free- agency, as to climb to that platform, and stay there." Now, we say, with the Arminian, that a common sufficient grace, which does not work faith and repentance, is in no sense sufficient; for until these graces are exercised, nothing is done. Heb. 11:6; Jn. 3:36. But he who has these graces, we further assert, has made the whole passage from death to life. That platform is the platform of eternal life. The whole difference between elect and non-elect is already constituted. See John 3:36; 1 John 5:1; Acts 13:48; 2 Cor. 5:17, with Eph. 3:17. If then there is sufficient grace, it is none other than the grace which effectuates redemption; and the Arminian should say, if consistent with his false premises, not that God by it puts it in every man's free will to fulfill the conditions on which further saving communications depend; but that He puts it in every man's free will to save himself.

#### OR ELSE, IT IS EITHER NOT COMMON, OR NOT SUFFICIENT

5. If the doctrine is true, it is every man's own uninfluenced, and not the purpose of God, which determines his eternal destiny. Either the common grace effects its saving work in those who truly believe, in virtue of some essential addition made to its influences by God, or it does not. If the former, then it was not "common," nor "sufficient," in those who failed to receive that addition. If the latter, then the whole difference in its success must have been made by the man's own free will resisting less--I.e., the essential opposition to grace in some souls, differs from that in others. But see Rom. 3:12, 27; Eccl. 8:11; Eph. 2:8, 9; 1 Cor. 4:7; Rom. 9:16; and the whole tenor of that

multitude of texts, in which believers ascribe their redemption, not to their own superior docility or penitence, but to distinguishing grace.

To attain the proper point of view for the rational refutation of the doctrine of "common " sufficient grace, it is only necessary to ask this question: What is the nature of the obstacle grace is needed to remove? Scripture answers in substance, that it is inability of will, which has its rudiments in an ungodly habitus of soul. That is to say: the thing grace has to remove is the soul's own evil disposition. Now, the idea that any cause, natural or supernatural, half rectifies this, so as to bring this disposition to an equipoise, is absurd. It is the nature of disposition to be disposed: this is almost a truism. It is impossible to think a moral agent devoid of any and all disposition. If God did produce in a sinful soul, for one instant, the state which common sufficient grace is supposed to realize, it would be an absurd tertium quid, in a state of moral neutrality. As we argued against the Pelagian, that state, if possible, would be immoral, in that it implied an indifferent equipoise as to positive obligations. And the initial volitions arising out of that state would not be morally right, because they would not spring out of positive right motives; and such acts, being worthless, could not foster any holy principles or habits. The dream of common grace is suggested obviously, by the Pelagian confusion of inability of will with compulsion. The inventor has his mind full of some evil necessity which places an external obstruction between the sinner and salvation; hence this dream of an aid, sufficient but not efficacious, which lifts away the obstruction, and yet leaves the sinner undetermined, though free, to embrace Christ. Remember that the obstruction is in the will; and the dream perishes. The aid which removes it can be nothing short of that, which determines the will to Christ. The peculiar inconsistency of the Wesleyan is seen in this: that, when the Pelagian advances this idea of Adam's creation in a slate of moral neutrality, the Wesleyan (see

Wesley's Orig. sin. or Watson, ch. 18th), refutes it by the same irrefragable logic with the Calvinists. He proves the very state of soul to be preposterous and impossible. Yet, when he comes to effectual calling, he imagines a common grace, which results, at least for a time, in the same impossible state of the soul! It is a reversion to Pelagius.

## GRACE IN REGENERATION INVINCIBLE

The views of regeneration which Calvinists present, in calling the grace of God therein invincible, and in denying the synergism (sunergeia) of man's will therein, necessarily flow from their view of original sin. We do not deny that the common call is successfully resisted by all non-elect gospel sinners; it is because God never communicates renewing grace, as He never intended in His secret purpose. Nor do we deny that the elect, while under preliminary conviction, struggle against grace, with as much obstinacy as they dare; this is ensured by their depraved nature. But on all those whom God purposes to save, He exerts a power, renewing and persuading the will, so as infallibly to ensure their final and voluntary submission to Christ. Hence we prefer the word invincible to irresistible. This doctrine we prove, by all those texts which speak of God's power in regeneration as a new creation, birth, resurrection; for the idea of successful resistance to these processes, on the part of the dead matter, or corpse, or faetus, is preposterous. Conviction may be resisted; regeneration is invincible. We prove it again from all those passages which exalt the divine and mighty power exerted in the work. See Eph. 1:19,20; Ps.110:3. Another emphatic proof is found in this, that otherwise, God could not be sure of the conversion of all those He purposed to convert; yea, not of a single one of them; and Christ would have no assurance that He should ever "see of the travail of His soul" (Isa. 53) in a single case ! For, in order for God to

be sure of the result, He must put forth power adequate to overcome all opposing resistances. But see all those passages, in which the security and immutability of God's purposes of grace are asserted. Rom. 9:21, 23; Eph. 1:4; John xv; 16, &c., &c. Eph. 2:10.

### MERE FOREKNOWLEDGE INADEQUATE

Here, the Arminian rejoins, that God's scientia media, or foreknowledge of the contingent acts of free agents (arising not from His purpose of control over those acts, but from His infinite insight into their character, and the way it will act under foreseen circumstances), enables Him to foreknow certainly who willing prove their common grace, and that some will. His eternal purposes are not crossed, therefore, they say, because He only purposed from eternity to save those latter. The fatal answer is, that if the acts of free agents are certainly foreseen, even with this scientia media, they are no longer contingent, but certain; and worse than this: Man's will being in bondage, all the foreknowledge which God has, from His infinite insight into human character, will be only a foreknowledge of obdurate acts of resistance on man's part, as long as that will is unsubdued. God's foreknowledge, in that case, would have been a foreknowledge that every son of Adam would resist and be lost. The only foreknowledge God could have, of any cases of submission, was one founded on His own decisive purpose to make some submit, by invincible grace.

### GRACE DOES NOT DESTROY FREE AGENCY

The Arminian objects again, that our doctrine represents man as dragged reluctantly into a state of grace, like an angry wild beast into a cage; whereas, freedom of will, and hearty concurrence are essential elements of all service acceptable to God. The answer is, that the sinner's will is the very subject of this invincible grace. God

so renews it that it neither can resist, nor longer wishes to resist. But this objection virtually reappears in the next part of the question.

#### THE SOUL PASSIVE IN ITS QUICKENING. PROOF

Calvinists are accustomed also to say, in opposition to all Synergistic views, that the will of man is not active, but only passive in regeneration. In this proposition, it is only meant that man's will is the subject, and not the agent, nor one of the agents of the distinctive change. In that renovating touch, which revolutionizes the active powers of the soul, it is acted on and not agent. Yet, activity is the inalienable attribute of an intelligent being; and in the process of conversion, which begins instantaneously with regeneration, the soul is active in all its exercises towards sin, holiness, God, its Savior, the law, &c., &c.

This doctrine is proved by the natural condition of the active powers of the soul. Man's propensities are wholly and certainly directed to some form of ungodliness, and to impenitency. How, then, can the will, prompted by these propensities, persuade itself to anything spiritually good and penitent? It is expecting a cause to operate in a direction just the opposite to its nature--as well expect gravity to raise masses flung into the air, when its nature is to bring them down. And this is agreeable to the whole Bible representation. Does the foetus procure its own birth? the dead body its own resurrection? the matter of creation its own organization? See, especially, John 1:13. Yet this will, thus renewed, chooses God, and acts holiness, freely, just as Lazarus, when resuscitated, put forth the activities of a living man.

The objections of the Arminian may all be summed up in this: that sinners are commanded, not only to put forth all the actings of the renewed nature, such as believing, turning from sin, loving God, &c.,

but are commanded to perform the very act of giving their hearts to God, which seems to contain the very article of regeneration. See Prov. 23:26; Is. 1:16; Ezek. 18:31; Deut. 10:16.

### OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

The answer is, 1st. That God's precepts are no test of the extent of our ability of will, but only of our duty. When our Creator has given to us capacities to know and love Him, and the thing which prevents is our depraved wills, this is no reason why He should or ought to cease demanding that which is His due. If the moral opposition of nature into which God's creatures may sink themselves by their own fault, were a reason why He should cease to urge His natural rights on them, He would soon have no right left. Again: the will of man, when renovated by grace, needs a rule by which to put forth its renewed activity, just as the eye, relieved of its darkness by the surgeon needs light to see. Hence, we provide light for the renovated eye; not that light alone could make the blind eye see. And hence, God applies His precepts to the renovated will, in order that it may have a law by which to act out its newly bestowed, spiritual free-agency. But 3d, and chiefly: These objections are all removed, by making a sound distinction between regeneration and conversion. In the latter the soul is active; and the acts required by all the above passages, are the soul's (now regenerate) turning to God.

### BIBLE PROMISES NO SALVATION TO HEATHEN

The salvability of any heathen without the gospel is introduced here, because the question illustrate these views concerning the extent of the grace of redemption, and the discussions between us and the Arminians. We must hold that Revelation gives us no evidence that Pagans can find salvation, without Scriptural means. They are sinners. The means in their reach appear to contain no salvation. a.)



One argument is this: All of them are self-convicted of some sin (against the light of nature). "Without the shedding of blood is no remission." But the gospel is the only proposal of atonement to man. b.) Paganism provides nothing to meet the other great want of human nature, an agency for moral renovation. Is any man more spiritually minded than decent children of the Church are, because he is a Pagan ? Do they need the new birth less than our own beloved offspring? Then it must be at least as true of the heathen, that except they be born again, they shall not see the kingdom. But their religions present no agencies for regeneration. They do not even know the Word. So far are their theologies from any sanctifying influence, their morals are immoral, their deities criminals, and the heaven to which they aspire a pandemonium of sensual sin immortalized.

#### GOD NO MORE UNJUST TO THEM THAN TO NON- ELECT UNDER THE GOSPEL

Now, the Arminians reject this conclusion, thinking God cannot justly condemn any man, who is not furnished with such means of knowing and as put his destiny in every sense within his own choice. These means the heathen do not fully possess, where their ignorance is invincible. The principle asserted is, that God cannot justly hold any man responsible, who is not blessed with both " natural and moral ability." I answer, that our doctrine concerning the heathen puts them in the same condition with those unhappy men in Christian lands, who have the outward word, but experience no effectual calling of the Spirit. God requires the latter to obey that Law and Gospel, of which they enjoy the clearer lights; and the obstacle which ensures their failure to obey is, indeed, not any physical constraint, but an inability of will. Of the heathen, God would require no more than perfect obedience to the light of nature; and it is the

same inability of will which ensures their failure to do this. Hence, as you see, the doctrine of a common sufficient grace, and of the salvability of the heathens, are parts of the same system. So, the consistent Calvinist is able to justify God in the condemnation of adult heathens, according to the principles of Paul. Rom. 2:12. On the awful question, whether all heathens, except those to whom the Church carries the gospel, are certainly lost, it does not become us to speak. One thing is certain: that "there is none other Name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. Guilt must be expiated; and depravity must be cleansed, before the Pagan (or the nominal Christian) can see God. Whether God makes Christ savingly known to some, by means unknown to the Church, we need not determine. We are sure that the soul which "feels after Him if haply he may find Him," will not be cast off of God, because it happens to be outside of Christendom. But are there such? This question it is not ours to answer. We only know, that God in the Scriptures always enjoins on His Church that energy and effort in spreading the gospel, which would be appropriate, were there no other instrumentality but ours. Here is the measure of our duty concerning foreign missions.

#### CONDITIONAL DECREES ARE IMPLIED IN SYNERGISM

THE favorite Arminian dogma, that God's will concerning the salvation of individuals is conditioned on His simple foresight of their improvement of their common grace, in genuine faith, repentance, and holy obedience, is necessary to the coherency of their system. If grace is invincible, and all true faith, &c., are its fruits, then God's purpose as to working them must be absolute in this sense. If grace is only synergistic, and the sinner's free will alone decides the question of resisting it, or co-operating with it, then, of course, the sovereignty of decision, in this matter, is in the creature,

and not in God; and He must be guided in His purpose by what it is foreseen the creature will choose to do. Thus we reach, by a corollary from the Arminian doctrine of "Calling," that which in time is first, the nature of the Divine purpose about it. The student is here referred to the Lecture on the Decree. But as the subject is so illustrative of the two theories of redemption, the Arminian and the orthodox, I shall not hesitate to discuss the same thing again, and to reproduce some of the same ideas.

#### THE RESULT MAY BE CONDITIONED, AND NOT THE DECREE

And let me begin by reminding you of that plain distinction, by the neglect of which, Arminians get all the plausibility of their view. It is one thing to say that, in the Divine will, the result purposed is conditioned on the presence of its means; another thing to say that, God's purpose about it is also conditioned or dependent on the presence of its means. The former is true, the latter false. And this, because the presence of the means is itself efficaciously included in this same Divine purpose. Thus, a believer's salvation is doubtless dependent on his repentance; in the sense that, if he does not repent, he will not be saved. But God's purpose to save him is not dependent on his choosing to repent; for one of the things which God's purpose efficaciously determines is, that this believer shall have grace to repent. Remember, also, that when we say God's election is not dependent on the believer's foreseen faith, &c., we do not represent the Divine purpose as a motiveless caprice. It is a resolve founded most rationally, doubtless, on the best of reasons--only, the superior faith and penitence of that man were not, a priori among them; because had not God already determined, from some better reasons unknown to us, that man would never have had any faith or repentance to foresee. And this is a perfect demonstration, as well as a Scriptural one. The Arminian opinion makes an effect the cause of

its own cause. And that our faith, &c., are effects of our calling and election, see Rom. 8:29; Eph. 1:4, 5; 2 Thes. 2:13; 1 Cor. 4:7; Jno. 15:16.

#### PROVIDENCE MAKES SOVEREIGN DISTINCTIONS IN MEN'S OUTWARD OPPORTUNITIES. ESPECIALLY OF INFANTS

(b). But to this I may add the same idea in substance, which I used against Common Sufficient Grace: That, in fact, differences are made, in the temperaments and characters, opportunities and privileges of individuals and nations, which practically result in the death of some in sin. Thus: what practical opportunity, humanly speaking, had the man born in Tahiti, in the 18th century, for redemption through Christ? Now the Arminian himself admits an election of races or nations to such privilege, which is sovereign. Does not this imply a similar disposal of the fate of individuals? Can an infinite understanding fail to comprehend the individuals, in disposing of the destiny of the mass? But, under this head especially, I remark: the time of every man's death is decided by a sovereign Providence. But by determining this sovereignly, God very often practically decides the man's eternal destiny. Much more obvious is this, in the case of infants. According to Arminians, all that die in infancy are saved. So, then, God's purpose to end their mortal life in infancy is His purpose to save them. But this purpose cannot be formed from any foresight of their faith or repentance; because they have none to foresee, being saved without them.

#### IF FORESEEN, FAITH MUST BE CERTAIN

(c). God's foresight of believers' faith and repentance implies the certainty, or "moral necessity " of these acts, just as much as a sovereign decree. For that which is certainly foreseen must be

certain. The only evasion from this is the absurdity of Adam Clarke, that God chooses not to foreknow certain things, or the impiety of the Socinians, that He cannot foreknow some things. On both, we may remark, that if this faith and repentance are not actually foreknown, they cannot be the bases of any resolve on God's part.

#### IMMUTABLE DECREE CANNOT BE CONDITIONED ON A MUTABLE CAUSE, SCRIPTURE

(d) That any purposes of God should depend on the acts of a creature having an indeterminate, contingent will, such as Arminian describes, is incompatible with their immutability and eternity. But all His decrees are such. See Ps.33:11; 2 Tim. 2.19; Eph. 1:4; Is. 46:10. In a word, this doctrine places the sovereignty in the creature, instead of God, and makes Him wait on His own servant. It is disparaging to God.

Last: This very purpose of individual election to salvation is often declared to be uncaused by any foreseen good in us. See Matt. 11:26; Rom. 9:11-16; 11:5-6, etc.

#### TEXTS SEEMING TO EXPRESS A CONDITIONED PURPOSE

But Arminians cite many passages, in which they assert, God's resolve as to what He shall do to men is conditioned on their good or bad conduct. They are such as 1 Sam. 13:13; Ps. 81.13-14; Luke 7:30; Ezek. 18:21, etc.; Luke 19:42. Our opponents here make an obvious confusion of things, which should be distinguished. When God preceptively reveals a connection between two alternative lines of conduct, and their respective results, as established by His law or promise, he does not at all reveal anything thereby, as to what He purposes with reference to permitting or procuring the exercise of that conduct by man. Of course, it does not imply that His purpose

on this point is contingent to Him, or that the consequent results were uncertain to Him. We have seen that many of the results decreed by God were dependent on means which man employed; but that God's resolve was not dependent, because it secretly embraced their performance of those instrumental acts also. But the proof that the Arminians misconstrue those Scripture instances, is this: That the Bible itself contains many instances of these conditional threats and promises, and expressions of compassion, where yet the result of them is expressly foretold. If expressly predicted, they must have been predetermined. See, then, Is. 1:19, 20, compared with 7:17-20. And, more striking yet, Acts 27:23-25, with 31.

#### EVASION ATTEMPTED FROM ROMANS 9:11

Rom. 9:11-18, is absolutely conclusive against conditional election. The only evasion by which the Arminian can escape its force, is, that this passage teaches only a national election of Israel and Edom, represented in their patriarchs, Jacob and Esau, to the outward privileges of the Gospel. We reply, as before, that Jacob and Esau certainly represented themselves also, so that here are two cases of unconditional predestination. But Paul's scope shows that the idea is false: for that scope is to explain, how, on his doctrine of justification by grace, many members of Israel were lost, notwithstanding equal outward privileges. And in answering this question, the Apostle evidently dismisses the corporate or collective, in order to consider the individual relation to God's plan and purpose. See the verses 8, 15, 24. That the election was not merely to privileges is clearly proved by the allusion of verse 8, compared with verses 4, 21, 24.

#### CALVINISTIC VIEW AGREEABLE TO THE TRUE NATURE OF THE WILL

2. I am now to show that the Calvinistic scheme is consistent, and the Arminian inconsistent, with the philosophical theory of the will and free agency. Let me here refer you to Lecture 11, where the true doctrine of the will is stated and defended, and request you, if your mastery of the views there given is not perfect, to return and make it so, before proceeding. While I shall not repeat the arguments, the definition of the true doctrine is so important (and has so often been imperfectly made by Calvinists), that I shall take the liberty to restate it.

### TRUE THEORY OF THE WILL STATED

The Arminian says that free-agency consists in the self-determining power of the will, as a distinct faculty in the soul. The Calvinist says, it consists in the self-determining power of the soul. An Arminian says an agent is only free, when he has power to choose as the will may determine itself either way, irrespective of the stronger motive. The Calvinist says that an agent is free, when he has power to act as his own will chooses. The Arminian says that in order to be free, the agent must be exempt from the efficient influence of his own motives; the Calvinist, that he must be exempt from co-action, or external constraint; The Arminian says, that in order to be free, the agent must always be capable of having a volition uncaused. The Calvinist says that if an agent has a volition uncaused, he cannot possibly be free therein, because that volition would be wholly irrational; the agent would therein be simply a brute. Every free, rational, responsible volition is such, precisely because it is caused i.e. by the agent's own motives; the rational agent is morally judged for his volitions according to their motives, or causes.

MOTIVE WHAT?

But when we ask: What is the motive of a rational volition, we must make that distinction which all Arminians, and many Calvinists heedlessly overlook between motive and inducement. The object offered to the soul as an inducement to choose is not the cause, the motive of the choice; but only the occasion. The true efficient cause is something of the soul's own, something subjective; namely, the soul's own appetency according to his prevalent, subjective disposition. The volition is not efficaciously caused by the inducement or object which appeals, but by the disposition which is appealed to. Thus, the causative spring of a free agent's action is within, not without him; according to the testimony of our consciousness. (The theory which makes the objective inducement the true cause of volition, is from that old, mischievous, sensualistic psychology, which has always been such a curse to theology). But then, this inward or subjective spring of action is not lawless; it is not indeterminate; if it were, the agent would have neither rationality nor character; and its action would be absolutely blind and brutish. This subjective spring has a law of its own activity--that is to say, its self-action is of a determinate character (of one sort or another). And that character is what is meant by the radical habitus, or natural disposition of the agent. And this subjective disposition is what gives uniform quality to that series of acts, by which common sense estimates the character of an agent. (And this, as we saw, was a sufficient proof of our doctrine; that otherwise, the exhibition of determinate character by a free agent, would be impossible). God is an excellent Agent, because He has holy original disposition. Satan is a wicked agent, because he has an unholy disposition, etc.

#### DISPOSITION WHAT?

Now, this habitus or disposition of soul is not by any means always absolutely simple; it is a complex of certain active principles, with



mental habitudes proceeding therefrom, and modified by outward circumstances. With reference to some sorts of outward inducements, these active principles may act with less uniformity and determinateness; with reference to others, with more. Here, modifying outward influences may change the direction of the principles. The avaricious man is sometimes prompted to generous volitions, for instance. But our common sense recognizes this truth: that the more, original and primary of those active principles constituting a being's disposition or habitus, are perfectly determinate and uniform in their action. For instance: no being, when happiness and suffering are the alternatives, is ever prompted by his own disposition, to choose the suffering for its own sake; no being is ever prompted, applause or reproach being equally in its reach, to prefer the reproach to the applause for its own sake. And last: this disposition, while never the effect of specific acts of volition (being always a priori thereto, and cause of them) is spontaneous; that is, in exercising the disposition, both in consideration and choice, the being is self-prompted. When arguing against the Pelagian sophism, that man could not be responsible for his disposition, because it is "involuntary," I showed you the ambiguity wrapped up in that word. Of course, anything which, like disposition, precedes volition, cannot be voluntary in the sense of proceeding out of a volition; what goes before of course does not follow after the same thing. But the question is, "whether disposition is self-prompted." There is a true sense in which we intuitively know that a man ought not to be made responsible for what is "involuntary," viz.; for what happens against his will. But does any man's own disposition subsist against his will? If it did it would not be his own. There is here a fact of common sense, which is very strangely overlooked; that a man may most freely prefer what is natural to him, and in that sense his prior to his volition choosing it. Let a simple instance serve. Here is a young gentleman to whom nature

has given beautiful and silky black hair. He, himself, thinks it very pretty, and altogether prefers it. Does he not thereby give us as clear, and as free an expression of his taste in hair, as though he had selected a black wig? So, were he to purchase hair dye to change his comely locks to a 'carrot red,' we should regard him as evincing very bad taste. But I ask, if we saw another whom nature had endowed with 'carrot red hair,' glorying in it with pride and preference, we should doubtless esteem him guilty of precisely the same bad taste, and precisely as free therein as the other. But the color of his hair was determined by nature, not by his original selection. Now, my question is: must we not judge the moral preference just as free in the parallel case, as the aesthetic? I presume that every reflecting mind will give an affirmative answer. If, for instance, a wicked man made you the victim of his extortion, or his malice, you would not think it any palliation to be told by him that he was naturally covetous or malignant, nor would you be satisfied by the plea, that this evil disposition was not at first introduced into his soul by his personal act of soul; while yet he confessed that he was entirely content with it and cherished it with a thorough preference. In fine: whether the moral agent is free in entertaining his connate disposition, may be determined by a very plain test. Does any other agent compel him to feel it, or does he feel it of himself? The obvious answer discloses this fact; that disposition is the most intimate function of our self-hood, and this, whether connate or self-induced.

#### THIS THEORY OBVIOUS. CALVINISM IN HARMONY WITH IT

Is not this now the psychology of common sense and consciousness? Its mere statement is sufficiently evincive of its truth. But you have seen a number of arguments by which it is demonstrated, and the rival theory reduced to absurdity. Now, our assertion is, that the

Calvinistic doctrine of effectual calling is agreeable to these facts of our free-agency, and the Arminian inconsistent with them.

## GRACE CANNOT PRODUCE AN EQUILIBRIUM BETWEEN HOLINESS AND SIN

(a.) First, the equilibrium of will, to which Arminians suppose the gospel restores all sinners, through common sufficient grace, would be an unnatural and absurd state of soul, if it existed. You will remember that the Wesleyans (the Arminian school which we meet) admit that man lost equilibrium of will in the fall; but say that it is restored through Christ; and that this state is necessary to make man truly free and responsible in choosing the Savior. But we have shown that such a state is impossible for an active agent, and irrational. So far as it existed, it would only show the creature's action irrational, like that of the beasts. Hence, the evangelical choice arising in such a state would be as motiveless, as reasonless, and therefore, as devoid of right moral character, as the act of a man walking in his sleep. And, to retort the Arminian's favorite conclusion, all the so-called gracious states of penitence, &c., growing out of that choice, must be devoid of right moral quality, how can those exercises of soul have that quality? Only as they are voluntary, and prompted by right moral motives. But as we have seen, motive is subjective; so that the action of soul cannot acquire right moral quality until it is prompted by right moral disposition. Hence, if that common sufficient grace were anything at all, it would be the grace of moral renovation; all who had it would be regenerate.

## THE NATURAL WILL DECISIVELY BENT TO CARNALITY

(b.) Second: We have seen that the notion of a moral agent without determinate, subjective moral character, of some sort, is absurd. The radical, ruling habitus has some decisive bent of its own, some way

or other. Is not this simply to say that disposition is disposed? The question of fact then arises, which is the bent or determinate direction, which man's natural disposition has, touching spiritual things? Is it for, or against it? Or, as a question of fact, is the disposition of mankind naturally, and uniformly. either way? Or, are some men one way disposed by nature, and some the other, as to this object? The answer is, that they are all naturally disposed, in the main, the same way, and that, against the spiritual claims of Christ and God. What are these claims? That the sinner shall choose the holy will of God over his own, and His favor over sensual, earthly, and sinful joys in all their forms. Nothing less than this is evangelical repentance and obedience. Now note, we do not say that no men ever choose any formal act of obedience by nature. Nor, that no man ever desires (what he conceives to be) future blessedness by nature. Nor, that every natural man is as much bent on all forms of rebellion, as every other. But we assert, as a matter of fact, that all naturally prefer self-will to God's holy will, and earthly, sensual, and sinful joys (in some forms) to God's favor and communion; that this is the original, fundamental, spontaneous disposition of all; and that in all essential alternatives between self and God, the disposition is, in the natural man, absolutely determinate and certain. If this is true, then the unconverted man without sovereign grace is equally certain to choose carnally, and equally a free agent in choosing so.

#### PROVED BY CONSCIOUSNESS AND EXPERIENCE

But that such is the determinate disposition of every natural man, is obvious both from experience and from Scripture. Every renewed man, in reviewing his own purposes, is conscious that, before regeneration, self-will was, as against God, absolutely dominant in all his feelings and purposes; of which no stronger test can be imagined than this conscious fact; that the very best religious impulses to

which his soul could be spurred by remorse or alarm, were but modifications of self-will, (self-righteousness.) Every true Christian looks back to the time when he was absolutely incompetent to find, or even to imagine, any spontaneous good or joy in anything except carnality; and the only apprehension it was possible for him to have of God's service, in looking forward to the time when, he supposed, the fear of hell would compel him to undertake it, was of a constraint and a sacrifice. So, when we look without, while we see a good many in the state of nature, partially practicing many secular virtues, and even rendering to God some self-righteous regards, we see none preferring God's will and favor to self-will and earth. All regard such a choice as an evil per se; all shrink from it obstinately; all do so under inducements to embrace it which reasonably ought to be immense and overwhelming. The experimental evidence, that this carnality is the original and determinate law of their disposition, is as complete as that which shows the desire of happiness is a law of their disposition. And all this remains true of sinners under the gospel, of sinners enlightened, of sinners convicted and awakened by the Holy Ghost in His common operations; which is a complete, practical proof that there is not any such sufficient grace, common to all as brings their wills into equilibrium about evangelical good. For those are just the elements which the Arminians name, as making up that grace: and we see that where they are, still there is no equilibrium, but the old, spontaneous, native bent, obstinately dominant still.

#### PROVED BY SCRIPTURE

The decisiveness of that disposition is also asserted in Scripture in the strongest possible terms. All men are the "servants of sin," John. 8:34; Rom. 6:20; 2 Pet. 1:19. They are "sold under sin." Rom. 7:14. They are "in the bond of iniquity." Acts 8:23. They are "dead in sins." Eph.2:1. They are "blind;" yea, "blindness" itself. Eph. 4:18. Their

"hearts are stony." Ezek. 36:26, They are "impotent" for evangelical good 2 Cor. 3:5; John. 15:5; Rom. 5:6; Matt. 7:18; 12:34; John. 6:44. "The carnal mind is enmity, and cannot be subject to the law of God." Rom. 8:7. Surely these, with the multitude of similar testimonies, are enough to prove against all ingenious glosses, that, our view of man's disposition is true. But if man's free-agency is misdirected by such active principles as these, original, uniform, absolutely decisive, it is folly to suppose that the mighty revolution to holiness can originate in that free-agency; it must originate without, in almighty grace.

### INABILITY DOES NOT SUPERSEDE RESPONSIBILITY

Nor is it hard for the mind which has comprehended this philosophy of common sense and experience, to solve the current Arminian objection; that the man in such a state of will cannot be responsible or blameworthy for his continued impenitency. This "inability of will" does not supersede either free-agency or responsibility.

### INABILITY DEFINED

There is here an obvious distinction from that external coercion, which the reason and conscience of every man recognizes as a different state, which would supersede responsibility. The Calvinists of the school of Jonathan Edwards make frequent use of the terms, "moral inability," "natural inability," to express that plain, old distinction. Turretin teaches us that they are not new. In his Locus, 10, que. 4, section 39, 40, you will find some very sensible remarks, which show that this pair of terms is utterly ambiguous and inappropriate, however good the meaning of the Calvinists who used them. I never employ them. That state which they attempt to describe as "moral inability," our Confession more accurately calls, loss of all ability of will." (Ch. 9 section 3). It should be remarked here, that in this phrase, and in many similar ones of our Confession,

the word "will" is used in a sense more comprehensive than the specific faculty of choosing. It means the "conative powers," (so called by Hamilton,) including with that specific function, the whole active power of soul. The "inability," then, which we impute to the natural man, and which does not supersede responsibility, while it does make his voluntary continuance in impenitence absolutely certain, and his turning of himself to true holiness impossible, is a very distinct thing from that physical coercion, and that natural lack of essential faculties, either of which would be inconsistent with moral obligation. It is thus defined in Hodge's outlines: "Ability consists in the power of the agent to change his own subjective state, to make himself prefer what he does not prefer, and to act in a given case in opposition to the co-existent desires and preferences of the agent's own heart." I will close with a statement of the distinction, which I uttered under very responsible circumstances. "All intelligent Calvinists understand very well, that "inability" consists not in the extinction of any of the powers which constituted man the creature he was before Adam's fall, and which made his essence as a religious being; but in the thorough moral perversion of them all. The soul's essence is not destroyed by the fall; if it were, in any part, man's responsibility would be to that extent modified. But all his faculties and susceptibilities now have a decisive and uniform, a native and universal, a perpetual and total moral perversion, by reason of the utter revolt of his will from God and holiness, to self-will and sin; such that it is impossible for him, in his own free will, to choose spiritual good for its own sake."

#### REGENERATION DOES NOT VIOLATE, BUT PERFECTS FREE-AGENCY

(c) Regeneration, correspondingly, does not constrain a man to will against his dispositions; but it renews the dispositions themselves. It

reverse the morbid and perverse bias of the will. It rectifies the action of all faculties and affections, previously perverted by that bias. God's people are "willing in the day of His power." Ps. 110:3. "He worketh in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. 2.13. In that believers now form holy volitions at the prompting of their own subjective principles, unconstrained by force, they are precisely as free as when, before, they spontaneously formed sinful volitions at the prompting of their opposite evil principles. But in that the action of intellect and desire and conscience is now rectified, purified, ennobled, by the divine renovation, the believer is more free than he was before. "He cannot sin, because the living and incorruptible seed" of which he is born again "liveth and abideth in him." Thus, regeneration, though almighty, does not infringe free-agency, but perfects it.

#### OBJECTION SOLVED

The standing Arminian objection is, that man cannot be praise or blame-worthy, for what does not proceed from his own free-will. Hence, if he does not primarily choose a new heart, but it is wrought in him by another, he has no more moral credit, either for the change or its consequences, than for the native color of his hair. This objection is, as you have seen, of a Pelagian source. By the same argument Adam could have had no concreated righteousness; but we saw that the denial of it to him was absurd. By the same reasoning God Himself could have no moral credit for His holy volitions; for He never chose a righteousness, having been eternally and necessarily righteous. We might reply, also, that the new and holy state is chosen by the regenerate man, for his will is as free and self-moved, when renovated in preferring his own renovation, as it ever was in sinners.



## THIS BECAUSE THE SPIRIT MOULDS DISPOSITION A PRIORI TO THE WILL

To sum up, then: The quickening touch of the Holy Ghost operates, not to contravene any of the free actings of the will; but to mould dispositions which lie back of it. Second: all the subsequent right volitions of the regenerate soul are in view of inducements rationally presented to it. The Spirit acts, not across man's nature, but according to its better law. Third: the propensities by which the renewed volitions are determined are now noble, not ignoble, harmonious, not confused and hostile; and rational, not unreasonable. Man is most truly free when he has his soul most freely subjected to God's holy will. See those illustrious passages in John 8:36; 2 Cor. 3:17; Rom. 8:21. Since this blessed work is like the free-agency which it reinstates, one wholly unique among the actions of God, and essentially different from all physical effects, it cannot receive any adequate illustration. Any parallel attempted, from either material or animal causes, would be incomplete. If, for instance, I were to say that the carnal man "in the bonds of iniquity," is like a wretch, who is hindered from walking in the paths of his duty and safety by some incubus that crushes his strength, I should use a false analogy: for the incubus is external: carnality is internal: an evil state qualifying the will itself. But this erroneous parallel may serve us so far; the fortunate subject of effectual calling has no more occasion to complain of violence done to his free-agency, than that wretch would, when a deliverer came and rolled the abhorred load off his body, restoring his limbs to the blessed freedom of motion, which might carry him away from the death that threatened him. You must learn to think of the almighty grace put forth in effectual calling, as reparative only; not violative. Augustine calls it a *Delectatio victrix*. It is a secret, omnipotent, silent, beneficent work of God, as gentle, yet powerful, as that which restored the vital spark to the corpse of

Lazarus. Such are all God's beneficent actions, from the launching of the worlds in their orbits, to the germination of the seed in the soil.

## **OF FREE-WILL IN THE FALLEN STATE, AND OF EFFECTUAL VOCATION OR CONVERSION TO GOD**

**By Christopher Ness**

The Arminians not only deny election to be an eternal, peculiar, unconditional, and irreversible act of God; and assert that Christ died equally and indiscriminately for every individual of mankind; for them that perish no less than for them that are saved; but they also aver that saving grace is tendered to the acceptance of every man; which he may or may not receive, just as he pleases. That the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit in conversion is not invincible but is suspended, or depends for its efficacy on the will of man. That notwithstanding Christ's death, it was possible (in respect of free-will) that all should perish; that now, by His death for all, true grace is given to all; which they may improve, hold fast, and be saved; or despise, neglect, cast away, and be lost!

The will of man is naturally a self-determining power and principle, but hath since the Fall the strong bias of sin upon it. Freedom is radically and originally in the will, not in the understanding; and it is an essential property of it, that it cannot be compelled by any created external agent, in its own free choice. Now it is no wonder, if many mistakes arise about this great engine of the Almighty, since the soul

knows not itself but by reflection; and though we know its qualities and operations, yet we know not its essence.

Man is considered in a fourfold state: 1. The state of creation, therein he had free-will either to good or evil, but was necessitated to neither. 2. The state of degeneration, wherein he is a servant to sin, and necessitated to evil. 3. The state of regeneration, wherein he is freed from the slavery and dominion of sin, and from the love of sin, though not at present, from the inbred corruptions and in being of it. 4. The state of glorification, wherein man is both freely and necessarily good, perfect, and happy. In the first estate, man is free; in the second, a slave; in the third, set free; and in the fourth, having a glorious liberty.

The controversy is concerning the second state, wherein we say, that man is under a necessity of sinning, yet free from coercion; he is free to evil, but not to good; which appears by the following arguments:

1. That there is no free-will to good in the fallen estate, is proved from the Fall itself; if man, in the Fall, lost his free-will to good, then it cannot be found in the fallen estate.

The Fall implies: The loss of that original righteousness and perfection wherein man was created. If the other faculties of the soul became depraved, and were stripped of their primitive lustre by the Fall, then must the will also be a sharer in that depravation. Now the depravity of the will is proved by considering the good it hath lost, and the evil it hath gained, through Adam's sin. The good it has lost is sixfold: power, order, stability, prudence, obedience, liberty. The evil it hath gained is a threefold rebellion: (a.) Against the counsel of the mind. (b.) Against the controls of conscience. (c.) Against the commands of God. This king of the Isle of Man (the will), when he come first out of God's mint, was a curious silver-piece, and shone

most gloriously; but now, being fallen among thieves, is robbed of all, hath ashes for beauty, and is a tyrant upon a dunghill; yea, is free from righteousness, but a very slave to sin (Ro 6:17-20). Before the Fall, the will had liberty both to good or evil, to do or not to do; but since the Fall, the will is evil, only evil, and continually evil (Ge 6:5). The whole heart now is evil extensively, only evil intensively, and continually evil protensively.

2. If conversion be a new creation, then fallen man hath not a free-will to good.

A convert is called a "new creature," or a "new creation" in Ga 6:15, and 2Co 5:17. Creation is a production of something out of nothing; but if there be a free-will to do good in man before conversion, then is there something of its own nature spiritually good in unconverted man towards the work of conversion; so can it not be called a new creature. Sure I am every experienced soul finds the contrary in that work; the whole frame is out of frame in the unconverted state and man is a confused chaos, a vast emptiness, when this creating power comes upon him. Yea, a greater power is required to recreate this little world than at first to create the greater; for in this, though there be no pre-existing good matter, yet is there resisting evil matter. The creation of the great world was the work of God's Word (Ps 33:6); of His fingers (Ps 8:3); or of His hands (Ps 102:25). But to restore (the little world) man, requires God's arm (Lu 1:51); nay, Christ set His sides to it (Lu 22:44); it cost Him tears and agony and blood. New qualities and operations are created in us; the will to will well, and the power to do well, are ascribed to this creating almighty power in the effectual conversion of souls to God. "It is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Php 2:13).

3. If conversion be a new-begetting, or generation, then fallen man hath no free-will to good.

Generation is the motion to a being, and a proceeding into a being; this presupposes that there is no being before; for we are not, we are nothing before we be begotten; as it holds true in generation, so in regeneration: "Of His own will begat He us" (Jas 1:18). It is not said that God begat us of our wills (yet this should be said were there in us a free-will to good) but of God's will; and till then we are not (1Co 1:28).

Unconverted men are nothing creatures. (a.) A natural nothing; for what is the great womb whence all things come but nothing? (b.) A moral nothing; we are morally worse than nothing, that is miserable; "Man is vanity," or as in Hebrew, Adam is Abel, that is, vanity (Ps 39:5); "and a lie" (Ps 62:9). "The heart of the wicked is little worth" (Pr 10:20); neither for use nor service; as a shadow is not useful for war, nor a statue for prayer, so fallen man is unfit for the service of God, for his best actions are sin. All this shows we are nothing, and have not a free-will to good, till begotten of God.

4. If conversion be a new birth, then fallen man hath not a free-will to good.

We cannot have a birth of ourselves; a babe cannot be born of itself; nothing can have its original from itself, for it would then be before and after itself; it would be and would not be, at the same time. Thus are we taught to look up above ourselves for our new birth. "Except a man be born again," or from above (Joh 3:3). We are born, not of the flesh, "but of the Spirit" (Joh 3:6). Our first birth is of the earth, earthy; our second birth is from the Lord, Heavenly; "Born of God" (1Jo 3:9).

5. If conversion be a quickening of one that is dead in sin, then fallen man hath no free-will to good.

This is proved from Eph 2:1: "You hath He quickened who were dead" etc. He doth not say half dead, as the man was that fell among thieves (Lu 10:30); but wholly dead, as to spiritual life. There is no manner of good in us (Ro 7:18). And "we are not sufficient of ourselves to think" a good thought till Christ quickens us (2Co 3:5). "Without Him we can do nothing" (Joh 15:5). From Him is our fruit found (Ho 14:8); both the bud of good desires, the blossom of good purposes, and the fruit of good actions. Aaron's rod (a dry stick without a root) is a fit emblem; it budded, blossomed, and brought forth almonds; this was not done by any inward principle or power of nature, but it was solely and wholly the work of God. So Ezekiel's dry bones were made to live; nothing of that life was from themselves, but all from God. Thus it is in this spiritual life; we can contribute nothing by which to dispose ourselves to will that which is truly good; we cannot so much as call Christ Lord, but by the Spirit (1Co 12:3). If there be no life, but through union with Christ, then till we be engrafted into that blessed and bleeding vine we cannot bring forth fruit unto God. And it is not any natural power or principle in us that can engraft us into Christ, for faith is the engrafting grace, and that is "the gift of God" (Eph 2:8), the grace by which the just live (Hab 2:4), and by which Christ dwells in our hearts (Eph 3:17). Till then we are dead, and have no free-will to good.

6. If regeneration, or recovery from the state of degeneration, be a resurrection, then fallen man hath no free-will to good.

That regeneration is a resurrection is manifest from the following scriptures: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and

they that hear shall live" (Joh 5:25). "When we were dead in sins, (He) hath quickened us together with Christ" and "hath raised us up" etc. (Eph 2:5,6). It requires as much power to raise, quicken, and make alive a sinner dead in trespasses and sins, as to raise Christ from the dead (Eph 1:19,20). To raise up Christ, and to work faith in us, requires "the exceeding greatness of His power" (Eph 1:19). Here are three gradations: power, greatness of power, and as if that were too little, the apostle adds, "according to the working of His mighty power." The original words imply not only a working, but an effectual force in working; such strength as in the arms of valiant men who can do great exploits. Nay more, it is beyond all this, it implies a power that can do all things, an omnipotent power. Surely, had there been an internal principle in us toward this great work, or any free-will in us to good, Paul would not have used those gradations, nor such emphatical, significant expressions. This work of regeneration would not then have required the effectual, forcible power of the valiant arm of God; even such a power as raised up Christ from the dead, by which He was declared to be the Son of God (Ro 1:4).

7. If moral persuasion be altogether insufficient of itself to recover man from his fallen state, then fallen man hath no free-will to do good.

If moral persuasion could recover man, then faith would be an easy work, and not require such mighty power as has just been proved. Christ did more to the raising of Lazarus than morally persuade him to come out of the grave; when Christ said, "Lazarus, come forth" (Joh 11:43) a mighty power went along with the command, which gave effect thereto. It is not enough to persuade a prisoner to come forth, but his chains must be struck off, and the prison doors must be opened (Ac 12:6,7,10); and man is more than a mere prisoner; he is

dead in sin, so must have a quickening grace; which moral persuasion can never accomplish.

8. If Christ be All in all (Col 3:11), in matters of salvation, then man is nothing at all as to that work, and hath not in himself a free-will to good.

(a.) Christ's work is to bore the ear, which before is stopped like the deaf adder's to the voice of the charmer (Ps 58:4,5). Christ gives the understanding ear; "He openeth also their ear to discipline, and commandeth that they return from iniquity" (Job 36:10). See Ps 40:6, and Isa 50:4, which passages, although spoken of Christ, hold good concerning His people.

(b.) Christ opens not only the ear, but the heart also (Ac 16:14). The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, not she her own heart; which she might have done had she a free-will to good. The key of the heart hangs at Christ's girdle. "He that openeth and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth" (Re 3:7). Moral persuasion will never prove effectual to open the heart of man.

(c.) Besides Christ there is no Saviour (Isa 43:11; Ho 13:4); but free-will Arminianism makes man a co-saviour with Christ; as if there was a halving of it between the grace of Christ and the will of man, and the latter dividing the spoil with the former; yea, deserving the greater share: for if Christ be only a monitor, and persuade to good, then man's own will is the principal author of its own goodness; and he makes himself to differ from others, and hath something, that he received not at conversion, of which to boast before God. "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" (1Co 4:7). Persuasion leaves the admonished will to its own indifferency, not changing it at all; so



man becomes his own saviour, at least Christ is not the only Saviour; how then is Christ All in all?

9. If fallen man must be drawn to goodness, then hath he no free-will to good.

That moral persuasion will not bring a soul to Christ; that man cannot come himself, but must be drawn, is proved from Joh 6:44: "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him." Drawing is a bringing of anything out of its course and channel by an influence from without, and not from an innate power or principle from within. In So 1:4, it is not said lead, but "draw;" in drawing there is less will and more power than in leading; and though God draws us strongly, yet He doth it sweetly. As we are drawn, we have not a free-will to good, else man fell in his understanding only, not in his will; yet are we volunteers (Ps 110:3), a willing people; not that Christ finds us so, but makes us so "in the day of His power," and when He speaks to us with a strong hand (Isa 8:11). We are naturally haters of God, and at enmity with Him (Ro 1:30; 8:7), but the Spirit gives a new power to the soul, and then acts and influences that power to good; so draws a God-hater to love Him. This is more than a bare persuasion to a stone to be warm, for God takes away the "heart of stone," and gives a "heart of flesh" (Eze 36:26). God the Spirit gives the inclination to come, and the very power of coming to Christ; and Christ finds nothing that is good in us (Ro 7:18).

10. If the soul of man be passive in effectual calling, then is there in fallen man no free-will to good.

The spirit of grace is compared to a precious liquor that is infused; and the called and chosen of God are styled vessels of mercy. "I will pour upon the house of David . . . the spirit of grace" etc. (Zec 12:10);

"the vessels of mercy prepared unto glory" (Ro 9:23). Now a vessel is a passive receiver of liquor poured into it. "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost" (Ro 5:5); that is, poured out and infused into God's vessels of mercy. The atmosphere is passive when it receives light, and Adam's body was passive when God inspired it with life; though it was formed and organized, yet was it lifeless and breathless (Ge 2:7). So the will of man (in respect of this first reception of grace) hath neither concurrence nor cooperation active; the Lord is alone in that work. Apart from the influences of Divine grace, it is a very hell to any to be brought from hell; though it be an hell to us to stay after God hath opened our eyes and changed our hearts. Corrupt nature neither can nor will contribute anything to destroy its own corruptions. In the first work, the will moveth not itself, but is moved by God. The will, as a creature, must obey its Creator; yet as a sinful depraved will, it obeys not willingly till "made willing" (Ps 110:3). Man, and the will of man, while in an unregenerate state, may be compared to the tied-up colt in Mr 11:2 (tied and bound with sin's chain), but when "the Lord hath need of him," and the "day of His power" is come, the sinner must then be loosed and let go.

11. To deny grace, irresistible, special grace in conversion, is abominable; and the doctrine of free-will is a denial of this.

The advocates for free-will say, "If a man improves his naturals, God is bound to give him spirituals." What is this but turning grace into debt? And to say that the reason why one believes and another does not arises from the co-operation of the free-will of him that believeth, is to deny special irresistible grace as peculiar to the elect. All which is contrary to these scriptures: Joh 6:37,45; Ro 8:14; 1Co 1:23,24; 1Jo 4:13, and very many others. God's dispensations towards His people are all of free grace. He quickens whom He will (Joh 5:21). The heart

of one sinner is caused to melt as wax before the fire and receive God's seal, while the heart of another remains as immovable as marble, and as the rock that cannot be shaken; this is the work of God's gracious dispensation. "He hath mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth" (Ro 9:18). The Spirit blows where it listeth (Joh 3:8). God may drop in grace, even with the first breathings of life, and regenerate a babe as soon as it be brought forth; as John Baptist, who was filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb (Lu 1:15). And others He may cast into the womb of the new birth when in the very act of dropping out of the world, at the eleventh, yea, at the twelfth hour, as the thief on the cross. Oh, who can order the ways of grace, and set bounds to the spirit of God in its breathings on man!

12. Free-will brings with it so many absurdities that it cannot be received.

(a.) It makes man the cause of his own salvation.

(b.) It puts grace into man's power, not man's will under the power of grace.

(c.) It robs God of the honour of making one to differ from another, and ascribes it to man.

(d.) It allows man a liberty of boasting to God, saying, "God, I thank Thee that Thou gavest me power to will (yet Thou gavest that to Judas as well as me), but I thank myself for the act of willingness, since I receive from Thee no more than Judas did."

(e.) It exempts the creature from the power of God, as if man, spider-like, could spin a thread out of his own bowels whereon to climb to Heaven.

(f.) It maketh man the cause why God willeth this or that; so God must attend on the will of man, and not be infallible in His decrees, nor working all things according to the counsel of His own will (Eph 1:11 Ps 115:3).

(g.) Then the apostle James lied in saying "every good gift" is from God (Jas 1:17); and Paul also was mistaken in Ro 9:11. He should have said, "It is of man that willeth and runneth," and not, "Of God that showeth mercy."

### Objections in Favour of Free-Will Answered

Objection 1. There is a law written in the hearts of fallen mankind (Ro 2:15).

Answer 1. This is conscience bearing witness of right and wrong (see the same verse, Ro 2:15). Impotency is in the will.

2. Adam begat a son "in his own image" (Ge 5:3), not only as a man, but a sinner. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh" (Joh 3:6). "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one" (Job 14:4). While we are Christless we are without strength (Ro 5:6).

3. The devils have more light than men, yet are they altogether dead in sin, though they believe and tremble (Jas 2:19), and though they confess Christ (Lu 4:34; Mr 1:24). They sin freely, yet cannot avoid it, but must sin.

Objection 2. Why is man blamed for resisting the Spirit, if there is no free-will (Ac 7:51; Mt 23:37).

Answer 1. They resisted the preaching of the Gospel (which is the outward means of grace) by persecuting the ministers of it. The word "resist" in that passage of Scripture signifies a rushing against, and

falling upon in a rude and hostile manner, and fitly expresses their ill-treatment of Christ and His ministers by falling upon them and putting them to death. That is the resistance here particularly designed; see also Ac 7:52. The inward work of the Spirit cannot be resisted; as the creature can neither hinder nor further his own creation, nor the dead their own resurrection, so neither can fallen man hinder or further his conversion.

2. Mt 23:37. This scripture, so common in the mouths and so frequently found in the writings of Arminians, so readily produced by them on almost every occasion against the doctrines of grace -- this scripture, taken in its context, will advantage them nothing. "How often would I have gathered," etc., "but ye would not." This gathering does not design a gathering of Jews to Christ internally, by the Spirit and grace of God; but a gathering of them externally, to hear Him preach, so that they might be brought to an assent unto Him as the Messiah.

This reception of Christ would not have been saving faith, but it would have preserved them from that temporal ruin threatened in the following verse (Mt 23:38). This scripture therefore, as Ac 7:51, only respects a resistance to Christ's outward ministry. Jerusalem, i.e., her rulers, received Him not (Joh 7:48), therefore their house is to be desolated (Mt 23:38); the city is one thing and her children another. Here is temporal destruction threatened for neglecting temporal visitations (Lu 19:44). Nationally considered, Jerusalem would have been preserved in its peace had the people, upon the rational opportunity afforded them for receiving the Messiah, accepted Christ under that character.

Objection 3. Why doth God say, "What could I do more to My vineyard?" (Isa 5:4).

Answer 1. This is not spoken of grace, that God gives to particular men peculiarly; but of great things done for Israel as a nation (Ps 147:19-20). God dealt not so with other nations. "These words are part of a parable, representing the state and condition of the people of the Jews; and the design of it is to show the ingratitude of the Jews in the midst of many favours bestowed on them, and the patience and long-suffering of God towards them, and to vindicate His justice in their ruin as a nation" (Dr. John Gill).

2. God did enough in making man upright, and if he hath lost his uprightness, he must thank himself, and not blame God, who is not bound to restore it. Grace is the Lord's own; he giveth it to whom He will.

Objection 4. Man is a rational creature; his will cannot be determined by anything from without, it being a self-determining principle.

Answer 1. Irresistible grace takes not away that natural liberty which the will hath by creation, but the depravity of it only; knocking off its fetters, but not destroying its nature. We never enjoy our will so much as when God's will overrules ours. If man can determine his own will, and destroy the liberty of it, then much more God who is the maker of it.

2. To will is from nature, to will well is from grace; spiritual fruit must spring from a spiritual root.

"Not all the outward forms on earth, Nor rites that God hath given,  
Not will of man, nor blood, nor birth, Can raise a soul to Heaven.

The sovereign will of God alone, Creates us heirs of grace; Both in the  
image of His Son, A new peculiar race.

Thus quicken'd souls awake and rise From the long sleep of death;  
On Heavenly things they fix their eyes, And praise employs their  
breath."

## **OF THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD IN GOVERNING THE WORLD DIVERSELY,**

THRUST FROM THIS PRE-EMINENCE BY THE ARMINIAN IDOL  
OF FREE-WILL.

**by John Owen**

I COME now to treat of that betwixt which and the Pelagian idol there is *bellum a]spondon*, implacable war and immortal hatred, absolutely destructive to the one side, — to wit, the providence of God. For this, in that notion Christianity hath hitherto embraced it, and that, in such a sense as the Arminians maintain it, can no more consist together than fire and water, light and darkness, Christ and Belial, and he that shall go to conjoin them ploughs with an ox and an ass; they must be tied together with the same ligament “*quo ille mortua jungebat corpora vivis*,” — wherewith the tyrant tied dead bodies to living men. This strange advancement of the clay against the potter, not by the way of repining, and to say, “Why hast thou made me thus?” but by the way of emulation, “I will not be so, I will advance myself to the sky, to the sides of thy throne,” was heretofore unknown to the more refined Paganism. As these of contingency, so they, with a better error, made a goddess of providence, because, as they feigned, she helped Latona to bring forth in the isle of Delos; intimating that Latona, or nature, though big and great with sundry

sorts of effects, could yet produce nothing without the interceding help of divine providence: which mythology of theirs seems to contain a sweeter gust of divine truth than any we can expect from their towering fancies who are inclinable to believe that God for no other reason is said to sustain all things, but because he doth not destroy them. Now, that their proud, God- opposing errors may the better appear, according to my former method, I will plainly show what the Scripture teacheth us concerning this providence, with what is agreeable to right and Christian reason, not what is dictated by tumultuating affections.

Providence is a word which, in its proper signification, may seem to comprehend all the actions of God that outwardly are of him, that have any respect unto his creatures, all his works that are not *ad intra*, essentially belonging unto the Deity. Now, because God “worketh all things according to his decree, or the counsel of his will,” Ephesians 1:11, for whatsoever he doth now it pleased him from the beginning, Psalm 115:3; seeing, also, that known unto God are all his works from eternity; therefore, three things concerning his providence are considerable: — 1. His *decree* or *purpose*, whereby he hath disposed of all things in order, and appointed them for certain ends, which he hath fore-ordained. 2. His *prescience*, whereby he certainly fore-knoweth all things that shall come to pass. 3. His *temporal operation*, or working in time, — “My Father worketh hitherto,” John 5:17, — whereby he actually executeth all his good pleasure. The first and second of these have been the subject of the former chapters; the latter only now requireth our consideration.

This, then, we may conceive as an ineffable act or work of Almighty God, *whereby he cherisheth, sustaineth, and governeth the world, or all things by him created, moving them, agreeably to those natures which he endowed them withal in the beginning, unto those*



*ends which he hath proposed.* To confirm this, I will first prove this position, That the whole world is cared for by God, and by him governed, and therein all men, good or bad, all things in particular, be they never so small and in our eyes inconsiderable. Secondly, show the manner how God worketh all, in all things, and according to the diversity of secondary causes which he hath created; whereof some are necessary, some free, others contingent, which produce their effects *nec pa>ntwn, nec ejpi< to< polu>, sedkata< sumqeqhko>n*, merely by accident.

The providence of God in governing the world is plentifully made known unto us, both by his works and by his word. I will give a few instances of either sort: —

1. In general, that the almighty *Dhmiourgo>v*, and Framer of this whole universe, should propose unto himself no end in the creation of all things, — that he should want either power, goodness, will, or wisdom, to order and dispose the works of his own hands, — is altogether impossible.

2. Take a particular instance in one concerning accident, the knowledge whereof by some means or other, in some degree or other, hath spread itself throughout the world, — and that is that almost universal destruction of all by the flood, whereby the whole world was well-nigh reduced to its primitive confusion. Is there nothing but chance to be seen in this? was there any circumstance about it that did not show a God and his providence? Not to speak of those revelations whereby God foretold that he would bring such a deluge, what chance, what fortune, could collect such a small number of individuals of all sorts, wherein the whole kind might be preserved? What hand guided that poor vessel from the rocks and gave it a resting-place on the mountains? Certainly, the very reading

of that story, Genesis 7,8, having for confirmation the catholic tradition of all mankind, were enough to startle the stubborn heart of an atheist.

The word of God doth not less fully relate it than his works do declare it, Psalm 19, “My Father worketh hitherto,” saith our Savior, John 5:17. But did not God end his work on the seventh day, and did he not then “rest from all his work?” Genesis 2:2. True, from his work of creation by his omnipotence; but his work of gubernation by his providence as yet knows no end. Yea, and divers particular things he doth besides the ordinary course, only to make known “that he thus worketh,” John 9:3. As he hath framed all things by his wisdom, so he continueth them by his providence in excellent order, as is at large declared in that golden Psalm 104: and this is not bounded to any particular places or things, but “his eyes are in every place, beholding the evil and the good,” Proverbs 15:3; so that “none can hide himself in secret places that he shall not see him,” Jeremiah 23:24; Acts 17:24; Job 5:10,11; Exodus 4:11. And all this he saith that men “may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside him. He is the LORD, and there is none else. He formeth the light, and createth darkness: he maketh peace, and createth evil: he doeth all these things,” Isaiah 45:6,7. In these and innumerable like places doth the Lord declare that there is nothing which he hath made, that with the good hand of his providence he doth not govern and sustain.

Now, this general extent of his common providence to all doth no way hinder but that he may exercise certain special acts thereof towards some in particular, even by how much nearer than other things they approach unto him and are more assimilated unto his goodness. I mean his church here on earth, and those whereof it doth consist; “for what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto

them?” Deuteronomy 4:7. In the government hereof he most eminently showeth his glory, and exerciseth his power. Join here his works with his word, what he hath done with what he hath promised to do for the conservation of his church and people, and you will find admirable issues of a more special providence. Against this he promiseth “the gates of hell shall not prevail,” Matthew 16:18; — amidst of these he hath promised to remain, Matthew 28:20; supplying them with an addition of all things necessary, Matthew 6:33; desiring that “all their care might be cast upon him, who careth for them,” 1 Peter 5:7; forbidding any to “touch his anointed ones,” Psalm 105:15, and that because they are unto him as “the apple of his eye,” Zechariah 2:8. Now, this special providence hath respect unto a supernatural end, to which that, and that alone, is to be conveyed.

For wicked men, as they are excepted from this special care and government, so they are not exempted from the dominion of his almighty hand. He who hath created them “for the day of evil,” Proverbs 16:4, and provided a “place of their own” for them to go unto, Acts 1:25, doth not in this world suffer them to live without the verge of his all-ruling providence; but by suffering and enduring their iniquities with great patience and “long-suffering,” Romans 9:22, defending them oftentimes from the injuries of one another, Genesis 4:15, by granting unto them many temporal blessings, Matthew 5:45, disposing of all their works to the glory of his great name, Proverbs 21:1,2, he declareth that they also live, and move, and have their being in him, and are under the government of his providence. Nay, there is not the least thing in this world to which his care and knowledge doth not descend. In would it become his wisdom not to sustain, order, and dispose of all things by him created, but leave them to the ruin of uncertain chance. Jerome then was injurious to his providence, and cast a blemish on his absolute perfection, whilst he thought to have cleared his majesty from being

defiled with the knowledge and care of the smallest reptiles and vermin every moment; and St Austin is express to the contrary: “Who,” saith he, “hath disposed the several members of the flea and gnat, that hath given unto them order, life, and motion?” etc., — even most agreeable to holy Scriptures: so Psalm 104:20,21, 145:15; Matthew 6:26,30, “He feedeth the fowls, and clotheth the grass of the field;” Job 39:1,2; Jonah 4:6,7. Sure it is not troublesome to God to take notice of all that he hath created. Did he use that great power in the production of the least of his creatures, so far beyond the united activity of men and angels, for no end at all? Doubtless, even they also must have a well-disposed order, for the manifestation of his glory. “Not a sparrow falleth on the ground without our Father;” even “the hairs of our head are all numbered,” Matthew 10:29,30. “He clotheth the lilies and grass of the field, which is to be cast into the oven,” Luke 12:27,28. Behold his knowledge and care of them! Again, he used frogs and lice for the punishment of the Egyptians, Exodus 8; with a gourd and a worm he exercised his servant Jonah, chapter 4; yea, he calls the locusts his “terrible army;” — and shall not God know and take care of the number of his soldiers, the ordering of his dreadful host?

That God by his providence governeth and disposeth of all things by him created is sufficiently proved; the manner how he worketh all in all, how he ordereth the works of his own hands, in what this governing and disposing of his creatures doth chiefly consist, comes now to be considered. And here four things are principally to be observed: — First, The sustaining, preserving, and upholding of all things by his power; for “he upholdeth all things by the word of his power,” Hebrews 1:3. Secondly, His working together with all things, by an influence of causality into the agents themselves; “for he also hath wrought all our works in us,” Isaiah 26:12. Thirdly, His powerful overruling of all events, both necessary, free, and

contingent, and disposing of them to certain ends for the manifestation of his glory. So Joseph tells his brethren,

“As for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is at this day, to save much people alive,” Genesis 1:20.

Fourthly, His determining and restraining second causes to such and such effects:

“The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will,” Proverbs 21:1.

First, His sustentation or upholding of all things is his powerful continuing of their being, natural strength, and faculties, bestowed on them at their creation: “In him we live, and move, and have our being,” Acts 17. So that he doth neither work all himself in them, without any co-operation of theirs, which would not only turn all things into stocks, yea, and take from stocks their own proper nature, but also is contrary to that general blessing he spread over the face of the whole world in the beginning, “Be fruitful, and multiply,” Genesis 1:22; — nor yet leave them to a self-subsistence, he in the meantime only not destroying them; which would make him an idle spectator of most things in the world, not to “work hitherto,” as our Savior speaks, and grant to divers things here below an absolute being, not derivative from him: the first whereof is blasphemous, the latter impossible.

Secondly, For God’s working in and together with all second causes for producing of their effects, what part or portion in the work punctually to assign unto him, what to the power of the inferior causes, seems beyond the reach of mortals; neither is an exact comprehension thereof any way necessary, so that we make every

thing beholding to his power for its being, and to his assistance for its operation.

Thirdly, His supreme dominion exerciseth itself in disposing of all things to certain and determinate ends for his own glory, and is chiefly discerned advancing itself over those things which are most contingent, and making them in some sort necessary, inasmuch as they are certainly disposed of to some proposed ends. Between the birth and death of a man, how many things merely contingent do occur! how many chances! how many diseases! in their own nature all evitable, and, in regard of the event, not one of them but to some proves mortal; yet, certain it is that a man's "days are determined, the number of his months are with the Lord, he hath appointed his bounds that he cannot pass," Job 14:5. And oftentimes by things purely contingent and accidental he executeth his purposes, — bestoweth rewards, inflicteth punishments, and accomplisheth his judgments; as when he delivereth a man to be slain by the head of an axe, flying from the helve in the hand of a man cutting a tree by the way. But in nothing is this more evident than in the ancient casting of lots, a thing as casual and accidental as can be imagined, huddled in the cap at a venture. Yet God overruleth them to the declaring of his purpose, freeing truth from doubts, and manifestation of his power: Proverbs 16:33, "The lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD;" — as you may see in the examples of Achan, Joshua 7:16-18; Saul, 1 Samuel 10:20,21; Jonathan, 1 Samuel 14:41,42; Jonah, Jonah 1:7; Matthias, Acts 1:26. And yet this overruling act of God's providence (as no other decree or act of his) doth not rob things contingent of their proper nature; for cannot he who effectually causeth that they shall come to pass, cause also that they shall come to pass contingently?

Fourthly, God's predetermination of second causes (which I name not last as though it were the last act of God's providence about his creatures, for indeed it is the first that concerneth their operation) is that effectual working of his, according to his eternal purpose, whereby, though some agents, as the wills of men, are causes most free and indefinite, or unlimited lords of their own actions, in respect of their internal principle of operation (that is, their own nature), [they] are yet all, in respect of his decree, and by his powerful working, determined to this or that effect in particular; not that they are compelled to do this, or hindered from doing that, but are inclined and disposed to do this or that, according to their proper manner of working, that is, most freely: for truly such testimonies are everywhere obvious in Scripture, of the stirring up of men's wills and minds, of bending and inclining them to divers things, of the governing of the secret thoughts and motions of the heart, as cannot by any means be referred to a naked permission, with a government of external actions, or to a general influence, whereby they should have power to do this or that, or any thing else; wherein, as some suppose, his whole providence consisteth.

Let us now jointly apply these several acts to free agents, working according to choice, or relation, such as are the wills of men, and that will open the way to take a view of Arminian heterodoxies, concerning this article of Christian belief. And here two things must be premised: — First, That they be not deprived of their own radical or original internal liberty; secondly, That they be not exempt from the moving influence and gubernation of God's providence; — the first whereof would leave no just room for rewards and punishments; the other, as I said before, is injurious to the majesty and power of God. St Augustine judged Cicero worthy of special blame, even among the heathens, for so attempting to make men free that he made them sacrilegious, by denying them to be subject to an

overruling providence: which gross error was directly maintained by Damascen, a learned Christian, teaching, “Things whereof we have any power, not to depend on providence, but on our own free will;” an opinion fitter for a hog of the Epicurus herd than for a scholar in the school of Christ. And yet this proud, prodigious error is now, though in other terms, stiffly maintained: for what do they else who ascribe such an absolute independent liberty to the will of man, that it should have in its own power every circumstance, every condition whatsoever, that belongs to operation, so that all things required on the part of God, or otherwise, to the performance of an action being accomplished, it remaineth solely in the power of a man’s own will whether he will do it or no? which supreme and plainly divine liberty, joined with such an absolute uncontrollable power and dominion over all his actions, would exempt and free the will of man, not only from all fore-determining to the production of such and such effects, but also from any effectual working or influence of the providence of God into the will itself, that should sustain, help, or cooperate with it in doing or willing any thing; and, therefore, the authors of this imaginary liberty have wisely framed an imaginary concurrence of God’s providence, answerable unto it, — namely, a general and indifferent influence, always waiting and expecting the will of man to determine itself to this or that effect, good or bad; God being, as it were, always ready at hand to do that small part which he hath in our actions, whensoever we please to use him, or, if we please to let him alone, he no way moveth us to the performance of any thing. Now, God forbid that we should give our consent to the choice of such a captain, under whose conduct we might go down again unto Paganism, — to the erecting of such an idol into the throne of the Almighty. No, doubtless, let us be most indulgent to our wills, and assign them all the liberty that is competent unto a created nature, to do all things freely according to election and foregoing counsel, being free from all natural necessity and outward



compulsion; but for all this, let us not presume to deny God's effectual assistance, his particular powerful influence into the wills and actions of his creatures, directing of them to a voluntary performance of what he hath determined: which the Arminians opposing in the behalf of their darling free-will, do work in the hearts of men an overweening of their own power, and an absolute independence of the providence of God; for, —

First, they deny that God (in whom we live, and move, and have our being) doth any thing by his providence, “whereby the creature should be stirred up, or helped in any of his actions.” That is, God wholly leaves a man in the hand of his own counsel, to the disposal of his own absolute independent power, without any respect to his providence at all; whence, as they do, they may well conclude, “that those things which God would have to be done of us freely” (such as are all human actions), “he cannot himself will or work more powerfully and effectually than by the way of wishing or desiring,” as Vorstius speaks; which is no more than one man can do concerning another, perhaps far less than an angel. I can wish or desire that another man would do what I have a mind he should; but, truly, to describe the providence of God by such expressions seems to me intolerable blasphemy. But thus it must be; without such helps as these, Dagon cannot keep on his head, nor the idol of uncontrollable free-will enjoy his dominion.

Hence Corvinus will grant that the killing of a man by the slipping of an axe's head from the helve, although contingent, may be said to happen according to God's counsel and determinate will; but *on no terms will he yield that this may be applied to actions wherein the counsel and freedom of man's will do take place, as though that they also should have dependence on any such overruling power; — whereby he absolutely excludeth the providence of God from having*

any sovereignty within the territory of human actions, which is plainly to shake off the yoke of his dominion, and to make men lords paramount within themselves: so that they may well ascribe unto God (as they do) *only a deceivable expectation of those contingent things that are yet for to come*, there being no act of his own in the producing of such effects on which he can ground any certainty; only, he may take a conjecture, according to his guess at men's inclinations. And, indeed, this is the Helen for whose enjoyment, these thrice ten years, they have maintained warfare with the hosts of the living God; their whole endeavor being to prove, that, notwithstanding the performance of all things, on the part of God, required for the production of any action, yet *the will of man remains absolutely free, yea, in respect of the event, as well as its manner of operation, to do it or not to do it*. That is, notwithstanding God's decree that such an action shall be performed, and his foreknowledge that it will so come to pass; notwithstanding his cooperating with the will of man (as far as they will allow him) for the doing of it, and though he hath determined by that act of man to execute some of his own judgments; yet there is no kind of necessity but that he may as well omit as do it: which is all one as if they should say, "Our tongues are our own; we ought to speak: who is lord over us? We will vindicate ourselves into a liberty of doing what and how we will, though for it we cast God out of his throne." And, indeed, if we mark it, we shall find them undermining and pulling down the actual providence of God, at the root and several branches thereof; for, —

First, For his conservation or sustaining of all things, they affirm it to be very likely that this is nothing but *a negative act of his will, whereby he willeth or determineth not to destroy the things by him created*; and when we produce places of Scripture which affirm that it is an act of his power, they say *they are foolishly cited*. So that,

truly, let the Scripture say what it will, (in their conceit,) God doth no more sustain and uphold all his creatures than I do a house when I do not set it on fire, or a worm when I do not tread upon it.

Secondly, For God's concurring with inferior causes in all their acts and working, they affirm it to be only *a general influence, alike upon all and every one, which they may use or not use at their pleasure*, and in the use determine it to this or that effect, be it good or bad (so Corvinus), as it seems best unto them. In a word, to the will of man it is nothing but what suffers it to play its own part freely, according to its inclination; as they jointly speak in their Confession. Observe, also, that they account this influence of his providence not to be into the agent, the will of man, whereby that should be helped or enabled to do any thing (no, that would seem to grant a self-sufficiency), but *only into the act itself for its production*: as if I should help a man to lift a log, it becomes perhaps unto him so much the lighter, but he is not made one jot the stronger; which takes off the proper work of providence, consisting in an internal assistance.

Thirdly, For God's determining or circumscribing the will of man to do this or that in particular, they absolutely explode it, as a thing destructive to their adored liberty. "It is no way consistent with it," say they, in their Apology. So also Arminius: "The providence of God doth not determine the will of man to one part of the contradiction." That is, "God hath not determined that you shall, nor doth by any means overrule your wills, to do this thing rather than that, to do this or to omit that." So that the sum of their endeavor is, to prove that the will of man is so absolutely free, independent, and uncontrollable, that God doth not, nay, with all his power cannot, determine it certainly and infallibly to the performance of this or that particular action, thereby to accomplish his own purposes, to attain his own ends. Truly, it seems to me the most unfortunate attempt

that ever Christians lighted on; which, if it should get success answerable to the greatness of the undertaking, the providence of God, in men's esteem, would be almost thrust quite out of the world. "Tantae molis erat." The new goddess contingency could not be erected until the God of heaven was utterly despoiled of his dominion over the sons of men, and in the room thereof a home-bred idol of self-sufficiency set up, and the world persuaded to worship it. But that the building climb no higher, let all men observe how the word of God overthrows this Babylonian tower.

First, then, In innumerable places it is punctual that his providence doth not only bear rule in the counsels of men and their most secret resolutions, (whence the prophet declareth that he knoweth that "the way of man is not in himself," — that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," Jeremiah 10:23; and Solomon, that "a man's heart, deviseth his way, but the LORD directeth his steps," Proverbs 16:9; David, also, having laid this ground, that "the Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to naught," and "maketh the devices of the people of none effect," but "his own counsel standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations," Psalm 33:10,11, proceedeth accordingly, in his own distress, to pray that the Lord would infatuate and make "foolish the counsel of Ahithophel," 2 Samuel 15:31, — which also the Lord did, by working in the heart of Absalom to hearken to the cross counsel of Hushai); but also, secondly, That the working of his providence is effectual even in the hearts and wills of men to turn them which way he will, and to determine them to this or that in particular, according as he pleaseth: "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD," saith Solomon, Proverbs 16:1; — which Jacob trusted and relied on when he prayed that the Lord would grant his sons to find favor and mercy before that man whom then he supposed to be some atheistical Egyptian, Genesis 43:14; whence we must grant, either

that the good old man believed that it was in the hand of God to incline and unalterably turn and settle the heart of Joseph to favor his brethren, or else his prayer must have had such a senseless sense as this: "Grant, O Lord, such a general influence of thy providence, that the heart of that man may be turned to good towards my sons, or else that it may not, being left to its own freedom." A strange request! yet how it may be bettered by one believing the Arminian doctrine I cannot conceive. Thus Solomon affirmeth that "the king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, like the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will," Proverbs 21:1. If the heart of a king, who hath an inward natural liberty equal with others, and an outward liberty belonging to his state and condition above them, be yet so in the hand of the Lord as that he always turneth it to what he pleaseth in particular, then certainly other men are not excepted from the rule of the same providence; which is the plain sense of these words, and the direct thesis which we maintain in opposition to the Arminian idol of absolute independent free-will. So Daniel, also, reproving the Babylonian tyrant, affirmeth that he "glorified not the God in whose hand was his breath, and whose were all his ways," Daniel 5:23. Not only his breath and life, but also all his ways, his actions, thoughts, and words, were in the hand of God.

Yea, thirdly, sometimes the saints of God, as I touched before, do pray that God would be pleased thus to determine their hearts, and bend their wills, and wholly incline them to some one certain thing, and that without any prejudice to their true and proper liberty: so David, Psalm 119:36, "Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to *covetousness*." This prayer being his may also be ours, and we may ask it in faith, relying on the power and promise of God in Christ that he will perform our petitions, John 14:14. Now, I desire any Christian to resolve, whether, by these and the like requests, he intendeth to desire at the hand of God nothing but such an indifferent motion to

any good as may leave him to his own choice whether he will do it or no, which is all the Arminians will grant him; or rather, that he would powerfully bend his heart and soul unto his testimonies, and work in him an actual embracing of all the ways of God, not desiring more liberty, but only enough to do it willingly. Nay, surely the prayers of God's servants, requesting, with Solomon, that the Lord would be with them, and "incline their heart unto him, to keep his statutes and walk in his commandments," 1 Kings 8:57,58; and with David, to "create in them a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within them," Psalm 51:10; when, according to God's promises, they entreat him "to put his fear into their hearts," Jeremiah 32:40, "to unite their hearts to fear his name," Psalm 86:11, to work in them both the will and the deed, an actual obedience unto his law; — cannot possibly aim at nothing but a general influence, enabling them alike either to do or not to do what they so earnestly long after.

Fourthly, The certainty of divers promises and threatenings of Almighty God dependeth upon his powerful determining and turning the wills and hearts of men which way he pleaseth; thus, to them that fear him he promiseth that they shall find favor in the sight of men, Proverbs 3:4. Now, if, notwithstanding all God's powerful operation in their hearts, it remaineth absolutely in the hands of men whether they will favor them that fear him or no, it is wholly in their power whether God shall be true in his promises or no. Surely when Jacob wrestled with God on the strength of such promise, Genesis 32:12, he little thought of any question whether it were in the power of God to perform it. Yea, and the event showed that there ought to be no such question, chapter 33; for the Lord turned the heart of his brother Esau, as he doth of others when he makes them pity his servants when at any time they have carried them away captives, Psalm 106:46. See, also, the same powerful operation required to the execution of his judgments, Job 12:17, 20:21, etc. In brief, there is no

prophecy nor prediction in the whole Scripture, no promise to the church or faithful, to whose accomplishment the free actions and concurrence of men are required, but evidently declareth that God disposeth of the hearts of men, ruleth their wills, inclineth their affections, and determines them freely to choose and do what he in his good pleasure hath decreed shall be performed; — such as were the prophecies of deliverance from the Babylonish captivity by Cyrus, Isaiah 45; of the conversion of the Gentiles; of the stability of the church, Matthew 16; of the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, chapter 24; with innumerable others. I will add only some few reasons for the close of this long discourse.

This opinion, that God hath nothing but a general influence into the actions of men, not effectually moving their wills to this or that in particular, —

First, Granteth a goodness of *entity*, or being, unto divers things, whereof God is not the author, as those special actions which men perform without his special concurrence; which is blasphemous. The apostle affirms that “of him are all things.”

Secondly, It denieth God to be the author of all moral goodness, for an action is good inasmuch as it is such an action in particular; which that any is so, according to this opinion, is to be attributed merely to the will of man. The general influence of God moveth him no more to prayer than to evil communications tending to the corruption of good manners.

Thirdly, It maketh all the decrees of God, whose execution dependeth on human actions, to be altogether uncertain, and his foreknowledge of such things to be fallible and easily to be deceived; so that there is no reconciliation possible to be hoped for betwixt these following and the like assertions: —

S.S.	Lib. Arbit.
<p>“In him we live, and move, and have our being,” Acts 17:28.</p>	<p>“God’s sustaining of all things is not an affirmative act of his power, but a negative act of his will.”</p>
<p>“He upholdeth all things by</p>	<p>“Whereby he will not destroy them,” Rem. Apol.</p>
<p>the word of his power,” Hebrews 1:3. “Thou hast wrought all our works in us,” Isaiah 26:12. “My Father worketh hitherto,” John 5:17.</p>	<p>“God by his influence bestoweth nothing on the creature whereby it may be incited or helped in its actions,” Corvinus</p>
<p>“The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the LORD,” Proverbs 16:1. “The king’s heart is in the hand of the LORD, like the rivers of water: he turneth it</p>	<p>“Those things God would have us freely do ourselves; he can no more effectually work or will than by the way of wishing,” Vorstius.</p>



<p>whithersoever he will,” Proverbs 21:1.</p>	
<p>“Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness,” Psalm 119:36. “Unite my heart to fear thy name,” Psalm 86:11. “The God in whose hand try breath is, and whose are all try ways, thou hast not glorified,” Daniel 5:23.</p>	<p>“The providence of God doth not determine the free-will of man to this or that particular, or to one part of the contradiction,” Arminius.</p>
<p>See Matthew 27:1, compared with Acts 2:23, and 4:27,28; Luke 24:27; John 19:31-36. For the necessity of other events, see Exodus 21:17; Job 14:5; Matthew 19:7, etc.</p>	<p>“The will of man ought to be free from all kind of internal and external necessity in its actions,” Rem. That is, God cannot lay such a necessity upon any thing as that it shall infallibly come to pass as he intendeth. See the contrary in the places cited.</p>

## **Appendix**

# **Quotes on Effectual Grace**

**by St. Augustine**

### **A definition of grace**

The grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord must be understood as follows: grace is the only thing that delivers human beings from evil; without it, they do absolutely nothing good, whether in thought, or in will and emotion, or in action. Grace not only makes known to people what they ought to do, but also enables them to perform with love the duty that they know.

The apostle Paul certainly asked God to inspire the Corinthians with this good will and action when he said, ‘Now we pray to God that you do no evil, not that we should appear to be approved, but that you should do what is good’ (2 Cor.13:7). Who can hear this and not wake up and confess that the Lord God is the One Who turns us away from evil so that we do good? For the apostle does not say, ‘We admonish, we teach, we exhort, we rebuke.’ He says, ‘We pray to God that you do no evil, but that you should do what is good.’ Of course, he was also in the habit of speaking to them, and doing all those things which I have mentioned — he admonished, he taught, he exhorted, he rebuked. But he knew that all these things which he was openly doing in the way of planting and watering were of no avail, unless He Who secretly gives the increase answered his prayer on the Corinthians’ behalf. For as the same teacher of the Gentiles says, ‘Neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God Who gives the increase’ (1 Cor.3:7).

On Rebuke and Grace, 3

### **Two more definitions**

Listen to the apostle Paul when he says, 'Love is the fulfilment of the law' (Rom.13:10). How do we obtain the love? By the grace of God. By the Holy Spirit. For we could not have it from ourselves, as if we created it for ourselves. Love is the gift of God. And a great gift it is! For the apostle says, 'The love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit Who was given to us' (Rom.5:5).

Sermons on John, 17:6

For them [the Pelagians], grace means the knowledge with which the Lord God helps us, by which we can know what our duty is. The true meaning of grace, however, is the love that God breathes into us, which enables us with a holy delight to carry out the duty that we know.

Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, 4:11

### **No-one has any right to God's grace**

The grace of Christ, without which neither infants nor adults can be saved, is not bestowed on account of any virtues, but is given gratuitously, which is why it is called 'grace'. As Paul says, 'being justified freely through His blood' (Rom.3:24). So those who are not liberated by grace are indeed justly condemned <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> those who are not yet able to hear, those who are unwilling to obey, or again those who did not receive (at the time when their youth made them unable to hear) that washing of regeneration, which they might have received

and through which they might have been saved. All these are justly condemned, because they are not without sin, either the sin that they have derived from their birth, or the sin that they have added from their own misconduct. 'For all have sinned' whether in Adam or in themselves 'and come short of the glory of God' (Rom.3:23).

The entire mass of humanity, therefore, becomes liable to punishment. And if the deserved punishment of condemnation were inflicted on all, it would without doubt be righteously inflicted. Consequently, those who are delivered from punishment by grace are called, not vessels of their own virtues, but 'vessels of mercy' (Rom.9:23). Whose mercy? God's <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> the One Who sent Christ Jesus into the world to save the sinners whom He foreknew, and predestined, and called, and justified, and glorified. Now, who could be so madly insane as to fail to give inexpressible thanks to the mercy which liberates whom it chooses? The person who correctly appreciated the whole subject could not possibly blame the justice of God if He utterly condemned all people absolutely.

On Nature and Grace, 4-5

### **There is no true goodness in us prior to our conversion**

You [Julian of Eclanum] think that a person is helped by the grace of God in a good work, in such a way that grace does nothing to stir up his will towards that good work. Your own words sufficiently declare this. For why have you failed to say that a person is aroused by God's grace to a good work, as you have indeed said that he is aroused to evil by the suggestions of the devil? Why have you merely said that a person is always 'helped' in a good work by God's grace? As if by his own will, and without any grace of God, he undertook a good work, and then was divinely helped in the work itself, on account of the

virtues of his good will. In that case, grace is rendered as something due, rather than given as a gift — and so grace is no longer grace. But this is what, in the Palestinian verdict [the synod of Diospolis — see Introduction], Pelagius with a deceitful heart condemned, namely, that the grace of God is given according to our virtues.

Tell me, please, what good Paul willed while he was still Saul, when he was in fact willing great evils, breathing out slaughter as he went, in a horrible darkness of mind and madness, to destroy Christians? What virtues of Saul's good will prompted God to convert him by a marvellous and sudden call from those evils to good things? What shall I say, when Paul himself cries, 'Not by works of righteousness that we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us' (Tit.3:5)? And what about that saying of the Lord which I have already mentioned, 'No one can come to Me' — that is, 'believe in Me' — 'unless it has been granted to him by My Father' (Jn.6:65)? Is faith given to the person who is already willing to believe, in recognition of the virtues of his good will? Or rather, is not the will itself stirred up from above, as in the case of Saul, in order that he may believe, even though he is so hostile to the faith that he persecutes believers?

Indeed, how has the Lord commanded us to pray for those who persecute us? Do we pray that the grace of God may reward them for their good will? Do we not rather pray that the evil will itself may be changed into a good one? Surely the saints whom Saul was persecuting prayed for Saul, that his will might be converted to the faith which he was destroying; and they did not pray in vain. Indeed, the obviously miraculous nature of Saul's conversion made it clear that it originated in heaven. How many enemies of Christ at the present day are suddenly drawn to Him by God's secret grace! And let me set down this word from the gospel: 'No-one can come to Me, unless the Father Who sent me draws him' (Jn.6:44). What would

Julian not have said against me, if it were not for that verse? As it is, he is rousing himself, not against me, but against Christ Who spoke these words. For He does not say, 'unless He leads him,' which would have allowed us to think that the person's will went beforehand. But who is 'drawn,' if he was already willing? And yet no-one comes unless he is willing. Therefore in wondrous ways a person is drawn into a state of willingness, by Him who knows how to work within the very hearts of human beings. Not that unwilling people are made to believe, which cannot be. Rather, unwilling people are made willing.

Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, 1:37

### **The proud Pelagian takes the credit for his own goodness**

What good does it do the Pelagians to praise free will by saying, 'grace assists everyone's good resolution'? We could accept this without hesitation as being said in a Catholic spirit, if they did not attribute worthiness to the good resolution. For that would mean that God's assistance was now a wage paid as a debt to this worthiness  $\frac{3}{4}$  and that is no longer grace. They need to understand and confess that even that good resolution itself, which grace then comes and assists, could not have existed in a person if grace had not gone before it. How can there be a good resolution in someone without the mercy of God going first, since it is the good will which is itself prepared by the Lord?

When the Pelagians say that 'grace assists everyone's good resolution,' and then add, 'yet grace does not infuse the love of virtue into a heart that resists,' even this might be understood in a right sense, except that we know what they really mean. For in the case of the heart that resists, God's grace itself first of all makes the heart willing to hear the divine call; and then, the heart no longer resisting,

grace kindles the desire for virtue. So then, in everything where anyone does anything in accordance with God, God's mercy works first. And this our adversaries will not confess, because they choose to be not Catholics, but Pelagians. For it gives much delight to a proud ungodliness to think that, even when a person is forced to acknowledge that the Lord has given him something, it was not given as a gift, but paid in return for something. In this way, the children of destruction, not of the promise, think that they have made themselves good, and that God has repaid the self-made virtuous the reward they deserve for their work.

This is the pride that has blocked up the ears of the Pelagians' hearts, so that they do not hear, 'For what do you have that you did not receive?' (1 Cor.4:7) They do not hear, 'Without Me you can do nothing' (Jn.15:5) They do not hear, 'Love is from God' (1 Jn.4:7) They do not hear, 'God has dealt out to each one a measure of faith' (Rom.12:3). They do not hear, 'The Spirit breathes where He wills' (Jn.3:8), and, 'Those who are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God' (Rom.8:14). They do not hear, 'No-one can come to Me, unless it has been granted to him by My Father' (Rom.8:14). They do not hear what Ezra writes, 'Blessed is the Lord of our fathers, Who has put into the heart of the king to glorify His house which is in Jerusalem' (Ezra 7:27). They do not hear what the Lord says through Jeremiah, 'And I will put My fear into their heart, so that they will not depart from Me. Yes, I will visit them to make them good' (Jer.32:40-41).

And especially they do not hear that word spoken by Ezekiel the prophet, where God fully shows that He does not make people good (that is, obedient to His commands) because He is moved by worthy qualities in them. No, He repays people good for evil, by doing this for His own sake, and not for theirs. For He says, 'Thus says the Lord

God: I do not do this for your sake, O house of Israel, but for My holy name, which you have profaned among the nations, where you went. And I will sanctify My great name, which has been profaned among the nations, which you have profaned in the midst of them; and the nations shall know that I am the Lord, says the Lord God, when I shall be sanctified in you before their eyes. For I will take you from among the nations, and gather you out of all the countries, and will bring you into your own land. And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, I will cleanse you. A new heart also I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you shall keep My ordinances, and do them' (Ezek.36:22-27).

Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, 4:13-14

### **God is the source of the new heart and Christian obedience**

What does the putrid flesh of humanity have left to puff itself up with, and to refuse to glory in the Lord? Whatever it claims it has done to achieve virtue by its own effort, so that God must then reward it — against all such claims it shall be answered, it shall be exclaimed, it shall be contradicted, 'I do it; but for My own holy name's sake; I do not do it for your sakes, says the Lord God' (Ezek.36:22). Nothing so overthrows the Pelagians when they say that the grace of God is given according to our virtues. (In fact, Pelagius himself condemned this view, although he did not embrace the correct one — he was just afraid of the Eastern judges.) Nothing so overthrows the arrogance of people who say, 'We do it, that we may by our virtues establish a basis for God to work.' It is not



Pelagius that answers you, but the Lord Himself: 'I do it, and not for your sakes, but for My own holy name's sake.' For what good can you do out of a heart that is not good? But in order that you may have a good heart, He says, 'I will give you a new heart, and I will put a new spirit within you' (Ezek.36:26).

Can you say, 'We will first walk in His righteousness, and will observe His judgments, and will act in a worthy way, so that He will give His grace to us'? But what good would you evil people do? And how would you do those good things, unless you were yourselves good? But Who causes people to be good? Only He Who said, 'And I will visit them to make them good,' and, 'I will put my Spirit within you, and will cause you to walk in my righteousness, and to observe my judgments, and do them' (Ezek.36:27). Are you asleep? Can't you hear Him saying, 'I will cause you to walk, I will make you to observe,' lastly, 'I will make you to do'? Really, are you still puffing yourselves up? We walk, true enough, and we observe, and we do; but it is God Who He makes us to walk, to observe, to do. This is the grace of God making us good; this is His mercy going before us.

Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, 4:15

### **Without Me, you can do nothing**

The Pelagians think they have good grounds for accusing us of false teaching when we say, 'God inspires an unwilling and resisting person with the desire,' not for any very great good, but 'even for imperfect good.' Possibly, then, they themselves are keeping open a place for grace (at least in some sense) by thinking as follows: a person can have the desire for good without grace, but only for imperfect good; he could not easily have the desire for perfect good

even with grace, but without grace he could not desire perfect good at all.

But actually, even this view sees God's grace as being given according to our virtues (which Pelagius, in the church synod in the East, condemned, merely from the fear of being condemned). For if the desire for good begins from ourselves without God's grace, virtue itself will have begun — and to this virtue, the assistance of grace then comes, as if it were owed. Thus God's grace is not bestowed freely, but is given according to our virtue. However, in order that he might provide a reply to the future Pelagius, the Lord does not say, 'Without Me, it is with difficulty that you can do anything,' but He says, 'Without Me, you can do nothing' (Jn.15:5). And, that He might also provide an answer to these future heretics, in that very same Gospel saying He does not say, 'Without me you can bring nothing to perfection,' but 'do' nothing. For if He had said 'bring nothing to perfection', they might say that God's help is necessary, not for beginning good, which rests with ourselves, but for perfecting it. But let them hear the apostle too. For when the Lord says, 'Without me you can do nothing,' in this one word He comprehends both the beginning and the ending. The apostle, indeed, as if he were an expounder of the Lord's saying, distinguishes both [beginning and ending] very clearly when he says, 'Because He who has begun a good work in you will perfect it even to the day of Christ Jesus' (Phil.1:6).

Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, 2:18

**From first beginnings to final completion, salvation is by grace**

Since these things are so, everything that is commanded to human beings by the Lord in the holy Scriptures, for the sake of testing human free will, is either something we begin to obey by God's goodness, or is demanded in order to show us our need of grace to do it. Indeed, a person does not even begin to be changed from evil to good by the first stirrings of faith, unless the free and gratuitous mercy of God produces this in him.... So, therefore, we should think of God's grace as working from the beginning of a person's changing towards goodness, even to the end of its completion, so that he who glories may glory in the Lord. For just as no-one can bring goodness to perfection without the Lord, so no one can begin it without the Lord.

Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, 2:23

### **Pelagius turns grace into a reward for human goodness**

Then again, whatever it is that Pelagius means by 'grace,' he says is given even to Christians according to their virtues, although (as I have already mentioned above), when he was in Palestine, in his truly remarkable vindication of himself, he condemned those who hold this opinion! Now these are his words: referring to non-Christians, he says, 'In these, the good of their created condition is naked and defenceless.' Then he adds: 'In those, however, who belong to Christ, there is defence afforded by Christ's help.' You see it is still uncertain what this 'help' is, according to the remark we have already made on the same subject. Pelagius goes on, however, to say of those who are not Christians: 'They deserve judgment and condemnation, because they possess free will whereby they could come to have faith and deserve God's grace, but they make a bad use of the freedom which has been granted to them. But as for those who

by the right use of free will merit the Lord's grace, and keep His commandments <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> these deserve to be rewarded.'

Now it is clear; he says grace is bestowed according to worthiness (whatever he means by grace, which he does not make clear). For when he speaks about people deserving reward because they make a good use of their free will, so that they merit the Lord's grace, he asserts in fact that a debt is paid to them. What, then, becomes of the apostle's saying, 'Being justified freely by His grace ' (Rom.3:24)? And what of his other statement too, 'By grace you are saved' (Eph.2:8)? In this verse, Paul prevents us from supposing that salvation is by works, by expressly adding, 'by faith.' And even further, in case anyone imagines that faith itself is of human origin independently of the grace of God, the apostle says: 'And that not of yourselves; for it is the gift of God.'

On the Grace of Christ and Original Sin, 1:34

### **The Pelagians call it 'fate'; we call it 'grace'**

I was carefully meditating about why the Pelagians think they have a trump card when they accuse us of teaching 'fate' under the name of grace. So I first of all looked into their statements on the matter. They thought they could bring this objection against us: 'Under the name of grace, they teach fate, for they say that unless God inspired an unwilling and resisting person with the desire for good (even an imperfect good), he would not be able to cease from evil, nor to embrace good.' Then a little later, they assert their own beliefs, which I also examined: 'We confess that baptism is necessary for all ages, and that grace assists the good resolutions of everybody. But grace does not infuse the love of virtue into a reluctant soul, because there

is no favouritism with  
God.'

From these words of theirs, I perceived that the Pelagians think (or wish others to think) that we 'teach fate under the name of grace' merely because we say that God's grace is not given in respect of our virtues, but according to God's own most merciful will. For He said, 'I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy to whom I will show mercy' (Rom.9:15). And by way of consequence, Scripture adds, 'Therefore it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God Who shows mercy' (Rom.9:16). Here, anyone might be equally foolish in thinking or saying that the apostle teaches fate! But these Pelagians sufficiently lay themselves open to accusation. For when they slander us by saying that we 'maintain fate under the name of grace', because we say that God's grace is not given on account of our virtues, beyond a doubt they confess that they themselves say that grace is given on account of our virtues!

Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, 2:10

### **The effective transforming teaching of the Holy Spirit**

The kind of teaching we are talking about is spoken of by the Lord when He says: 'Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me' (Jn.6:45). So if someone does not come to Christ, we cannot correctly say of him, 'he has heard and learned that he ought to come to Christ, but he is not willing to do what he has learned.' It is indeed absolutely improper to apply such a statement to God's method of teaching people by grace. For if, as the Truth says, 'Everyone who has learned comes,' it follows, of course, that whoever does not come has not learned. But who can fail to see that a person's coming or not coming is by the choice of his will? If a person does

not come to Christ, he has simply made his choice not to come. But if he does come, it cannot be without assistance — such assistance that he not only knows what it is he ought to do, but actually does what he knows.

And so, when God teaches, it is not by the letter of the law, but by the grace of the Spirit. Moreover, He teaches so that whatever a person learns, he not only sees it with his perception, but also desires it with his choice, and accomplishes it in action. By this method of divine instruction, our very choosing itself, and our very performance itself, are assisted, and not merely our natural ‘capacity’ of willing and performing. For if nothing but this ‘capacity’ of ours were assisted by this grace, the Lord would have said, ‘Everyone that has heard and learned from the Father may possibly come to Me.’ This, however, is not what He said. His words are these: ‘Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.’

Now Pelagius says that the possibility of coming lies in our nature. Or as we even found him attempting to say some time ago, it lies in grace (whatever that may mean according to him), as when he says, ‘grace assists our capacity of coming to Christ.’ But he holds that our actual coming to Christ lies in our own will and act. Now just because a person may come to Christ, it does not follow that he actually comes, unless he has also willed and acted to come. But everyone who has learned from the Father not only has the possibility of coming, but actually comes! And in this result are already included the use of the capacity, the affection of the will, and the effect of the action.

On the Grace of Christ and Original Sin, 1:27

**Only those taught by the Father come to Christ**

Accordingly, our only Master and Lord Himself, when He had said what I previously mentioned — ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent’ (Jn.6:29) — says a little afterwards in the same discourse, ‘I said to you that you also have seen Me and have not believed. All that the Father gives Me will come to Me’ (Jn.6:37). What is the meaning of ‘will come to Me’ but ‘will believe in Me’? But it is the Father’s gift that this happens. Moreover, a little later Jesus says, ‘Do not murmur among yourselves. No-one can come to Me unless the Father Who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they will all be taught by God. Everyone who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes to Me’ (Jn.6:43-5). What is the meaning of ‘Everyone who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes to Me,’ except that there is no-one who fails to come to Me if they hear from the Father and learn? For if everyone who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes, then certainly everyone who does not come has not heard from the Father! For if he had heard and learned, he would come. No-one has heard and learned, and yet has failed to come. But everyone, as the Truth declares, who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes.

This teaching in which the Father is heard, and teaches to come to the Son, is far removed from the senses of the flesh. The Son Himself is also involved in this teaching, because He is the Father’s Word by which He teaches; and He does not do this through the ear of the flesh, but the ear of the heart. The Spirit of the Father and of the Son is also, at the same time, involved in this teaching; He, too, teaches, and does not teach separately, for we have learned that the workings of the Trinity are inseparable. And that is certainly the same Holy Spirit of Whom the apostle says, ‘We, however, having the same Spirit of faith’ (2 Cor.4:13). But this teaching is especially ascribed to

the Father, because the Only Begotten is begotten from Him, and the Holy Spirit proceeds from Him, of which it would be tedious to argue more elaborately. I think that my work in fifteen books on the Trinity which God is, has already reached you.

No, this instruction in which God is heard and teaches is very far removed, I say, from the senses of the flesh. We see that many come to the Son because we see that many believe in Christ; but when and how they have heard and learned this from the Father, we do not see. It is true that that grace is exceedingly secret, but who doubts that it is grace? This grace, therefore, which is invisibly bestowed on human hearts by the divine gift, is not rejected by any hard heart — because it is given for the purpose of first taking away the hardness of the heart! When, therefore, the Father is heard within, and teaches, so that a person comes to the Son, He takes away the heart of stone and gives a heart of flesh, as He has promised in the declaration of the prophet. He thus makes them children and vessels of mercy which He has prepared for glory.

On the Predestination of the Saints, 13

### **Free will and a good will both come from God**

It is not enough simply to have choice of will, which is freely turned in this direction and that, and belongs among those natural gifts which a bad person may use badly. We must also have a good will, which belongs among those gifts which it is impossible to use badly. This impossibility is given to us by God; otherwise I do not know how to defend what Scripture says: ‘What do you have that you did not receive?’ (1 Cor.4:7) For if God gives us a free will, which may still be either good or bad, but a good will comes from ourselves, then what comes from ourselves is better than what comes from God! But it is



the height of absurdity to say this. So the Pelagians ought to acknowledge that we obtain from God even a good will.

It would indeed be a strange thing if the will could stand in some no-man's-land, where it was neither good nor bad. For we either love righteousness, and this is good; and if we love it more, this is better. If we love it less, this is less good; or if we do not love righteousness at all, it is not good. And who can hesitate to affirm that, when the will does not love righteousness in any way at all, it is not only a bad will, but even a totally depraved will? Since therefore the will is either good or bad, and since of course we do not derive the bad will from God, it remains that we derive from God a good will. Otherwise, since our justification proceeds from a good will, I do not know what other gift of God we ought to rejoice in. That, I suppose, is why it is written, 'The will is prepared by the Lord' (Prov.8:35, Septuagint). And in the Psalms, 'The steps of a man will be rightly ordered by the Lord, and His way will be the choice of his will' (Ps.37:23). And what the apostle says, 'For it is God Who works in you both to will and to do of His own good pleasure' (Phil.2:13).

On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins, 2:30

### **What we need is love**

We maintain that God does not only create a person with a free will, and give teaching by which he is instructed how he ought to live. We say further that the human will is so divinely aided in the pursuit of righteousness, that a person receives the Holy Spirit. And the Spirit forms in his mind a delight in, and a love of, that supreme and unchangeable good which is God, even now while he is still 'walking by faith' and not yet 'by sight' (2 Cor.5:7). By this gift to him of the Spirit as the pledge, as it were, of the free gift [of eternal life], he

conceives an ardent desire to cling to his Creator, and burns to enter into a state of participation in that true light, so that he may enjoy blessing from the One to Whom he owes his existence. A person's free will, indeed, avails for nothing except to sin, if he does not know the way of truth. And even after his duty and his true goal begin to become known to him, he still fails to do his duty, or to set about it, or to live rightly, unless he also takes delight in it and feels a love for it. Now, in order to win our affections to what is right, God's 'love is shed abroad in our hearts,' not through the free-will which arises from ourselves, but 'through the Holy Spirit Who is given to us' (Rom.5:5).

On the Spirit and the Letter, 5

### **God's grace works in us sovereignly to produce a godly will**

Some might interpret 'It is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God Who shows mercy' (Rom.9:16), in this sense — that salvation comes from both, that is, both from the human will and from the mercy of God. In that case, we must understand the saying, 'It is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God Who shows mercy,' as if it meant that the human will alone is not sufficient, unless the mercy of God goes with it. But then it would follow that the mercy of God alone is not sufficient, unless the human will goes with it! Therefore, if we may rightly say, 'it is not of man who wills, but of God Who shows mercy,' because the human will by itself is not enough, why may we not also rightly put it the other way round: 'It is not of God Who shows mercy, but of man who wills,' because the mercy of God by itself is not sufficient? Surely, no Christian will dare to say this, 'It is not of God Who shows mercy, but of man who wills,' in case he openly contradicts the apostle!

So it follows that the true interpretation of the saying, 'It is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God Who shows mercy,' is that the entire work belongs to God, Who both makes the human will righteous, and prepares it in this way for His assistance, and then assists it when it is prepared. For human righteousness of will precedes many of God's gifts, but not all of them; and it must itself be included among those gifts which it does not precede. We read in Holy Scripture, both that God's mercy 'shall meet me' (Ps.59:10), and that His mercy 'shall follow me' (Ps.23:6). Mercy goes before the unwilling person to make him willing; it follows the willing person to make his will effective. Why are we taught to pray for our enemies, who are plainly unwilling to lead a holy life, unless that God may produce willingness in them? And why are we ourselves taught to ask in order that may receive, unless that He who has created in us the wish, may Himself satisfy the wish? We pray, then, for our enemies, that the mercy of God may go before them, as it has gone before us; and we pray for ourselves that His mercy may follow us.

Enchiridion, 32

### **Grace creates a truly free will**

Do we by grace destroy free will? God forbid! We establish free will. For even as the law is not destroyed but established by faith, so free will is not destroyed but established by grace. The law is fulfilled only by a free will. And yet the law brings the knowledge of sin; faith brings the acquisition of grace against sin; grace brings the healing of the soul from the disease of sin; the health of the soul brings freedom of will; free will brings the love of righteousness; and the love of righteousness fulfils the law. Thus the law is not destroyed but established through faith, since faith obtains grace by which the law

is fulfilled. Likewise, free will is not destroyed through grace, but is established, since grace cures the will so that righteousness is freely loved. Now all the stages which I have here connected together in their successive links, are each spoken of individually in the sacred Scriptures. The law says: 'You shall not covet' (Ex.20:17). Faith says: 'Heal my soul, for I have sinned against You' (Ps.41:4). Grace says: 'See, you have been made well: sin no more, in case a worse thing comes upon you' (Jn.5:14). Health says: 'O Lord my God, I cried to You, and You have healed me' (Ps.30:2). Free will says: 'I will freely sacrifice to You' (Ps.54:6). Love of righteousness says: 'Transgressors told me pleasant tales, but not according to Your law, O Lord' (Ps. 119:85).

How is it then that miserable human beings dare to be proud, either of their free will, before they are set free, or of their own strength, if they have been set free? They do not observe that in the very mention of free will they pronounce the name of liberty. But 'where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty' (2 Cor.3:17). If, therefore, they are the slaves of sin, why do they boast of free will? For 'by whatever a person is overcome, to that he is delivered as a slave' (2 Pet.2:19). But if they have been set free, why do they puff themselves up as if it were by their own doing? Why do they boast, as if their freedom were not a gift? Or are they so free that they will not have Him for their Lord Who says to them, 'Without Me, you can do nothing' (Jn.15:5), and, 'If the Son sets you free, you shall be truly free?' (Jn.8:36).

On the Spirit and the Letter, 52

### **Sovereign grace humbles human pride**

God does not grant His mercy to some people because they know Him, but in order that they may know Him. Nor is it because they are

upright in heart, but that they may become so, that He grants them His righteousness by which He justifies the ungodly. This thought does not inflate us with pride! The sin of pride arises when anyone has too much self-confidence, and makes himself the supreme reason for living. Driven by this conceited feeling, the proud person departs from the Fountain of life, from Whose streams alone we can drink the holiness which is itself the good life. Yes, the proud person departs from that unchanging Light, by sharing in which the rational soul set on fire (so to speak) and becomes a created and reflected light.

On the Spirit and the Letter, 11

### **Spiritual desire comes from God**

God does many good things in a human being that the human being does not do. But a human being does nothing good that God does not cause him to do. Accordingly, the Lord would not put a desire for something good in a person, if that thing were not indeed good; but if it is good, we derive it only from Him Who is supremely and incomparably good. For what is the desire for good but love? John the apostle speaks of this without any ambiguity, and says, 'Love is from God' (1 Jn.4:7). Love does not begin from ourselves, and then get perfected by God. No, if love is from God, we have the whole of it from God. May God by all means turn us away from this folly of making ourselves first and Himself last in our reception of His gifts!

Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, 2:21

### **Love comes from God**

It is no wonder that the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness does not comprehend it. In John's letter, the Light declares, 'Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God' (1 Jn.3:1). And in the Pelagian writings the darkness says, 'Love comes to us from our own selves.' Now, if the Pelagians only possessed true love, that is, Christian love, they would also know where they obtained possession of it. The apostle knew this when he said, 'But we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit Who is from God, so that we might know the things that are freely given to us by God' (1 Cor.2:12). And John says, 'God is love' (1 Jn.4:16). So the Pelagians are saying that they actually have God Himself, not from God, but from their own selves! They admit that we have the knowledge of the law from God, but they insist that love is from our own selves. They are not listening to the apostle when he says, 'Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up' (1 Cor.8:21). Now what can be more absurd, what can be more insane and more alien to the very sacredness of love itself, than to maintain that God merely gives us the knowledge which (apart from love) puffs us up, while the love that prevents the possibility of this inflated knowledge springs from ourselves?!

On Grace and Free Will, 40

### **The difference between knowledge and love**

Now even Pelagius should frankly confess that this grace is plainly set forth in the inspired Scriptures. He should not, with shameless insolence, hide the fact that he has too long opposed it. Let him admit it with healthy regret, so that the holy Church may cease to be troubled by his stubborn persistence, and rejoice instead in his sincere conversion. Let him distinguish between knowledge and love,

as they ought to be distinguished. For ‘knowledge puffs up, but love builds up’ (1 Cor.8:1). Knowledge no longer puffs up when love builds up. And since each is the gift of God (although one is less, and the other greater), Pelagius must not extol our righteousness above the praise which is due to God Who justifies us. Yet this is what he does, when he says that the lesser of these two gifts (knowledge) is assisted by divine grace, and claims that the greater gift (love) comes from the human will.

But if Pelagius agrees that we receive love from the grace of God, he must not think that any virtues of our own preceded our reception of the gift. For what virtues could we possibly have had, at the time when we did not love God? Indeed, so that we might receive the love that enables us to love, God loved us while as yet we had no love ourselves. This the apostle John most expressly declares: ‘Not that we loved God,’ says he, ‘but that He loved us’ (1 Jn.4:10). And again, ‘We love Him, because He first loved us’ (1 Jn.4:19). Most excellently and truly spoken! For we could not have any power to love Him, unless we received it from Him in His first loving us. And what good could we possibly do if we possessed no love? But how could we help doing good if we have love? God’s command may appear sometimes to be kept by those who do not love Him, but only fear Him; but where there is no love, God does not reckon any work as good, nor is there any ‘good work’ rightly so called. For ‘whatever is not from faith is sin’ (Rom.14:23) and ‘faith works by love’ (Gal.5:6).

On the Grace of Christ and Original Sin, 1:27

### **When we do good, God’s will inspires ours**

It is certain that we keep the commandments if we will. But because ‘the will is prepared by the Lord’ (Prov.8:35, Septuagint), we must

ask Him for such a force of will that is sufficient to make us act by willing. Again, it is certain that when we will, we are the ones who do the willing. But it is God Who causes us to will what is good, of whom it is said (as he has just now expressed it), ‘The will is prepared by the Lord.’ Of the same Lord it is said, ‘The steps of a man are ordered by the Lord, and He wills his way’ (Ps.37:23). Of the same Lord it is also said, ‘It is God who works in you, even to will!’ (Phil.2:13) Again, it is certain that when we act, we are the ones who act. But it is God who causes us to act, by applying efficacious powers to our will. As He has said, ‘I will make you to walk in my statutes, and to observe my judgments, and to do them’ (Ezek.36:27). When he says, ‘I will make you ... to do them,’ what else does He say in fact than, ‘I will take away from you your heart of stone,’ from which used to arise your inability to act, ‘and I will give you a heart of flesh,’ in order that you may act (Ezek.36:26)? And what does this promise amount to but this: I will remove your hard heart, out of which you did not act, and I will give you an obedient heart, out of which you shall act?

On Grace and Free Will, 32

### **Called according to God’s purpose, not ours**

Why do the Pelagians say they believe that ‘grace assists the good resolution of everyone, but it does not instil the desire for virtue into a reluctant heart’? They say this as if a person from his own resources, without God’s assistance, has a good resolution and a desire for virtue; and this preceding virtue is worthy of being assisted by the subsequent grace of God. For they think, perhaps, that when the apostle said, ‘For we know that He works all things for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to purpose’ (Rom.8:28) — they think perhaps that Paul meant human purpose,



so that this purpose, as a worthy quality, would secure the mercy of the God Who calls.

If that's what they think, they are ignorant of Paul's real meaning: 'Who are called according to purpose,' that is, not human purpose, but the purpose of God, by which before the world's creation He elected those whom He foreknew and predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom.8:29). For not all the called are 'called according to purpose', since 'many are called, few are chosen' (Matt.22:14). But those who are called according to purpose are the persons who were elected before the creation of the world. Of this purpose of God, it was also said (as I have already mentioned concerning the twins Esau and Jacob), 'that the purpose of God might stand according to election, not by works, but by Him Who calls, it was said, that the elder shall serve the younger' (Rom.9:11-12). This purpose of God is also mentioned in that place where, writing to Timothy, he says, 'Labour with the gospel according to the power of God, Who saves us and calls us with this holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His purpose and grace, which was given to us in Christ Jesus before eternal ages, but is now made manifest by the coming of our Saviour Jesus Christ' (2 Tim.1:8-10).

This, then, is the purpose of God, of which it is said, 'He works together all things for good for those who are called according to purpose.' Subsequent grace indeed assists a human good purpose, but the good purpose would not itself exist if grace did not work first.

Against Two Letters of the Pelagians, 2:22

**Grace in operation and co-operation**

‘Love does no harm to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law’ (Rom.13:10). This love the apostle Peter did not yet possess, when he denied the Lord three times out of fear. ‘There is no fear in love,’ says the gospel writer John in his first letter, ‘but perfect love casts out fear’ (1 Jn.4:18). But still, however small and imperfect Peter’s love was, it was not entirely lacking when he said to the Lord, ‘I will lay down my life for Your sake’ (Jn.13:37). For he supposed he was able to carry out what he felt himself willing to do. And who was it that had begun to give Peter his love, however small? Who but God Who prepares the will, and perfects by His co-operation what He begins by His operation? For in beginning to work, He works in us to give us the will, and in perfecting this work, He works with us when we have the will. This is why the apostle says, ‘I am confident of this very thing, that He Who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ’ (Phil.1:6). He operates, therefore, without our help, in order that we may will; but when we will, and will so as to act, He co-operates with us. We can, however, ourselves do nothing to carry out good works of godliness, without God either working to give us the will, or co-working with us when we will.

On Grace and Free Will, 33

### **Give what You command, and command what You will**

When we commit sin, we get no help from God; but we are not able to act justly, and to fulfil the law of righteousness in every part, unless we are helped by God. Light does not help our physical eyes to shut out light; rather, light helps our eyes to see, and the eye cannot see at all unless light helps it. Likewise God, Who is the light of the inner self, helps our mental sight, in order that we may do some good, not according to our own righteousness, but according to His.

But if we turn away from God , it is our own act; then we are wise according to the flesh, then we consent to the lust of the flesh for unlawful deeds. When we turn to God, therefore, He helps us; when we turn away from Him, He forsakes us. But God even helps us to turn to Him; and this, certainly, is something that light does not do for the eyes of the body.

When, therefore, He commands us in the words, ‘Turn to Me, and I will turn to you’ (Zech.1:3), and we say to Him, ‘Turn us, O God of our salvation’ (Ps.85:4), and again, ‘Turn us, O God of hosts’ (Ps.80:3) — what else do we say but, ‘Give what You command’? When He commands us, saying, ‘Understand now, O simple among the people’ (Ps.94:8), and we say to Him, ‘Give me understanding, that I may learn Thy commandments’ (Ps.119:73) — what else do we say but, ‘Give what You command’? When He commands us, saying, ‘Do not go after your lusts’ (Ecclesiasticus 18:30), and we say to Him, ‘We know that no-one can be chaste, unless God gives it to him’ (Wisdom 8:21) — what else do we say but, ‘Give what You command’? When He commands us, saying, ‘Do justice’ (Isa.56:1), and we say, ‘Teach me Your judgments, O Lord’ (Ps.119:108) — what else do we say but, ‘Give what You command’? Likewise, when He says: ‘Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled’ (Matt.5:6), from whom should we seek the meat and drink of righteousness, but from Him Who promises His fullness to those who hunger and thirst after it?

On the Merits and Forgiveness of Sins, 2:5

### **Is faith itself the gift of God?**

We must still try to answer briefly this question: Is the will by which we believe itself the gift of God, or does it arise from that free will

which is naturally implanted in us? If we say that faith is not the gift of God, we must then fear that we have discovered some answer to the apostle's reproachful appeal: 'What do you have that you did not receive? Now, if you received it, why do you boast, as if you had not received it?' (1 Cor.4:7) If the will to believe is not God's gift, we could reply: 'See, we have the will to believe, which we did not receive. See what we boast about — even something we did not receive!' If, however, we were to say that this kind of will is entirely the gift of God, we would then have to fear that unbelieving and ungodly people might unreasonably seem to have a fair excuse for their unbelief, in the fact that God had refused to give them the will to believe.

On the Spirit and the Letter, 57

### **Faith itself is God's gift**

Paul's last statement here is, 'I have kept the faith' (2 Tim.4:7). But the man who says this is the same man who declares in another passage, 'I have obtained mercy that I might be faithful' (1 Cor.7:25). He does not say, 'I obtained mercy because I was faithful,' but 'in order that I might be faithful.' This shows that even faith itself cannot be had without God's mercy, and that it is the gift of God. Paul very expressly teaches us this when he says, 'For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God' (Eph.2:8). The Pelagians might possibly say, 'We received grace because we believed.' as if they would attribute the faith to themselves, and the grace to God. Therefore the apostle, having said, 'You are saved through faith,' added, 'And that not of yourselves, but it is the gift of God.' And again, in case they say they deserved so great a gift by their works, he immediately

added, 'Not of works, in case anyone should boast.' Not that Paul denied good works, or emptied them of their value, for he says that God renders to everyone according to his works (Rom.2:6); but works proceed from faith, not faith from works. Therefore it is from God that we have works of righteousness, as it is from Him that faith, concerning which it is written, 'The just shall live by faith' (Rom.1:17).

On Grace and Free Will, 17

### **Faith is part of our re-creation in Christ**

And in case people should arrogate to themselves the merit at least of their own faith, not understanding that this too is the gift of God, this same apostle, who says in another place that he had 'obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful' (1 Cor.7:25), here also adds: 'and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, in case anyone should boast' (Eph.2:8). And in case it should be thought that good works will be lacking in those who believe, he adds further: 'For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them' (Eph.2:10). We shall be made truly free, then, when God fashions us, that is, forms and creates us anew, not as human beings — for He has done that already — but as good people. His grace is now doing this, so that we may be a new creation in Christ Jesus, according as it is said: 'Create in me a clean heart, O God' (Ps.51:10). For God had already created David's heart, so far as the physical structure of the human heart is concerned; but the psalmist prays for the renewal of the life which was still lingering in his heart.

Enchiridion, 31

## **If faith is not God's gift, salvation is no longer by grace**

It follows, therefore, that without any virtue of our own, we receive the gift of faith, from which the rest of salvation flows — although according to the Pelagians, we obtain salvation because of our virtue. If, however, they insist on denying that faith is freely given to us, what is the meaning of the apostle's words: 'According as God has dealt to everyone a measure of faith' (Rom.12:3)? And if they argue that faith is bestowed as a reward for virtue, not as a free gift, what then becomes of another saying of the apostle: 'To you it is given on the behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake' (Phil.1:29)? The apostle's testimony makes each of these a gift — both that a person believes in Christ, and that he suffers for Christ's sake. These Pelagians, however, attribute faith to free will, in such a way as to make it seem that grace is given to faith not as a gratuitous gift, but as a debt. Thus grace ceases to be grace any longer. How can something be grace if it is not gratuitous?

On the Grace of Christ and Original Sin, 1:34

## **Giving thanks to God for faith proves that faith is His doing**

The apostle gives thanks to God for those who have believed — not, clearly, because the gospel has been declared to them, but because they have believed. For he says, 'in whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation — in whom, having also believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is a pledge of our inheritance, for the redemption of God's own possession, for the praise of his glory. For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus and with reference to all the saints, cease not to give

thanks for you' (Ephesians 1:13-16). Their faith was new and recent, following on the preaching of the gospel to them. When the apostle hears of this faith of theirs, he gives thanks to God for them. If he were to give thanks to someone for what he might think or know that person had not given, it would be called a flattery or a mockery, rather than a giving of thanks. 'Do not be deceived, for God is not mocked' (Gal.6:7); for the beginning of faith is also His gift, unless we rightly judge the apostolic giving of thanks to be either mistaken or fallacious! What then? Does that not stand forth as the beginning of the faith of the Thessalonians, for which the same apostle gives thanks to God when he says, 'For this reason also we thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually works in you, and which you believed' (1 Thess.2:13)? What does Paul give thanks to God for here? Surely it is a vain and idle thing if He to whom Paul gives thanks did not Himself do the thing! But, since this is not a vain and idle thing, certainly God, to whom Paul gave thanks for this work, Himself did it, so that when they had received the word of God which they heard, they received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God. God, therefore, works in human hearts with that 'calling according to His purpose' (Rom.8:28), of which we have spoken a great deal, in order that people should not hear the gospel in vain, but when they hear it, should be converted and believe, receiving it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God.

On the Predestination of the Saints, 39

### **The example of Lydia**

For what is the meaning of, 'praying also for us that God would open to us a door of the word' (Col.4:3), unless it is a most manifest demonstration that even the very beginning of faith is the gift of God? For faith would not be sought from God in prayer, unless it were believed to be given by Him. This gift of heavenly grace had descended to that seller of purple for whom, as Scripture says in the Acts of the Apostles, 'The Lord opened her heart, and she gave heed to the things spoken by Paul' (Acts 16:14). For she was called so that she might believe. For God does what He wills in human hearts, either by His assistance or by His judgment, so that through their means may be fulfilled what His hand and counsel have predestined to be done.

On the Predestination of the Saints, 41

### **Why pray that God will give faith to unbelievers, if faith is not a gracious gift?**

If God does not make people willing who were not willing, on what principle does the Church pray, according to the Lord's commandment, for her persecutors?... For what do we pray for on behalf of those who are unwilling to believe, except that God would work in them to make them willing? Certainly the apostle says, 'Brethren, my heart's desire and my prayer to God for them is for their salvation' (Rom.10:1). He prays for those who do not believe — for what, except that they may believe? For they will obtain salvation in no other way. If, then, the faith of those praying precedes the grace of God [in converting unbelievers], what about the faith of those for whom prayer is offered that they may come to faith? Does their faith precede the grace of God? How can it, since this is the very thing that



we seek for them, that on those who do not believe— that is, who have no faith — faith itself may be bestowed?

On the Predestination of the Saints, 15

### **The same theme pursued**

Now if faith comes simply from free will, and is not given by God, why do we pray for unbelievers that they may believe? This it would be absolutely useless, unless we believe (quite correctly) that almighty God is able to take wills that are perverse and opposed to faith, and turn them to faith. Human free will is addressed when it is said, ‘Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts’ (Ps.95:7-8). But if God were not able to remove from the human heart even its obstinacy and hardness, He would not say, through the prophet, ‘I will take from them their heart of stone, and will give them a heart of flesh’ (Ezek.11:19). All this was foretold in reference to the New Testament, as is shown clearly enough by the apostle when he says, ‘You are our epistle, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart’ (2 Cor.3:2-3).

We must not, of course, suppose that this phrase is used as if those who ought to live spiritually might live in a fleshly way. But a stone, with which the hard human heart is compared, has no feeling. What was there left for God to compare the wise human heart with, but the flesh which possesses feeling? For this is what is said by the prophet Ezekiel: ‘I will give them another heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them a heart of flesh, so that they may walk in My statutes, and keep My ordinances, and do them: and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, says the Lord’ (Ezek.11:19-29). Can we possibly,

without utter absurdity, maintain that there first existed in anyone the good virtue of a good will, to entitle him to the removal of his heart of stone? How can we say this, when all the time this heart of stone itself signifies precisely a will of the hardest kind, a will that is absolutely inflexible against God? For if a good will comes first, there is obviously no longer a heart of stone.

On Grace and Free Will, 29

### **Repentance is the gift of God**

The mercy of God is necessary not only when a person repents, but even to lead him to repent. How else can we explain what the apostle says of certain people: 'if perhaps God may give them repentance' (2 Tim.2:25)? And before Peter wept bitterly, we are told by the gospel-writer, 'The Lord turned, and looked upon him' (Lk.22:61).

Enchiridion, 82

### **Grace is the death of pride**

Beware, O Christian, beware of pride. Even though you are a disciple of the saints, ascribe it always and wholly to grace. It was not brought about by what you deserve, but by the grace of God, that there is any 'remnant' in you. For the prophet Isaiah, having this remnant in view, had already said, 'Unless the Lord of Hosts had left us a seed, we would have become like Sodom, and would have been like Gomorrah' (Isa.1:9, Rom.9:29). 'So then,' says the apostle, 'at this present time also a remnant is saved through the election of grace. But if it is by grace,' he says, 'then it is no longer by works' (that is, 'do not be puffed up any longer on what you deserve'); 'otherwise

grace is no longer grace' (Rom.11:5-6). For if you build on your own work; then a reward is rendered to you, rather than grace freely bestowed. But if it is grace, it is gratuitously given.

I ask you, then, O sinner, 'Do you believe in Christ?' You say, 'I do believe.' 'What do you believe? Do you believe that all your sins can be forgiven freely through Him?' Then you have what you have believed. O grace gratuitously given! And you, righteous soul, what do you believe? Do you believe that you cannot keep your righteousness without God? If you are righteous, then, impute it wholly to His mercy; but if you are a sinner, ascribe it to your own iniquity. Be your own accuser, and He will be your gracious Deliverer. For every crime, wickedness, or sin comes from our own negligence, but all virtue and holiness come from God's gracious goodness.

Sermons on the Gospels, 50:4

### **When God crowns our virtues, grace is crowning its own gifts**

The Pelagians say that the only grace that is not given according to our virtues is the grace by which a person's sins are forgiven, but that the final grace of eternal life is given as a reward to our preceding virtues. They must not be allowed to go without an answer. If, indeed, they understand and acknowledge our virtues to be the gifts of God too, then their opinion would not deserve condemnation. But since they preach human virtues by declaring that a person has them from his own self, then most rightly the apostle replies: 'Who makes you to differ from another? And what do you have that you did not receive? Now, if thou received it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?' (1 Cor.4:7) To a person who holds such views, it is

perfect truth to say: It is His own gifts that God crowns, not your virtues. If your virtues come from your own self, not from God, then they are evil, and God does not crown them. But if they are good, they are God's gifts, because, as the Apostle James says, 'Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights' (Jam.1:17). In accordance with this John the Lord's forerunner also declares: 'A man can receive nothing unless it is given to him from heaven' (Jn.3:27) — from heaven, of course, because from there came also the Holy Spirit, when Jesus ascended up on high, led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men. If, then, your good virtues are God's gifts, God does not crown them as your virtues, but as His own gifts.

On Grace and Free Will, 15

### **The same theme pursued**

Finally, after the redemption from all corruption, what remains but the crown of righteousness? This at least remains, but even here, under the crown, do not let your head be swollen, in case it fails to receive the crown! Listen, mark well the psalm, how that crown will not rest on a swollen head. After the psalmist had said, 'Who redeems your life from corruption,' he says, 'Who crowns you' (Ps.103:4). Here you were ready at once to say, 'The phrase "Crowns you" is an acknowledgment of my virtues; my own excellence has done it; it is the payment of a debt, not a gift.' Listen rather to the psalm. For it is you again that say this; and 'all men are liars' (Ps.116:11)!

Hear what God says: 'Who crowns you with mercy and pity' (Ps.103:4). From His mercy He crowns you, from His pity He crowns you. For you had no worthiness that He should call you to Himself;

or being called, no worthiness that He should justify you; or being justified, no worthiness that He should glorify you. ‘The remnant is saved by the election of grace. But if it is by grace, then it is no longer by works; otherwise grace is no more grace’ (Rom.11:5-6). ‘For to him who works, the reward shall not be reckoned according to grace, but according to debt’ (Rom.4:4). The apostle says, ‘Not according to grace, but according to debt.’ But ‘He crowns you with pity and mercy.’ If your own virtues have gone before, God says to you, ‘Examine well your virtues, and you shall see that they are My gifts.’

This then is ‘the righteousness of God’ (Rom.1:17). It is like the phrase, ‘the Lord’s salvation’ (Ex.14:13) – not that by which the Lord is saved, but which He gives to those whom He saves. So too the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord is called ‘the righteousness of God’ – not that by which the Lord is righteous, but by which He justifies those ungodly people whom He makes righteous.

Sermons on the Gospels, 81:8-9

# **A LETTER FROM GEORGE WHITEFIELD TO THE REV. MR JOHN WESLEY IN ANSWER TO MR. WESLEY'S SERMON ENTITLED "FREE GRACE"**

*"But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed" (Gal. 2:11).*

## **PREFACE**

I am very well aware what different effects publishing this letter against the dear Mr. Wesley's Sermon will produce. Many of my friends who are strenuous advocates for *universal redemption* will immediately be offended. Many who are zealous on the other side will be much rejoiced. They who are lukewarm on both sides and are carried away with carnal reasoning will wish this matter had never been brought under debate.

The reasons I have given at the beginning of the letter, I think are sufficient to satisfy all of my conduct herein. I desire therefore that they who hold election would not triumph, or make a party on one hand (for I detest any such thing)—and that they who are prejudiced against that doctrine be not too much concerned or offended on the other.

Known unto God are all his ways from the beginning of the world. The great day will discover why the Lord permits dear Mr. Wesley and me to be of a different way of thinking. At present, I shall make no enquiry into that matter, beyond the account which he has given

of it himself in the following letter, which I lately received from his own dear hands:

*London, August 9, 1740*

*My dear Brother,*

*I thank you for yours, May the 24th. The case is quite plain. There are bigots both for predestination and against it. God is sending a message to those on either side. But neither will receive it, unless from one who is of their own opinion. Therefore, for a time you are suffered to be of one opinion, and I of another. But when his time is come, God will do what man cannot, namely, make us both of one mind. Then persecution will flame out, and it will be seen whether we count our lives dear unto ourselves, so that we may finish our course with joy. I am, my dearest brother,*

*Ever yours,*

*J. WESLEY*

Thus my honoured friend, I heartily pray God to hasten the time, for his being clearly enlightened into all the doctrines of divine revelation, that we may thus be closely united in principle and judgment as well as heart and affection. And then if the Lord should call us to it, I care not if I go with him to prison, or to death. For like Paul and Silas, I hope we shall sing praises to God, and count it our highest honour to suffer for Christ's sake, and to lay down our lives for the brethren.

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## **WHITEFIELD'S LETTER TO WESLEY**

Bethesda in Georgia, Dec. 24, 1740

Reverend and very dear Brother,

God only knows what unspeakable sorrow of heart I have felt on your account since I left England last. Whether it be my infirmity or not, I frankly confess, that Jonah could not go with more reluctance against Nineveh, than I now take pen in hand to write against you. Was nature to speak, I had rather die than do it; and yet if I am faithful to God, and to my own and others' souls, I must not stand neutral any longer. I am very apprehensive that our common adversaries will rejoice to see us differing among ourselves. But what can I say? The children of God are in danger of falling into error. Nay, numbers *have* been misled, whom God has been pleased to work upon by my ministry, and a greater number are still calling aloud upon me to show also my opinion. I must then show that I know no man after the flesh, and that I have no respect to persons, any further than is consistent with my duty to my Lord and Master, *Jesus Christ*.

This letter, no doubt, will lose me many friends: and for this cause perhaps God has laid this difficult task upon me, even to see whether I am willing to forsake all for him, or not. From such considerations as these, I think it my duty to bear an humble testimony, and earnestly to plead for the truths which, I am convinced, are clearly revealed in the Word of God. In the defence whereof I must use great plainness of speech, and treat my dearest friends upon earth with the greatest simplicity, faithfulness, and freedom, leaving the consequences of all to God.

For some time before, and especially since my last departure from England, both in public and private, by preaching and printing, you have been propagating the doctrine of *universal redemption*. And when I remember how Paul reproved Peter for his dissimulation, I



fear I have been sinfully silent too long. O then be not angry with me, dear and honoured Sir, if now I deliver my soul, by telling you that I think in this you greatly err.

'Tis not my design to enter into a long debate on God's decrees. I refer you to Dr. Edwards his *Veritas Redux* [This refers to a work by Dr. John Edwards of Cambridge, not Jonathan Edwards, the famous American pastor-theologian.], which, I think is unanswerable—except in a certain point, concerning a *middle sort* between elect and reprobate, which he himself in effect afterwards condemns.

I shall only make a few remarks upon your sermon, entitled Free Grace." And before I enter upon the discourse itself, give me leave to take a little notice of what in your Preface you term an indispensable obligation to make it public to all the world. I must own, that I always thought you were quite mistaken upon that head.

The case (you know) stands thus: When you were at Bristol, I think you received a letter from a private hand, charging you with not preaching the gospel, because you did not preach up election. Upon this you drew a lot: the answer was "*preach and print*." I have often questioned, as I do now, whether in so doing, you did not tempt the Lord. A due exercise of religious prudence, without [the drawing of] a lot, would have directed you in that matter. Besides, I never heard that you enquired of God, whether or not election was a gospel doctrine.

But, I fear, taking it for granted [that election was not a biblical truth], you only enquired whether you should be silent or preach and print against it.

However this be, the lot came out "*preach and print*"; accordingly you preached and printed against election. At my desire, you

suppressed the publishing of the sermon whilst I was in England; but you soon sent it into the world after my departure. O that you had kept it in! However, if that sermon was printed in answer to a lot, I am apt to think, one reason why God should so suffer you to be deceived, was, that hereby a special obligation might be laid upon me, faithfully to declare the Scripture doctrine of election, that thus the Lord might give me a fresh opportunity of seeing what was in my heart, and whether I would be true to his cause or not; as you could not but grant, he did once before, by giving you such another lot at Deal.

The morning I sailed from Deal for Gibraltar [2 February 1738], you arrived from Georgia. Instead of giving me an opportunity to converse with you, though the ship was not far off the shore, you drew a lot, and immediately set forward to London. You left a letter behind you, in which were words to this effect: "When I saw [that] God, by the wind which was carrying you out, brought me in, I asked counsel of God. His answer you have enclosed." This was a piece of paper, in which were written these words, "Let him return to London."

When I received this, I was somewhat surprised. Here was a good man telling me he had cast a lot, and that God would have me return to London. On the other hand, I knew my call was to Georgia, and that I had taken leave of London, and could not justly go from the soldiers, who were committed to my charge. I betook myself with a friend to prayer. That passage in 1 Kings 13 was powerfully impressed upon my soul, where we are told that the Prophet was slain by a lion when he was tempted to go back (contrary to God's express order) upon another Prophet's telling him God would have him do so. I wrote you word that I could not return to London. We sailed immediately.

Some months after, I received a letter from you at Georgia, wherein you wrote words to this effect: "Though God never before gave me a wrong lot, yet, perhaps, he suffered me to have such a lot at that time, to try what was in your heart." I should never have published this private transaction to the world, did not the glory of God call me to it. It is plain you had a wrong lot given you here, and justly, because you tempted God in drawing one. And thus I believe it is in the present case. And if so, let not the children of God who are mine and your intimate friends, and also advocates for *universal redemption*, think that doctrine true—because you preached it up in compliance with a lot given out from God.

This, I think, may serve as an answer to that part of the Preface to your printed sermon, wherein you say, "Nothing but the strongest conviction, not only that what is here advanced is the truth as it is in Jesus, but also that I am indispensably obliged to declare this truth to all the world." That you believe what you have written to be truth, and that you honestly aim at God's glory in writing, I do not in the least doubt. But then, honoured Sir, I cannot but think you have been much mistaken in imagining that your tempting God, by casting a lot in the manner you did could lay you under an *indispensable obligation* to any action, much less to publish your sermon against the doctrine of *predestination to life*.

I must next observe, that as you have been unhappy in printing at all upon such an *imaginary warrant*, so you have been as unhappy in the choice of your text. Honoured Sir, how could it enter into your heart to choose a text to disprove the doctrine of election out of Romans 8, where this doctrine is so plainly asserted? Once I spoke with a Quaker upon this subject, and he had no other way of evading the force of the Apostle's assertion than by saying, "I believe Paul was in the wrong." And another friend lately, who was once highly

prejudiced against election, ingenuously confessed that he used to think St. Paul himself was mistaken, or that he was not truly translated.

Indeed, honoured Sir, it is plain beyond all contradiction that St. Paul, through the whole of Romans 8, is speaking of the privileges of those only who are really in Christ. And let any unprejudiced person read what goes before and what follows your text, and he must confess the word "all" only signifies those that are in Christ. And the latter part of the text plainly proves, what, I find, dear Mr. Wesley will, by no means, grant. I mean the *final perseverance* of the children of God: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, [*i.e.*, all Saints] how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Rom. 8:32). [He shall give us] grace, in particular, to enable us to persevere, and every thing else necessary to carry us home to our Father's heavenly kingdom.

Had any one a mind to prove the doctrine of *election*, as well as of *final perseverance*, he could hardly wish for a text more fit for his purpose than that which you have chosen to disprove it! One who did not know you would suspect that you were aware of this, for after the first paragraph, I scarce know whether you have mentioned [the text] so much as once through your whole sermon.

But your discourse, in my opinion, is as little to the purpose as your text, and instead of warping, does but more and more confirm me in the belief of the doctrine of God's *eternal election*.

I shall not mention how illogically you have proceeded. Had you written clearly, you should first, honoured Sir, have proved your proposition: "God's grace is free to all." And then by way of inference [you might have] exclaimed against what you call *the horrible decree*. But you knew that people (because *Arminianism*, of late, has

so much abounded among us) were generally prejudiced against the doctrine of *reprobation*, and therefore thought if you kept up their dislike of that, you could overthrow the doctrine of election entirely. For, without doubt, the doctrine of election and reprobation must stand or fall together.

But passing by this, as also your equivocal definition of the word *grace*, and your false definition of the word *free*, and that I may be as short as possible, I frankly acknowledge: I believe the doctrine of reprobation, in this view, that God intends to give saving grace, through Jesus Christ, only to a certain number, and that the rest of mankind, after the fall of Adam, being justly left of God to continue in sin, will at last suffer that eternal death which is its proper wages.

This is the established doctrine of Scripture, and acknowledged as such in the 17th article of the Church of England, as Bishop Burnet himself confesses. Yet dear Mr. Wesley absolutely denies it.

But the most important objections you have urged against this doctrine as reasons why you reject it, being seriously considered, and faithfully tried by the Word of God, will appear to be of no force at all. Let the matter be humbly and calmly reviewed, as to the following heads:

**First**, you say that if this be so (*i.e.*, if there be an election) then is all preaching vain: it is needless to them that are elected; for they, whether with preaching or without, will infallibly be saved. Therefore, the end of preaching to save souls is void with regard to them. And it is useless to them that are not elected, for they cannot possibly be saved. They, whether with preaching or without, will infallibly be damned. The end of preaching is therefore void with regard to them likewise. So that in either case our preaching is vain, and your hearing also vain. Page 10, paragraph 9.

O dear Sir, what kind of reasoning—or rather sophistry—is this! Hath not God, who hath appointed salvation for a certain number, appointed also the preaching of the Word as a means to bring them to it? Does anyone hold election in any other sense? And if so, how is preaching needless to them that are elected, when the gospel is designated by God himself to be the power of God unto their eternal salvation? And since we know not who are elect and who reprobate, we are to preach promiscuously to all. For the Word may be useful, even to the non-elect, in restraining them from much wickedness and sin. However, it is enough to excite to the utmost diligence in preaching and hearing, when we consider that by these means, some, even as many as the Lord hath ordained to eternal life, shall certainly be quickened and enabled to believe. And who that attends, especially with reverence and care, can tell but he may be found of that happy number?

**Second**, you say that the doctrine of election and reprobation directly tends to destroy holiness, which is the end of all the ordinances of God. For (says the dear mistaken Mr. Wesley) "it wholly takes away those first motives to follow after it, so frequently proposed in Scripture. The hope of future reward, and fear of punishment, the hope of heaven, and the fear of hell, et cetera."

I thought that one who carries perfection to such an exalted pitch as dear Mr. Wesley does, would know that a true lover of the Lord Jesus Christ would strive to be holy for the sake of being holy, and work for Christ out of love and gratitude, without any regard to the rewards of heaven, or fear of hell. You remember, dear Sir, what Scougal says, "Love's a more powerful motive that does them move." But passing by this, and granting that rewards and punishments (as they certainly are) may be motives from which a Christian may be honestly stirred up to act for God, how does the doctrine of election

destroy these motives? Do not the elect know that the more good works they do, the greater will be their reward? And is not that encouragement enough to set them upon, and cause them to persevere in working for Jesus Christ? And how does the doctrine of election destroy holiness? Who ever preached any other election than what the Apostle preached, when he said, "Chosen . . . through sanctification of the Spirit?" (2 Thess. 2:13). Nay, is not holiness made a mark of our election by all that preach it? And how then can the doctrine of election destroy holiness?

The instance which you bring to illustrate your assertion, indeed, dear Sir, is quite impertinent. For you say, "If a sick man knows that he must unavoidably die or unavoidably recover, though he knows not which, it is not reasonable to take any physic at all." Dear Sir, what absurd reasoning is here? Were you ever sick in your life? If so, did not the bare probability or possibility of your recovering, though you knew it was unalterably fixed that you must live or die, encourage you to take physic? For how did you know but that very physic might be the means God intended to recover you by?

Just thus it is as to the doctrine of election. I know that it is unalterably fixed (one may say) that I must be damned or saved; but since I know not which for a certainty, why should I not strive, though at present in a state of nature, since I know not but this striving may be the means God has intended to bless, in order to bring me into a state of grace?

Dear Sir, consider these things. Make an impartial application, and then judge what little reason you had to conclude the 10th paragraph, page 12, with these words: "So directly does this doctrine tend to shut the very gate of holiness in general, to hinder unholy men from ever approaching thereto, or striving to enter in thereat."

"As directly," you say, "does the doctrine tend to destroy several particular branches of holiness, such as meekness, love, et cetera." I shall say little, dear Sir, in answer to this paragraph. Dear Mr. Wesley perhaps has been disputing with some warm narrow-spirited men that held election, and then he infers that their warmth and narrowness of spirit was owing to their principles? But does not dear Mr. Wesley know many dear children of God, who are predestinarians, and yet are meek, lowly, pitiful, courteous, tender-hearted, kind, of a catholic spirit, and hope to see the most vile and profligate of men converted? And why? because they know God saved themselves by an act of his electing love, and they know not but he may have elected those who now seem to be the most abandoned.

But, dear Sir, we must not judge of the truth of principles in general, nor of this of election in particular, entirely from the practice of some that profess to hold them. If so, I am sure much might be said against your own. For I appeal to your own heart, whether or not you have not felt in yourself, or observed in others, a narrow-spiritedness, and some disunion of soul respecting those that hold *universal redemption*. If so, then according to your own rule, *universal redemption* is *wrong*, because it destroys several branches of holiness, such as meekness, love, et cetera. But not to insist upon this, I beg you would observe that your inference is entirely set aside by the force of the Apostle's argument, and the language which he expressly uses in Colossians 3:12-13: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye."



Here we see that the Apostle exhorts them to put on bowels of mercy, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, et cetera, upon this consideration: namely, because they were elect of God. And all who have experientially felt this doctrine in their hearts feel that these graces are the genuine effects of their being elected of God.

But perhaps dear Mr. Wesley may be mistaken in this point, and call that passion which is only zeal for God's truths. You know, dear Sir, the Apostle exhorts us to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). Therefore you must not condemn all that appear zealous for the doctrine of election as narrow-spirited, or persecutors, just because they think it their duty to oppose you. I am sure, I love you in the bowels of Jesus Christ, and think I could lay down my life for your sake; but yet, dear Sir, I cannot help strenuously opposing your errors upon this important subject, because I think you warmly, though not designedly, oppose the truth, as it is in Jesus. May the Lord remove the scales of prejudice from off the eyes of your mind and give you a zeal according to true Christian knowledge!

**Third**, says your sermon, "This doctrine tends to destroy the comforts of religion, the happiness of Christianity, et cetera."

But how does Mr. Wesley know this, who never believed election? I believe they who have experienced it will agree with our 17th article, that "the godly consideration of predestination, and election in Christ, is full of sweet, pleasant, unspeakable comfort to godly persons, and such as feel in themselves the working of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh, and their earthly members, and drawing their minds to high and heavenly things, as well because it does greatly establish and confirm their faith of eternal salvation,

to be enjoyed through Christ, as because it doth fervently kindle their love towards God," et cetera.

This plainly shows that our godly reformers did not think election destroyed holiness or the comforts of religion. As for my own part, this doctrine is my daily support. I should utterly sink under a dread of my impending trials, were I not firmly persuaded that God has chosen me in Christ from before the foundation of the world, and that now being effectually called, he will allow no one to pluck me out of his almighty hand.

You proceed thus: "This is evident as to all those who believe themselves to be reprobate, or only suspect or fear it; all the great and precious promises are lost to them; they afford them no ray of comfort."

In answer to this, let me observe that none living, especially none who are desirous of salvation, can know that they are not of the number of God's elect. None but the unconverted, can have any just reason so much as to fear it. And would dear Mr. Wesley give comfort, or dare you apply the precious promises of the gospel, being children's bread, to men in a natural state, while they continue so? God forbid! What if the doctrine of election and reprobation *does* put some upon doubting? So does that of regeneration. But, is not this doubting a good means to put them upon searching and striving; and that striving, a good means to make their calling and their election sure?

This is one reason among many others why I admire the doctrine of election and am convinced that it should have a place in gospel ministrations and should be insisted on with faithfulness and care. It has a natural tendency to rouse the soul out of its carnal security. And therefore many carnal men cry out against it. Whereas universal

redemption is a notion sadly adapted to keep the soul in its lethargic sleepy condition, and therefore so many natural men admire and applaud it.

Your 13th, 14th and 15th paragraphs come next to be considered. "The witness of the Spirit," you say, "experience shows to be much obstructed by this doctrine."

But, dear Sir, whose experience? Not your own; for in your journal, from your embarking for Georgia, to your return to London, you seem to acknowledge that you have it not, and therefore you are no competent judge in this matter. You must mean then the experience of others. For you say in the same paragraph, "Even in those who have tasted of that good gift, who yet have soon lost it again," (I suppose you mean lost the sense of it again) "and fallen back into doubts and fears and darkness, even horrible darkness that might be felt, et cetera." Now, as to the darkness of desertion, was not this the case of Jesus Christ himself, after he had received an unmeasurable unction of the Holy Ghost? Was not his soul exceeding sorrowful, even unto death, in the garden? And was he not surrounded with an horrible darkness, even a darkness that might be felt, when on the cross he cried out, "My God! My God! why hast thou forsaken me?"

And that all his followers are liable to the same, is it not evident from Scripture? For, says the Apostle, "He was tempted in all things like as we are" (Heb 4:15) so that he himself might be able to succour those that are tempted (Heb. 2:18). And is not their liableness thereunto consistent with that conformity to him in suffering, which his members are to bear (Phil. 3:10)? Why then should persons falling into darkness, after they have received the witness of the Spirit, be any argument against the doctrine of election?

"Yet," you say, "many, very many of those that hold it not, in all parts of the earth, have enjoyed the uninterrupted witness of the Spirit, the continual light of God's countenance, from the moment wherein they first believed, for many months or years, to this very day." But how does dear Mr. Wesley know this? Has he consulted the experience of many, very many in all parts of the earth? Or could he be sure of what he hath advanced without sufficient grounds, would it follow that their being kept in this light is owing to their not believing the doctrine of election? No, this [doctrine], according to the sentiments of our church, "greatly confirms and establishes a true Christian's faith of eternal salvation through Christ," and is an anchor of hope, both sure and steadfast, when he walks in darkness and sees no light; as certainly he may, even after he hath received the witness of the Spirit, whatever you or others may unadvisedly assert to the contrary.

Then, to have respect to God's everlasting covenant, and to throw himself upon the free distinguishing love of that God who changeth not, will make him lift up the hands that hang down, and strengthen the feeble knees.

But without the belief of the doctrine of election, and the immutability of the free love of God, I cannot see how it is possible that any should have a comfortable assurance of eternal salvation. What could it signify to a man whose conscience is thoroughly awakened, and who is warned in good earnest to seek deliverance from the wrath to come, though he should be assured that all his past sins be forgiven, and that he is now a child of God; if notwithstanding this, he may hereafter become a child of the devil, and be cast into hell at last? Could such an assurance yield any solid, lasting comfort to a person convinced of the corruption and treachery of his own heart, and of the malice, subtlety, and power of

Satan? No! That which alone deserves the name of a full assurance of faith is such an assurance as emboldens the believer, under the sense of his interest in distinguishing love, to give the challenge to all his adversaries, whether men or devils, and that with regard to all their future, as well as present, attempts to destroy—saying with the Apostle,

Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 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 (Rom. 8:33-39).

This, dear Sir, is the triumphant language of every soul that has attained a full assurance of faith. And this assurance can only arise from a belief of God's electing everlasting love. That many have an assurance they are in Christ today, but take no thought for, or are not assured they shall be in him tomorrow—nay to all eternity—is rather their imperfection and unhappiness than their privilege. I pray God to bring all such to a sense of his eternal love, that they may no longer build upon their own faithfulness, but on the unchangeableness of that God whose gifts and callings are without

repentance. For those whom God has once justified, he also will glorify.

I observed before, dear Sir, it is not always a safe rule to judge of the truth of principles from people's practice. And therefore, supposing that all who hold *universal redemption* in your way of explaining it, after they received faith, enjoyed the continual uninterrupted sight of God's countenance, it does not follow that this is a fruit of their principle. For that I am sure has a natural tendency to keep the soul in darkness for ever, because the creature thereby is taught that his being kept in a state of salvation is owing to his own free will. And what a sandy foundation is that for a poor creature to build his hopes of perseverance upon? Every relapse into sin, every surprise by temptation, must throw him "into doubts and fears, into horrible darkness, even darkness that may be felt."

Hence it is that the letters which have been lately sent me by those who hold universal redemption are dead and lifeless, dry and inconsistent, in comparison of those I receive from persons on the contrary side. Those who settle in the universal scheme, though they might begin in the Spirit, (whatever they may say to the contrary) are ending in the flesh, and building up a righteousness founded on their own free will: whilst the others triumph in hope of the glory of God, and build upon God's never-failing promise and unchangeable love, even when his sensible presence is withdrawn from them.

But I would not judge of the truth of election by the experience of any particular persons: if I did (O bear with me in this foolishness of boasting) I think I myself might glory in election. For these five or six years I have received the witness of God's Spirit; since that, blessed be God, I have not doubted a quarter of an hour of a saving interest in Jesus Christ: but with grief and humble shame I do acknowledge, I

have fallen into sin often since that. Though I do not—dare not—allow of any one transgression, yet hitherto I have not been (nor do I expect that while I am in this present world I ever shall be) able to live one day perfectly free from all defects and sin. And since the Scriptures declare that there is not a just man upon earth (no, not among those of the highest attainments in grace) that doeth good and sinneth not (Eccl. 7:20), we are sure that this will be the case of all the children of God.

The universal experience and acknowledgement of this among the godly in every age is abundantly sufficient to confute the error of those who hold in an absolute sense that after a man is born again he cannot commit sin. Especially since the Holy Spirit condemns the persons who say they have no sin as deceiving themselves, as being destitute of the truth, and as making God a liar (1 Jn. 1:8, 10). I have been also in heaviness through manifold temptations, and expect to be often so before I die. Thus were the Apostles and primitive Christians themselves. Thus was Luther, that man of God, who, as far as I can find, did not peremptorily, at least, hold election; and the great John Arndt was in the utmost perplexity, but a quarter of an hour before he died, and yet he was no predestinarian.

And if I must speak freely, I believe your fighting so strenuously against the doctrine of election and pleading so vehemently for a sinless perfection are among the reasons or culpable causes, why you are kept out of the liberties of the gospel, and from that full assurance of faith which they enjoy, who have experimentally tasted, and daily feed upon God's electing, everlasting love.

But perhaps you may say, that Luther and Arndt were no Christians, at least very weak ones. I know you think meanly of Abraham, though he was eminently called the friend of God: and, I believe, also

of David, the man after God's own heart. No wonder, therefore, that in a letter you sent me not long since, you should tell me that no Baptist or Presbyterian writer whom you have read knew anything of the liberties of Christ. What? Neither Bunyan, Henry, Flavel, Halyburton, nor any of the New England and Scots divines? See, dear Sir, what narrow-spiritedness and want of charity arise from your principles, and then do not cry out against election any more on account of its being "destructive of meekness and love."

**Fourth**, I shall now proceed to another head. Says the dear Mr. Wesley, "How uncomfortable a thought is this, that thousands and millions of men, without any preceding offence or fault of theirs, were unchangeably doomed to everlasting burnings?"

But who ever asserted, that thousands and millions of men, *without any preceding offence or fault of theirs*, were unchangeably doomed to everlasting burnings? Do not they who believe God's dooming men to everlasting burnings, also believe, that God looked upon them as men fallen in Adam? And that the decree which ordained the punishment first regarded the crime by which it was deserved? How then are they doomed without any preceding fault? Surely Mr. Wesley will own God's justice in imputing Adam's sin to his posterity. And also, after Adam fell, and his posterity in him, God might justly have passed them *all* by, without sending his own Son to be a saviour for any one. Unless you heartily agree to both these points, you do not believe original sin aright. If you do own them, then you must acknowledge the doctrine of election and reprobation to be highly just and reasonable. For if God might justly impute Adam's sin to all, and afterwards have passed by all, then he might justly pass by *some*. Turn on the right hand, or on the left; you are reduced to an inextricable dilemma. And, if you would be consistent, you must either give up the doctrine of the imputation of Adam's sin,



or receive the amiable doctrine of election, with a holy and righteous reprobation as its consequent. For whether you can believe it or not, the Word of God abides faithful: "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded" (Rom. 11:7).

Your 17th paragraph, page 16, I pass over. What has been said on the 9th and 10th paragraphs, with a little alteration, will answer it. I shall only say, it is the doctrine of election that most presses me to abound in good works. I am willing to suffer all things for the elect's sake. This makes me to preach with comfort, because I know salvation does not depend on man's free will, but the Lord makes willing in the day of his power, and can make use of me to bring some of his elect home, when and where he pleases.

But, **Fifth**, you say, "This doctrine has a direct manifest tendency to overthrow the whole Christian religion. For," say you, "supposing that eternal, unchangeable decree, one part of mankind must be saved, though the Christian revelation were not in being."

But, dear Sir, how does that follow? Since it is only by the Christian revelation that we are acquainted with God's design of saving his church by the death of his Son. Yea, it is settled in the everlasting covenant that this salvation shall be applied to the elect through the knowledge and faith of him. As the prophet says in Isaiah 53:11, "*By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many.*" How then has the doctrine of election a direct tendency to overthrow the whole Christian revelation? Who ever thought that God's declaration to Noah, that seed-time and harvest should never cease, could afford an argument for the neglect of plowing or sowing? Or that the unchangeable purpose of God, that harvest should not fail, rendered the heat of the sun, or the influence of the heavenly bodies unnecessary to produce it? No more does God's absolute purpose of

saving his chosen preclude the necessity of the gospel revelation, or the use of any of the means through which he has determined the decree shall take effect. Nor will the right understanding, or the reverent belief of God's decree, ever allow or suffer a Christian in any case to separate the means from the end, or the end from the means.

And since we are taught by the revelation itself that this was intended and given by God as a means of bringing home his elect, we therefore receive it with joy, prize it highly, use it in faith, and endeavour to spread it through all the world, in the full assurance, that wherever God sends it, sooner or later, it shall be savingly useful to all the elect within its call.

How then, in holding this doctrine, do we join with modern unbelievers in making the Christian revelation unnecessary? No, dear Sir, you mistake. Infidels of all kinds are on *your* side of the question. Deists, Arians, and Socinians arraign God's sovereignty and stand up for universal redemption. I pray God that dear Mr. Wesley's sermon, as it has grieved the hearts of many of God's children, may not also strengthen the hands of many of his most avowed enemies!

Here I could almost lie down and weep. "Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon; lest the daughters of the Philistines rejoice, lest the daughters of the uncircumcised triumph" (2 Sam. 1:20).

Further, you say, "This doctrine makes revelation contradict itself." For instance, say you, "The assertors of this doctrine interpret that text of Scripture, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated, as implying that God, in a literal sense, hated Esau and all the reprobates from eternity!" And, when considered as fallen in Adam, were they not objects of his hatred? And might not God, of his own

good pleasure, love or show mercy to Jacob and the elect—and yet at the same time do the reprobate no wrong? But you say, "God is love." And cannot God be love, unless he shows the same mercy to all?

Again, says dear Mr. Wesley, "They infer from that text, 'I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy,' that God is merciful only to some men, viz the elect; and that he has mercy for those only, flatly contrary to which is the whole tenor of the Scripture, as is that express declaration in particular, 'The Lord is loving to every man, and his mercy is over all his works.'"

And so it is, but not his *saving* mercy. God is loving to every man: he sends his rain upon the evil and upon the good. But you say, "God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34). No! For every one, whether Jew or Gentile, that believeth on Jesus, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him. "But he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk. 16:16). For God is no respecter of persons, upon the account of any outward condition or circumstance in life whatever; nor does the doctrine of election in the least suppose him to be so. But as the sovereign Lord of all, who is debtor to none, he has a right to do what he will with his own, and to dispense his favours to what objects he sees fit, merely at his pleasure. And his supreme right herein is clearly and strongly asserted in those passages of Scripture, where he says, "Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion" (Rom. 9:15, Exod. 33:19).

Further, from the text, "the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her [Rebekah], The elder shall serve the younger" (Rom. 9:11-

12)—you represent us as inferring that our predestination to life in no way depends on the foreknowledge of God.

But who infers this, dear Sir? For if foreknowledge signifies approbation, as it does in several parts of Scripture, then we confess that predestination and election *do* depend on God's foreknowledge. But if by God's foreknowledge you understand God's fore-seeing some good works done by his creatures as the foundation or reason of choosing them and therefore electing them, then we say that in this sense predestination does not any way depend on God's foreknowledge.

But I referred you, at the beginning of this letter, to Dr. Edwards's *Veritas Redux*, which I recommended to you also in a late letter, with Elisha Coles on *God's Sovereignty*. Be pleased to read these, and also the excellent sermons of Mr. Cooper of Boston in New England (which I also sent you) and I doubt not but you will see all your objections answered. Though I would observe, that after all our reading on both sides the question, we shall never in this life be able to search out God's decrees to perfection. No, we must humbly adore what we cannot comprehend, and with the great Apostle at the end of our enquiries cry out, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?" (Rom. 11:33-34)—or with our Lord, when he was admiring God's sovereignty, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight" (Matt. 11:26).

However, it may not be amiss to take notice, that if those texts, "The Lord is . . . not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9) and "I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live" (Ezek.

33:11)—and such like—be taken in their strictest sense, then no one will be damned.

But here's the distinction. God taketh no pleasure in the death of sinners, so as to delight simply in their death; but he delights to magnify his justice, by inflicting the punishment which their iniquities have deserved. As a righteous judge who takes no pleasure in condemning a criminal, may yet justly command him to be executed, that law and justice may be satisfied, even though it be in his power to procure him a reprieve.

I would hint further, that you unjustly charge the doctrine of *reprobation* with blasphemy, whereas the doctrine of *universal redemption*, as you set it forth, is really the highest reproach upon the dignity of the Son of God, and the merit of his blood. Consider whether it be not rather blasphemy to say as you do, "Christ not only died for those that are saved, but also for those that perish."

The text you have misapplied to gloss over this, see explained by Ridgely, Edwards, Henry; and I purposely omit answering your texts myself so that you may be brought to read such treatises, which, under God, would show you your error. You cannot make good the assertion that Christ died for them that perish without holding (as Peter Bohler, one of the Moravian brethren, in order to make out universal redemption, lately frankly confessed in a letter) that all the damned souls would hereafter be brought out of hell. I cannot think Mr. Wesley is thus minded. And yet unless this can be proved, universal redemption, taken in a literal sense, falls entirely to the ground. For how can all be universally redeemed, if all are not finally saved?

Dear Sir, for Jesus Christ's sake, consider how you dishonour God by denying election. You plainly make salvation depend not on *God's*

*free grace*, but on *man's free-will*. And if thus, it is more than probable, Jesus Christ would not have had the satisfaction of seeing the fruit of his death in the eternal salvation of one soul. Our preaching would then be vain, and all invitations for people to believe in him would also be in vain.

But, blessed be God, our Lord knew for whom he died. There was an eternal compact between the Father and the Son. A certain number was then given him as the purchase and reward of his obedience and death. For these he prayed (Jn. 17:9), and *not for the world*. For these elect ones, and these only, he is now interceding, and with their salvation he will be fully satisfied.

I purposely omit making any further particular remarks on the several last pages of your sermon. Indeed had not your name, dear Sir, been prefixed to the sermon, I could not have been so uncharitable as to think you were the author of such sophistry. You beg the question, in saying that God has declared, (notwithstanding you own, I suppose, some will be damned) that he will save all— *i.e.*, every individual person. You take it for granted (for solid proof you have none) that God is unjust, if he passes by any, and then you exclaim against the "*horrible decree*": and yet, as I before hinted, in holding the doctrine of original sin, you profess to believe that he might justly have passed by all.

Dear, dear Sir, O be not offended! For Christ's sake be not rash! Give yourself to reading. Study the covenant of grace. Down with your carnal reasoning. Be a little child; and then, instead of pawning your salvation, as you have done in a late hymn book, if the doctrine of *universal redemption* be not true; instead of talking of *sinless perfection*, as you have done in the preface to that hymn book, and making man's salvation to depend on his *own free will*, as you have

in this sermon; you will compose a hymn in praise of sovereign distinguishing love. You will caution believers against striving to work a perfection out of their own hearts, and print another sermon the reverse of this, and entitle it "Free Grace *Indeed*." Free, not because free to all; but free, because God may withhold or give it to whom and when he pleases.

Till you do this, I must doubt whether or not you know yourself. In the meanwhile, I cannot but blame you for censuring the clergy of our church for not keeping to their articles, when you yourself by your principles, positively deny the 9th, 10th and 17th.

Dear Sir, these things ought not so to be. God knows my heart, as I told you before, so I declare again, nothing but a single regard to the honour of Christ has forced this letter from me. I love and honour you for his sake; and when I come to judgment, will thank you before men and angels, for what you have, under God, done for my soul.

There, I am persuaded, I shall see dear Mr. Wesley convinced of election and everlasting love. And it often fills me with pleasure to think how I shall behold you casting your crown down at the feet of the Lamb, and as it were filled with a holy blushing for opposing the divine sovereignty in the manner you have done.

But I hope the Lord will show you this before you go hence. O how do I long for that day! If the Lord should be pleased to make use of this letter for that purpose, it would abundantly rejoice the heart of, dear and honoured Sir,

Yours affectionate, though unworthy brother and servant in Christ,

GEORGE WHITEFIELD.

# **ARTICULI ARINIANI SIVE REMONSTANTIA**

## **The Five Arminian Articles**

**A.D. 1610**

### Article I.

That God, by an eternal, unchangeable purpose in Jesus Christ his Son, before the foundation of the world, hath determined, out of the fallen, sinful race of men, to save in Christ, for Christ's sake, and through Christ, those who, through the grace of the Holy Ghost, shall believe on this his Son Jesus, and shall persevere in this faith an obedience of faith, through this grace, even to the end; and, on the other hand, to leave the incorrigible and unbelieving in sin and under wrath, and to condemn them as alienate from Christ, according to the word of the gospel in John iii. 36: 'He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of god abideth on him,' and according to other passages of Scripture also.

### Article II.

That, agreeable thereto, Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world, died for all men and for every man, so that he has obtained for them all, by his death on the cross, redemption and the forgiveness of sins, yet



that no one actually enjoys this forgiveness of sins except the believer, according to the word of the Gospel of John iii. 16: 'God so love the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' And in the First Epistle of John ii. 2: 'And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.'

#### Article III.

That man has not saving grace of himself, nor of the energy of his free will, inasmuch as he, in the state of apostasy and sin, can of and by himself neither think, will, nor do any thing that is truly good (such as saving Faith eminently is); but that it is needful that he be born again of God in Christ, through his Holy Spirit, and renewed in understanding, inclination, or will, and all his powers, in order that he may rightly understand, think, will, and effect what is truly good, according to the Word of Christ, John xv. 5: 'Without me ye can do nothing.'

#### Article IV.

That this grace of God is the beginning, continuance, and accomplishment of all good, even to this extent, that the regenerate man himself, without prevenient or assisting, awakening, following and co-operative grace, can neither think, will, nor do good, nor withstand any temptations to evil; so that all good deeds or movements, that can be conceived, must be ascribed to the grace of God in Christ. But as respects the mode of the operation of this grace, it is not irresistible, inasmuch as it is written concerning many, that they have resisted the Holy Ghost. Acts vii., and elsewhere in many places.

#### Article V.

That those who are incorporated into Christ by a true faith, and have thereby become partakers of his life-giving Spirit, have thereby full power to strive against Satan, sin, the world, and their own flesh, and to win the victory; it being well understood that it is ever through the assisting grace of the Holy Ghost; and that Jesus Christ assists them through his Spirit in all temptations, extends to them his hand, and if only they are ready for the conflict, and desire his help, and are not inactive, keeps them from falling, so that they, by no craft or power of Satan, can be misled nor plucked out of Christ's hands, according to the Word of Christ, John x.28: 'Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.' But whether they are capable, through negligence, of forsaking again the first beginnings of their life in Christ, of again returning to this present evil world, of turning away from the holy doctrine which was delivered them, or losing a good conscience, of becoming devoid of grace, that must be more particularly determined out of the Holy Scriptures, before we ourselves can teach it with the full persuasion of our minds.

## **FREE GRACE**

**John Wesley**  
**SERMON 128**

**Preached at Bristol, in the year 1740**

**(text from the 1872 edition)**

## TO THE READER

Nothing but the strongest conviction, not only that what is here advanced is "the truth as it is in Jesus," but also that I am indispensably obliged to declare this truth to all the world, could have induced me openly to oppose the sentiments of those whom I esteem for their work's sake: At whose feet may I be found in the day of the Lord Jesus!

Should any believe it his duty to reply hereto, I have only one request to make, -- Let whatsoever you do, be done inherently, in love, and in the spirit of meekness. Let your very disputing show that you have "put on, as the elect of God, bowels of mercies, gentleness, longsuffering; that even according to this time it may be said, "See how these Christians love one another!"

## ADVERTISEMENT

*Whereas a pamphlet entitled, "Free Grace Indeed," has been published against this Sermon; this is to inform the publisher, that I cannot answer his tract till he appears to be more in earnest. For I dare not speak of "the deep things of God" in the spirit of a prize-fighter or a stage-player. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom. 8:32*

1. How freely does God love the world! While we were yet sinners, "Christ died for the ungodly." While we were "dead in our sin," God "spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all." And how freely with him does he "give us all things!" Verily, FREE GRACE is all in all!

2. The grace or love of God, whence cometh our salvation, is FREE IN ALL, and FREE FOR ALL.

3. First. It is free in all to whom it is given. It does not depend on any power or merit in man; no, not in any degree, neither in whole, nor in part. It does not in anywise depend either on the good works or righteousness of the receiver; not on anything he has done, or anything he is. It does not depend on his endeavors. It does not depend on his good tempers, or good desires, or good purposes and intentions; for all these flow from the free grace of God; they are the streams only, not the fountain. They are the fruits of free grace, and not the root. They are not the cause, but the effects of it. Whatsoever good is in man, or is done by man, God is the author and doer of it. Thus is his grace free in all; that is, no way depending on any power or merit in man, but on God alone, who freely gave us his own Son, and "with him freely giveth us all things.

4. But it is free for ALL, as well as IN ALL. To this some have answered, "No: It is free only for those whom God hath ordained to life; and they are but a little flock. The greater part of God hath ordained to death; and it is not free for them. Them God hateth; and, therefore, before they were born, decreed they should die eternally. And this he absolutely decreed; because so was his good pleasure; because it was his sovereign will. Accordingly, they are born for this, -- to be destroyed body and soul in hell. And they grow up under the irrevocable curse of God, without any possibility of redemption; for what grace God gives. he gives only for this, to increase, not prevent, their damnation."

5. This that decree of predestination. But methinks I hear one say, "This is not the predestination which I hold: I hold only the election of grace. What I believe is not more than this, -- that God,, before the

foundation of the world, did elect a certain number of men to be justified, sanctified, and glorified. Now, all these will be saved, and none else; for the rest of mankind God leaves to themselves: So they follow the imaginations of their own hearts, which are only evil continually, and, waxing worse and worse, are at length justly punished with everlasting destruction."

6. Is this all the predestination which you hold? Consider; perhaps this is not all. Do not you believe God ordained them to this very thing" If so, you believe the whole degree; you hold predestination in the full sense which has been above described. But it may be you think you do not. Do not you then believe, God hardens the hearts of them that perish: Do not you believe, he (literally) hardened Pharaoh's heart; and that for this end he raised him up, or created him? Why, this amounts to just the same thing. If you believe Pharaoh, or any one man upon earth, was created for this end, -- to be damned, -- you hold all that has been said of predestination. And there is no need you should add, that God seconds his degree, which is supposed unchangeable and irresistible, by hardening the hearts of those vessels of wrath whom that decree had before fitted for destruction.

7. well, but it may be you do not believe even this; you do not hold any decree of reprobation; you do not think God decrees any man to be damned, not hardens, irresistibly fits him, for damnation; you only say, "God eternally decreed, that all being dead in sin, he would say to some of the dry bones, Live, and to others he would not; that, consequently, these should be made alive, and those abide in death, - - these should glorify God by their salvation, and those by their destruction."

8. Is not this what you mean by the election of grace? If it be, I would ask one or two question: Are any who are not thus elected saved? or were any, from the foundation of the world? Is it possible any man should be saved unless he be thus elected? If you say, "No," you are but where you was; you are not got one hair's breadth farther; you still believe, that, in consequence of an unchangeable, irresistible decree of God, the greater part of mankind abide in death, without any possibility of redemption; inasmuch as none can save them but God, and he will not save them. You believe he hath absolutely decreed not to save them; and what is this but decreeing to damn them? It is, in effect, neither more not less; it comes to the same thing; for if you are dead, and altogether unable to make yourself alive, then, if God has absolutely decreed he will make only others alive, and not you, he hath absolutely decreed your everlasting death; you are absolutely consigned to damnation. So then, though you use softer words than some, you mean the self-same thing; and God's decree concerning the election of grace, according to your account of it, amounts to neither more not less than what others call God's decree of reprobation.

9. Call it therefore by whatever name you please, election, preterition, predestination, or reprobation, it comes in the end to the same thing. The sense of all is plainly this, -- by virtue of an eternal, unchangeable, irresistible decree of God, on part of mankind are infallibly saved, and the rest infallibly damned; it being impossible that any of the former should be damned. or that any of the latter should be saved.

10. But if this be so, then is all preaching vain. It is needless to them that are elected; for they, whether with preaching or without, will infallibly be saved. Therefore, the end of preaching -- to save should -- is void with regard to them; and it is useless to them that are not

elected, for they cannot possibly be saved: They, whether with preaching or without, will infallibly be damned. The end of preaching is therefore void with regard to them likewise; so that in either case our preaching is vain, as you hearing is also vain.

11. This then, is a plain proof that the doctrine of predestination is not a doctrine of God, because it makes void the ordinance of God; and God is not divided against himself. A Second is, that it directly tends to destroy that holiness which is the end of all the ordinances of God. I do not say, none who hold it are holy; (for God is of tender mercy to those who are unavoidably entangled in errors of any kind;) but that the doctrine itself, -- that every man is either elected or not elected from eternity, and that the one must inevitably be saved, and the other inevitably damned, -- has a manifest tendency to destroy holiness in general; for it wholly takes away those first motives to follow after it, so frequently proposed in Scripture, the hope of future reward and fear of punishment, the hope of heaven and fear of hell. That these shall go away into everlasting punishment, and those into life eternal, is not motive to him to struggle for life who believes his lot is cast already; it is not reasonable for him so to do, if he thinks he is unalterably adjudged either to life or death. You will say, "But he knows not whether it is life or death." What then? -- this helps not the matter; for if a sick man knows that he must unavoidably die, or unavoidably recover, though he knows not which, it is unreasonable for him to take any physic at all. He might justly say, (and so I have heard some speak, both in bodily sickness and in spiritual,) "If I am ordained to life, I shall live; if to death, I shall live; so I need not trouble myself about it." So directly does this doctrine tend to shut the very gate of holiness in general, -- to hinder unholy men from ever approaching thereto, or striving to enter in thereat.

12. as directly does this doctrine tend to destroy several particular branches of holiness. Such are meekness and love, -- love, I mean, of our enemies, -- of the evil and unthankful. I say not, that none who hold it have meekness and love; (for as is the power of God, so is his mercy;) but that it naturally tends to inspire, or increase, a sharpness or eagerness of temper, which is quite contrary to the meekness of Christ; as then especially appears, when they are opposed on this head. And it as naturally inspires contempt or coldness towards those whom we suppose outcast from God. "O but," you say. "I suppose no particular man a reprobate." You mean you would not if you could help it: But you cannot help sometimes applying your general doctrine to particular persons: The enemy of souls will apply it for you. You know how often he has done so. But you rejected the thought with abhorrence. True; as soon as you could; but how did it sour and sharpen your spirit in the mean time! you well know it was not the spirit of love which you then felt towards that poor sinner, whom you supposed or suspected, whether you would or no, to have been hated of God from eternity.

13. Thirdly. This doctrine tends to destroy the comfort of religion, the happiness of Christianity. This is evident as to all those who believe themselves to be reprobated, or who only suspect or fear it. All the great and precious promises are lost to them; they afford them no ray of comfort: For they are not the elect of God; therefore they have neither lot nor portion in them. This is an effectual bar to their finding any comfort or happiness, even in that religion whose ways are designed to be "ways of pleasantness, and all her paths peace."

14. And as to you who believe yourselves the elect of God, what is your happiness? I hoe, not a notion, a speculative belief, a bare opinion of any kind; but a feeling possession of God in your heart, wrought in you by the Holy Ghost, or, the witness of God's Spirit with



your spirit that you are a child of God. This, otherwise termed "the full assurance of faith,": is the true ground of a Christian's happiness. And it does indeed imply a full assurance that all your past sins are forgiven, and that you are *now* a child of God. But it does not necessarily imply a full assurance of our future perseverance. I do not say this is never joined to it, but that it is not necessarily implied therein; for many have the one who have not the other.

15. Now, this witness of the Spirit experience shows to be much obstructed by this doctrine; and not only in those who, Believing themselves reprobated, by this belief thrust it far from them, but even in them that have tasted of that good gift, who yet have soon lost it again, and fallen back into doubts, and fears, and darkness, -- horrible darkness, that might be felt! And I appeal to any of you who hold this doctrine, to say, between God and your own hearts, whether you have not often a return of doubts and fears concerning your election or perseverance! If you ask, "Who has not?" I answer, Very few of those that hold this doctrine; but many, very many, of those that hold it not, in all parts of the earth; -- many of these have enjoyed the uninterrupted witness of his Spirit, the continual light of his countenance, from the moment wherein they first believed, for many months or years, to this day.

16. That assurance of faith which these enjoy excludes all doubt and fear, It excludes all kinds of doubt and fear concerning their future perseverance; though it is not properly, as was said before, an assurance of what is future, but only of what *now* is. And this needs not for its support a speculative belief, that whoever is once ordained to life must live; for it is wrought from hour to hour, by the mighty power of God, "by the Holy Ghost which is given unto them." And therefore that doctrine is not of God, because it tends to obstruct, if

not destroy, this great work of the Holy Ghost, whence flows the chief comfort of religion, the happiness of Christianity.

17. Again: How uncomfortable a thought is this, that thousands and millions of men, without any preceding offense or fault of theirs, were unchangeably doomed to everlasting burnings! How peculiarly uncomfortable must it be to those who have put on Christ! to those who, being filled with bowels of mercy, tenderness, and compassion, could even "wish themselves accursed for their brethren's sake!"

18. Fourthly. This uncomfortable doctrine directly tends to destroy our zeal for good works. And this it does, First, as it naturally tends (according to what was observed before) to destroy our love to the greater part of mankind, namely, the evil and unthankful. For whatever lessens our love, must go far lessen our desire to do them good. This it does, Secondly, as it cuts off one of the strongest motives to all acts of bodily mercy, such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and the like, -- viz., the hope of saving their souls from death. For what avails it to relieve their temporal wants, who are just dropping into eternal fire? "Well; but run and snatch them as brands out of the fire.: Nay, this you suppose impossible. They were appointed thereunto, you say, from eternity, before they had done either good or evil. you believe it is the will of God they should die. And "who hath resisted his will?" But you say you do not know whether these are elected or not. What then? If you know they are the one or the other, -- that they are either elected or not elected, -- all your labour is void and vain. In either case, your advice, reproof, or exhortation is as needless and useless as our preaching. It is needless to them that are elected; for they will infallibly be saved without it. It is useless to them that are not elected; for with or without it they will infallibly be damned; therefore you cannot consistently with your principles take any pains about their

salvation. Consequently, those principles directly tend to destroy you zeal for good works; for all good works; but particularly for the greatest of all, the saving of souls from death.

19. But, Fifthly, this doctrine not only tends to destroy Christian holiness, happiness, and good works, but hath also a direct and manifest tendency to overthrow the whole Christian Revelation. The point which the wisest of the modern unbelievers most industriously labour to prove, is, that the Christian Revelation is not necessary. They well know, could they once show this, the conclusion would be too plain to be denied, "If it be not necessary, it is not true," Now, this fundamental point you give up. For supposing that eternal, unchangeable decree, one part of mankind must be saved, though the Christian Revelation were not in being, and the other part of mankind must be damned, notwithstanding that Revelation. And what would an infidel desire more? You allow him all he asks. In making the gospel thus unnecessary to all sorts of men, you give up the whole Christian cause. "O tell it not in Gath! lest the daughters of the uncircumcised rejoice; "lest the sons of unbelief triumph!

20. And as this doctrine manifestly and directly tends to overthrow the whole Christian Revelation, so it does the same thing, by plain consequence, in making that Revelation contradict itself. For it is grounded on such an interpretation of some texts (more or fewer it matters not) as flatly contradicts all the other texts, and indeed the whole scope and tenor of Scripture. For instance: The assertors of this doctrine interpret that text of Scripture, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated," as implying that God in a literal sense hated Esau, and all the reprobated, from eternity. Now, what can possibly be a more flat contradiction than this, not only to the whole scope and tenor of Scripture, but also to all those particular texts which expressly declare, "God is love?" Again: They infer from that text, "I

will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," (Romans 4:15) that God is love only to some men, viz., the elect, and that he hath mercy for those only; flatly contrary to which is the whole tenor of Scripture, as is that express declaration in particular, "The Lord is loving unto every man; and his mercy is over all his works." (Psalm 114:9.) Again: They infer from that and the like texts, "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy;: that he showeth mercy only to those to whom he had respect from all eternity. Nay, but who replieth against God now? You now contradict the whole oracles of God, which declare throughout, "God is no respecter of persons:" (Acts 10:34) "There is no respect of persons with him." (Rom. 2:11.) Again: from that text, "The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her," unto Rebecca, "The elder shall serve the younger;" you infer, that our being predestinated, or elect, no way depends on the foreknowledge of God. Flatly contrary to this are all the scriptures; and those in particular, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God; " (1 Peter 1:2;) "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate." (Rom. 8:29.)

21. And "the same Lord over all is rich" in mercy "to all that call upon him:" (Romans 10:12:) But you say, "No; he is such only to those for whom Christ died. And those are not all, but only a few, whom God hath chosen out of the world; for he died not for all, but only for those who were 'chosen in him before the foundation of the world.'" (Eph. 1:4.) Flatly contrary to your interpretation of these scriptures, also, is the whole tenor of the New Testament; as are in particular those texts: -- "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died," (Rom. 14:15,) -- a clear proof that Christ died, not only for those that are saved, but also for them that perish: He is "the Saviour of the world;" (John 4:42;) He is "the Lamb of God that taketh away

the sins of the world;" (John 1:29;) "He is the propitiation, not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world;" (1 John 2:2;) "He," the living God, "is the Savior of all men;" (1 Timothy 4:10;) "He gave himself a ransom for all;" (1 Tim. 2:6;) "He tasted death for every man." (Heb. 2:9.)

22. If you ask, "Why then are not all men saved?" the whole law and the testimony answer, First, Not because of any decree of God; not because it is his pleasure they should die; for, As I live, saith the Lord God," I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth." (Ezek. 18:3, 32.) Whatever be the cause of their perishing, it cannot be his will, if the oracles of God are true; for they declare, "He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance;" (2 Pet. 3:9;) "He willeth that all men should be saved." And they, Secondly, declare what is the cause why all men are not saved, namely, that they will not be saved: So our Lord expressly, "Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life." (John 5:40.) "The power of the Lord is present to heal" them, but they will not be healed. "They reject the counsel," the merciful counsel, "of God against themselves," as did their stiff-necked forefathers. And therefore are they without excuse; because God would save them, but they will not be saved: This is the condemnation, "How often would I have gathered you together, and ye would not!" (Matt. 23:37.)

23. Thus manifestly does this doctrine tend to overthrow the whole Christian Revelation, by making it contradict itself; by giving such an interpretation of some texts, as flatly contradicts all the other texts, and indeed the whole scope and tenor of Scripture; -- an abundant proof that it is not of God. But neither is this all: For, Seventhly, it is a doctrine full of blasphemy; of such blasphemy as I should dread to mention, but that the honour of our gracious God, and the cause of his truth, will not suffer me to be silent. In the cause of God, then,

and from a sincere concern for the glory of his great name, I will mention a few of the horrible blasphemies contained in this horrible doctrine. But first, I must warn every one of you that hears, as ye will answer it at the great day, not to charge me (as some have done) with blaspheming, because I mention the blasphemy of others. And the more you are grieve with them that do thus blaspheme, see that ye "confirm your love towards them: the more, and that your heart's desire, and continual prayer to God, be, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do!"

24. This premised, let it be observed, that this doctrine represents our blessed Lord, "Jesus Christ the righteous," "the only begotten Son of the Father, full of grace and truth," as an hypocrite, a deceiver of the people, a man void of common sincerity. For it cannot be denied, that he everywhere speaks as if he was willing that all men should be saved. Therefore, to say he was not willing that all men should be saved, is to represent him as a mere hypocrite and dissembler. It cannot be denied that the gracious words which came out of his mouth are full of invitations to all sinners. To say, then, he did not intend to save all sinners, is to represent him as a gross deceiver of the people. You cannot deny that he says, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden." If, then, you say he calls those that cannot come; those whom he knows to be unable to come; those whom he can make able to come, but will not; how is it possible to describe greater insincerity? You represent him as mocking his helpless creatures, by offering what he never intends to give. You describe him as saying on thing, and meaning another; as pretending the love which his had not. Him, in "whose mouth was no guile," you make full of deceit, void of common sincerity; -- then especially, when, drawing nigh the city, He wept over it, and said, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often *would* I have gathered thy

children together, -- and *ye would not*;" \_EthelEsa -- kai ouk EthelEsate\_. Now, if you say, *they would*\_, but *he would not*\_, you represent him (*which who could hear?*) as *weeping crocodiles' tears; weeping over the prey which himself had doomed to destruction!*

*25. Such blasphemy this, as one would think might make the ears of a Christian to tingle! But there is yet more behind; for just as it honours the Son, so doth this doctrine honour the Father. It destroys all his attributes at once: It overturns both his justice, mercy, and truth; yea, it represents the most holy God as worse than the devil, as both more false, more cruel, and more unjust. More false; because the devil, liar as he is, hath never said, "He willeth all men to be saved:" More unjust; because the devil cannot, if he would, be guilty of such injustice as you ascribe to God, when you say that God condemned millions of souls to everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels, for continuing in sin, which, for want of that grace he will not give them, they cannot avoid: And more cruel; because that unhappy spirit "seeketh rest and findeth none;" so that his own restless misery is a kind of temptation to him to tempt others. But God resteth in his high and holy place; so that to suppose him, of his own mere motion, of his pure will and pleasure, happy as he is, to doom his creatures, whether they will or no, to endless misery, is to impute such cruelty to him as we cannot impute even to the great enemy of God and man. It is to represent the high God (he that hath ears to hear let him hear!) as more cruel, false, and unjust than the devil!*

*26. This is the blasphemy clearly contained in the horrible decree+ of predestination! And here I fix my foot. On this I join issue with every assertor of it. You represent God as worse than the devil; more false, more cruel, more unjust. But you say you will prove it by*

scripture. Hold! What will you prove by Scripture? that God is worse than the devil? I cannot be. Whatever that Scripture proves, it never can prove this; whatever its true meaning be. This cannot be its true meaning. Do you ask, "What is its true meaning then?" If I say, "I know not," you have gained nothing; for there are many scriptures the true sense whereof neither you nor I shall know till death is swallowed up in victory. But this I know, better it were to say it had no sense, than to say it had such a sense as this. It cannot mean, whatever it mean besides, that the God of truth is a liar. Let it mean what it will it cannot mean that the Judge of all the world is unjust. No scripture can mean that God is not love, or that his mercy is not over all his works; that is, whatever it prove beside, no scripture can prove predestination.

27. This is the blasphemy for which (however I love the persons who assert it) I abhor the doctrine of predestination, a doctrine, upon the supposition of which, if one could possibly suppose it for a moment, (call it election, reprobation, or what you please, for all comes to the same thing,) one might say to our adversary, the devil, "Thou fool, why dost thou roar about any longer? Thy lying in wait for souls is as needless and useless as our preaching. Hearest thou not, that God hath taken thy work out of thy hands; and that he doeth it much more effectually? Thou, with all thy principalities and powers, canst only so assault that we may resist thee; but He can irresistibly destroy both body and soul in hell! Thou canst only entice; but his unchangeable decrees, to leave thousands of souls in death, compels them to continue in sin, till they drop into everlasting burnings. Thou temptest; He forceth us to be damned; for we cannot resist his will. Thou fool, why goest thou about any longer, seeking whom thou mayest devour? Hearest thou not that God is the devouring lion, the destroyer of souls, the murderer of men" Moloch caused only children to pass through the fire: and that fire was soon quenched; or,



the corruptible body being consumed, its torment was at an end; but God, thou are told, by his eternal decree, fixed before they had done good or evil, causes, not only children of a span long, but the parents also, to pass through the fire of hell, the 'fire which never shall be quenched; and the body which is cast thereinto, being now incorruptible and immortal, will be ever consuming and never consumed, but 'the smoke of their torment,' because it is God's good pleasure, 'ascendeth up for ever and ever.'"

28. O how would the enemy of God and man rejoice to hear these things were so! How would he cry aloud and spare not! How would he lift up his voice and say, "To your tents, O Israel! Flee from the face of this God, or ye shall utterly perish! But whither will ye flee? Into heaven? He is there, Down to hell? He is there also. Ye cannot flee from an omnipresent, almighty tyrant. And whether ye flee or stay, I call heaven, his throne, and earth, his footstool, to witness against you, ye shall perish, ye shall die eternally. Sing, O hell, and rejoice, ye that are under the earth! For God, even the mighty God, hath spoken, and devoted to death thousands of souls, from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof! Here, O death, is they sting! They shall not, cannot escape; for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it. Here, O grave is thy victory Nations yet unborn, or ever they have done good or evil are doomed never to see the light of life, but thou shalt gnaw upon them for ever and ever! Let all those morning stars sing together, who fell with Lucifer, son of the morning! Let all the sons of hell shout for joy! For the decree is past, and who shall disannul it?"

29. Yea, the decree is past; and so it was before the foundation of the world. But what decree? Even this: "I will set before the sons of men 'life and death, blessing cursing.' And the soul that chooseth life shall live, as the soul that chooseth death shall die." This decree whereby

"whom God did foreknow, he did predestinate," was indeed from everlasting; this, whereby all who suffer Christ to make them alive are "elect according to the foreknowledge of God," now standeth fast, even as the moon, and as the faithful witnesses in heaven; and when heaven and earth shall pass away, yet this shall not pass away; for it is as unchangeable and eternal as is the being of God that gave it. This decree yields the strongest encouragement to abound in all good works and in all holiness; and it is a well-spring of joy, of happiness also, to our great and endless comfort. This is worthy of God; it is every way consistent with all the perfections of his nature. It gives us the noblest view both of his justice, mercy, and truth. To this agrees the whole scope of the Christian Revelation, as well as all the parts thereof. To this Moses and all the Prophets bear witness, and our blessed Lord and all his Apostles Thus Moses, in the name of his Lord: "I call heaven and earth to record against you this day, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore choose life, that thou and thy seed may live." Thus Ezekiel: choose life, that thou and thy seed may live;" Thus Ezekiel: (To cite one Prophet for all:) "The soul that sinneth, it shall die: The son shall not bear" eternally, "the iniquity of the father. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him." (18:20.) Thus our blessed Lord: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." (John 7:37.) Thus his great Apostle, St. Paul: (Acts 17:30:) "God commandeth all men everywhere to repent; -- "all men everywhere;" every man in every place, without any exception either of place or person. Thus St. James: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." (James 1:5.) Thus St. Peter: (2 Pet. 3:9:) "The Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." And thus St. John: " If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father; and he is the

propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world." (1 John 2:1, 2.)

30. O hear ye this, ye that forget God! Ye cannot charge your death upon him! "Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?' saith the Lord God." (Ezek. 18:23ff.) "Repent, and turn from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions where by ye have transgressed, -- for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God. Wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked. -- Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezekiel 33:11.)

## **Augustine**

**by Arthur C. Custance, Ph.D**

Aurelius Augustinus (354 - 430), Bishop of Hippo Regius in Roman North Africa, was undoubtedly the greatest of the Latin Fathers. He is called a Latin Father partly because he spoke and wrote in Latin, and partly to distinguish him from the Greek Fathers who wrote in Greek. Many of the latter were influential chiefly in the Eastern half of the Christian world which later became the Greek Orthodox Church, whose religious capital was Constantinople. Augustine's influence was chiefly in the Western world.

Augustine was born of middle-class parents at Tagaste in North Africa, but he seems to have been financially assisted as a young man when he had perhaps proved himself to be what today would be

called "scholarship material." His father, Patricius, remained for most of his life a pagan, but was converted shortly before his death in 372 when Augustine was just eighteen years of age.

In so far as the specific subject matter of this volume is concerned, Augustine's enormous literary output is of less immediate interest than his autobiography in which he detailed the circumstances that finally led to his conversion. It is in this autobiography, his *Confessions*, that we see the background of the long struggle he had with his own unruly nature, and how he became increasingly aware of both the fundamental depravity of the human heart and the futility of appealing to the unsaved to turn themselves towards the Savior.

Augustine begins his *Confessions* with the famous and often quoted (or misquoted) words, "Thou hast formed us for Thyself and our hearts are restless till they find their rest in Thee" (I.i.1). He then proceeds to give the reader some idea of his life before he became a Christian. He began very early to be a troublemaker, perhaps when he was only eight or nine years old, and his experience thereafter was what Hogarth would have painted under the title *The Progress of a Rake*. He was not converted until 386 A.D. at the age of thirty-two.

So he continues:

I will now call to mind my past foulness and the carnal corruptions of my soul, not because I love them but that I may love Thee, O my God. For love of thy love I do it, recalling in the very bitterness of my remembrance my most vicious ways that Thou mayest grow sweet to me--Thou sweetness without deception! And recollecting myself out of that my dissipation in which I was torn to pieces, while, being turned away from Thee, I lost myself among many vanities. For I even longed in my

youth formerly to be satisfied with worldly things, and I dared to grow wild again with various and shadowy loves; my form consumed away and I became corrupt in Thine eyes, pleasing myself and eager to be pleasing in the eyes of men. (II.i.1)

So even as a child he sought the thrills of crime on a petty scale of theft for the fun of it, making mischief for people simply for the pleasure of seeing their distress. He describes it thus:

I had a desire to commit robbery and did so, compelled neither by hunger nor poverty but through a dislike of doing the right things, and a certain lustiness of iniquity. For I pilfered that of which I had already sufficient, and much better. Nor did I desire to enjoy what I pilfered but only the theft and the misdeed itself. (II.iv.9)

Inevitably he tired of these adolescent delinquencies, having now reached the age at which the opposite sex became an object of interest. And so he went to Carthage, perhaps the most wanton city of the time "where a cauldron of unholy loves bubbled up all around me" (III.i.1). Into this cauldron he plunged with energetic abandon, and he recounts the steady degeneration of his soul which took place: "Woe, woe, by what steps was I dragged down to the depths of hell" (III.vii.11).

Meanwhile his mother, Monica, a most devout and godly Christian woman, watched his slow degradation with agonizing concern. Augustine was now in his early twenties and was quite aware of his mother's distress. "My mother, thy faithful one, wept to Thee on my behalf more than mothers are wont to bewail the physical deaths of their children" (III.xi.19).

Augustine's "progress" is remarkably typical of many modern young people who have a similar measure of economic independence. It seems clear that as a young adolescent he became involved with a gang of potential troublemakers who sought escape from the boredom of life by being destructive just for the fun of it. But in due time this palled, and as he grew into manhood he sought more sophisticated forms of escape. And so he went to Carthage, "the big city." But this, too, in time began to sicken him so that like many in similar circumstances today he turned hopefully to philosophy and in a sense "attached" himself to the founder of Manichaeism, the equivalent of the modern guru. He describes this change in lifestyle. "During the space of nine years, then, from my nineteenth to my twenty-eighth year we went on seduced and seducing, deceived and deceiving, in divers lusts; outwardly practicing a lifestyle which they call 'liberal'" (IV.i.1). In disgust at the emptiness of this life, therefore, he turned to a pagan philosophy which saw the universe as being divided into two eternal kingdoms, the kingdom of good and the kingdom of evil, neither of which could ever wholly conquer the other. Man might seek by the proper exercise of will to live increasingly in the one or the other but the strife was unending and there was no guarantee of complete victory either here or hereafter.

And so Augustine struggled on, gradually establishing a reputation as a teacher of rhetoric, while at the same time becoming increasingly disillusioned with Manichaeism. He found no peace, no meaning, no sense of purpose: only a growing sense of disease of spirit and dissatisfaction of mind. He was disturbed also by his own inability to temper his unruly will. To be good attracted him, but he could not find within himself the resources to achieve goodness. And so he went to Rome because he learned that students there lived under more restrictive influences bringing some measure of control to their disordered lives. He recounts the circumstances of this decision as

evidence, when seen in retrospect, of the overruling providence of God in his life.

It was not my desire to go to Rome because greater advantages and honors were guaranteed me by the friends who persuaded me to do this but my principal and almost my sole motive was that I had been informed that youths there studied more quietly and were kept under the control of more rigid discipline (V.viii.14).

This remark is a reflection of a struggle which seems to have gone on in his life for many years. The unruliness of his will, indeed the unruliness of every man's unredeemed will, was to be a key point of emphasis in his subsequent theology and profoundly influenced Luther's thinking a thousand years later. In spite of the fact that his personal problem appeared to him at the time to be the basic reason for his deciding to cross the Mediterranean to Rome, he later saw this as just one more instance of divine supervision in his life (V.viii.15).

Evidently his stay in Rome did not fulfill his expectations for he was soon attracted to Milan, accepting an invitation from that city to teach rhetoric. He notes that his traveling expenses were paid by the city fathers (V.xiii.23). Here he discovered the saintly Ambrose, Bishop of Milan; and to his mother's enormous relief, this godly minister came to have a tremendous influence on his life. With refreshing frankness he tells why he was first attracted to Ambrose. It was the Bishop's eloquence! And here we have a beautiful example of how the talents of a godly man, for surely eloquence is a talent, can be used in God's service in ways that are unexpected. In words which are equally as eloquent as the Bishop's, Augustine describes what gradually happened.

For although I took no trouble to learn *what* he spake but only to hear *how* he spake (for that vain concern alone remained to me, despairing of finding any way for man to approach Thee), yet along with the words which I prized there came into my mind also the things about which I was careless; for I could not separate them. And whilst I opened my heart to admit "how skillfully he spake," there also entered with it, but gradually, "how truly he spake"! (V.xiv.24).

I resolved therefore to become a catechumen in the catholic church, which my parents had commended to me, until something more positive should manifest itself to me whither I might steer my course...After that, O Lord, little by little Thou didst persuade me, drawing and calming my heart with a most gentle and merciful hand (VI.v.7).

The process was slow at first. As Augustine wrote:

And I, puzzling over and reviewing these things, marveled most at the length of time that had lapsed from my nineteenth year when I began to be inflamed with the desire for wisdom, resolving when I found her to forsake all the empty hopes and deceiving insanities of vain desire. Behold I was now getting on to my thirtieth year, still stuck in the same mire and eager for the enjoyment of things present which fly away and destroy me (VI.xi.18).

But Augustine was aware of the continuing pursuit of Him whom Francis Thompson so aptly named the "Hound of Heaven." This conviction strangely strengthened as the misery in his own soul deepened. In his growing despair he found himself nevertheless unexpectedly filled with praise for God!



Unto Thee be praise, unto Thee be glory. O Thou fountain of mercy! While I became more wretched, Thou became more near. Thy right hand was ever ready to pluck me out of the mire and to cleanse me: yet I was ignorant of it (VI.xvi.26).

By inward stings didst Thou disturb me that I should be dissatisfied, until Thou wert made sure to my inward sight. And by the secret hand of thy remedy was my swelling lessened, and the disordered and darkened eyesight of my mind was made whole from day to day by the sharp anointing of healthful sorrows (VII.viii.12).

And I enquired what iniquity really was. And I discovered it not to be a substance [as Manichaeism philosophy had viewed it] but a *perversion* of the will bent aside from Thee, O God....And I marveled that I now loved Thee and not just a fantasy instead of Thee. (emphasis mine: VI.xv.22. 23).

Here then we find a clear recognition of where the real problem of human wickedness lies. Pelagius (c. 390 A.D.) had taken the view that the wickedness of man was really something foreign to his nature, taught him through example and precept by his own corrupt society. The right appeal to his best nature would bring improvement and under the proper circumstances man had the power to correct his faults and achieve his own salvation.

In due course, Augustine, out of the depths of his own experience, was to become such an opponent of this hopeful humanism that Pelagius' teaching would subsequently be condemned by the Church of Rome. Salvation by self-effort was declared to be an impossibility for fallen man. Because of his own experience in Italy, Augustine very early came to the conclusion that the Church of Rome was the sole instrument or vehicle of the grace of God in bringing salvation to

the individual. There was no salvation outside of its orthodoxy. Augustine, in fact, by the cogency of his arguments, the eloquence of his writing and speaking, and the profundity of his own personal experience while searching for the truth, had a tremendous influence upon the Church of Rome's theology in this respect; and by many Protestant scholars he is considered to have been the founder of Roman Catholicism in its basic expression.

In the end, Augustine's main emphasis came to be not on the exclusive character of the Church of Rome as a vehicle of God's grace but on the total incapacity of man to turn himself about and contribute in any way to the effecting of his own salvation. As he wrote later:

And I sought a way of acquiring strength sufficient to enjoy Thee; but I found it not until I embraced that "mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus," "who is over all, God blessed forever," calling unto me and saying, "I am the way, the truth and the life" (VII.xviii.24).

And so Augustine came home at last to his God. And his heart was overwhelmed by love.

O my God, let me with gratitude remember and confess unto Thee thy mercies bestowed upon me. Let my bones be steeped in thy love and let them say, Who is like unto Thee, O Lord! "Thou hast loosed my bonds; I will offer unto Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving." And how Thou hast loosed them will I declare; and all who worship Thee when they hear these things shall say: "Blessed be the Lord in heaven and in earth, great and wonderful is his name" (VIII.1.1).

Yet the struggle with his unruly will continued, as it did for Paul (Rom. 7), and as it does in all of us. Witness how he cried out in some surprise:

Whence is this monstrous thing? And why is it? The mind commands the body and it obeys forthwith; the mind commands itself and is resisted. The mind commands the hand to be moved, and such readiness is there that the command is scarce to be distinguished from the obedience...The mind commands the mind to command the will, and yet though it be itself, it obeyeth not. Whence this monstrous thing? It commands itself to will and would not give the command unless it willed, yet is not done that which it commandeth. But it willeth not entirely; therefore it commandeth not entirely (VIII.ix.21).

Augustine's protest is eloquent, and his analogy is striking. He was perhaps the first after Paul to realize the Total Depravity of man.

Man unredeemed is spiritually incapable of truly willing the smallest step towards God unless he is enabled to do so through the office of the Holy Spirit. We may suppose that men do seek the Lord on their own initiative because we see them apparently doing it. We may suppose we ourselves did it because we were aware of a desire within ourselves. The very act of willing leads us to believe that we are willing of our own accord. We do not stop to ask, Why did I will to seek the Lord? Why did I, but not my neighbor, will to seek the Lord? Was it something in myself which distinguished me from my neighbor, and indeed from the multitude around me? And here is the crux of the matter, for if it was I who initiated this movement in my soul, then could I not be said to be a better man than my neighbor? Would I not be indeed in a position to boast, both here and hereafter?

But there is no reason to suppose that there are levels of spiritual deadness. We are all dead in trespasses and sins, and death is the great leveler. In this unregenerate state we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves. A corpse does not cry out for help. "The dead know not anything" (Eccles. 9:5). The sad truth is that even after we have been born again, we carry part of this death with us until we slough it off in the grave. Thus even after being born again, we still have two wills to contend with. This was Augustine's experience and it generated and colored his whole understanding of the truth of the Gospel of grace. Indeed, it was out of this experience that he really recovered for the Christian Church the doctrine of the sovereignty of God in the salvation of man. For man being spiritually dead could not possibly initiate out of his own inner being the seeds of spiritual life nor, having been redeemed, generate out of the old life that which is pleasing to God. Augustine's past continued to press heavily on his soul and agonizingly thwarted his aspirations after holiness, until he reached a crisis.

I flung myself down, how I do not know, under a certain fig tree, giving free course to my tears. I was saying these things and weeping in the most bitter contrition of my heart when, behold, I heard a voice as of a boy or a girl, I know not which, coming from a neighboring house, chanting and oft repeating, "Take up and read take up and read." I grasped [the New Testament manuscript in his hands], opened, and in silence read that paragraph on which my eyes first fell "Not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying; but put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:13, 14). No further would I read, nor did I need; for instantly, as the sentence ended--by a light, as it were, of security infused into my heart, all the gloom of doubt vanished away (VIII.xii.28, 29).

And so he went in at once to his mother to tell her what happened:  
"We make it known to her--she rejoiceth! We relate how it came to  
pass: she leapeth for joy [She was then nearly sixty years old] and  
triumpheth and blesseth Thee who art 'able to do exceedingly  
abundantly above all that we ask or think'" (VIII.xii.30).

So was this great warrior consecrated to the Lord's service.

Francis Thompson's beautiful poem "The Hound of Heaven" seems  
almost as though it were written to describe Augustine's experience.  
It opens with these words:

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;  
I fled Him, down the arches of the years

I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways  
Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears

I hid from Him, and under running laughter.  
Up vistaed hopes, I sped;  
And shot, precipitated,

Adown Titanic glooms of chasmed fears,  
From those strong Feet that followed, followed after.  
But with unhurrying chase,  
And unperturbed pace,

Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,  
They beat--and a Voice beat More instant than the Feet--

"All things betray thee, who betrayest Me."

An edition of this poem was published in 1926 with perceptive  
comments on the text by Michael A. Kelly. I found his remarks on

line 114 of the poem particularly interesting. The line is a short one. It reads, "I am defenseless utterly." At this moment in the poem Francis Thompson, after a long chase through the years, was now in the position of being nearly overtaken by God. Upon this Kelly comments as follows:

This is a terrible revelation to some souls (for we are all Pelagians at heart and would wish to be able to work out our salvation without God's grace)--the fact that with all their striving they get no closer to God, for they hit wide of the mark all the time by not preparing for and awaiting God's coming to them. What we can and must do is to cooperate with God's grace.

This is a noteworthy comment, for while Kelly is suggesting that Pelagianism is an error, he simply substitutes Arminianism instead. Pelagius said, "If a man sets his mind to it he can save his own soul without God's help." Arminius said, "Not so. He must have God's help. He must cooperate with God since he alone cannot save himself." Augustine, in complete contrast to both these positions, held that man is so totally corrupted in his being that he cannot contribute anything whatever. He is spiritually dead and entirely incapable of cooperating with God in any way. Augustine's own experience had taught him that he could not *assist* God in any way, and his own experience had also taught him that he could not *refuse* God in any way either. In his comment, Michael Kelly reflects the view so widely held today, that while man is not able to save himself, he can at least prepare himself to receive the salvation God offers by opening his own heart or at the very least by not resisting the overtures of the Holy Spirit. Modern man's experience, as he licks the wounds of the last two great wars, probably does not encourage too many Pelagians. But the great majority of men still prefer to

believe that they have enough autonomy left to be in a position to refuse or to accept the offer of God's salvation just as they have a mind to do.

Augustine died in 430 A.D. at the age of seventy-six. He never left his beloved North Africa for any substantial length of time. His life must have been exceedingly busy, for in addition to his duties as a bishop, his pen was constantly at work. Through his writings, his influence on the development of theology for centuries to come has been enormous. It is sometimes said that in the period of forty-four years between his conversion and his death he produced over a thousand treatises on every aspect of Christian doctrine. As a reflection of the influence of these writings, it may be noted that a bibliography listing works on Augustine published between 1950 and 1960 numbered in excess of five thousand titles.

We have already noted that Augustine's initial emphasis upon the unique role played by the Church of Rome in his conversion strongly influenced him to think of it as the only vehicle of God's mercy. This was seized upon by that institution as the basis for an exclusiveness which, there is little doubt, Augustine in his later years would have abhorred. Augustine's subsequent emphasis upon the Total Depravity of man and the corruption of his will was to play a very significant role in the formulation of the teachings of the Reformers. It thus came about that out of the voluminous works of a single individual there emerged finally two strongly opposed schools of theology, the Roman Catholic and the Protestant. Perhaps in a manner of speaking the second would not have emerged with clarity without the first, and we may therefore praise God for the whole of Augustine's ministry of writing, despite its sometimes contradictory nature. At any rate, Augustine stands as a major link between Paul and Calvin.

From Paul to Augustine the major emphasis theologically had been on the nature and Person of Christ as God-made-man, and experientially, on repentance and faith as the basis of salvation, and on good works (such as almsgiving, prayers, and submission to certain sacraments of the Church such as baptism) as proof of the reality of conversion. Increasingly there had developed a kind of tacit agreement that conversion resulted from a cooperation of wills, the human and the divine. By threat or argument or appeal men were persuaded to respond. Long before Arminius left his personal impress upon the Church of God, Arminianism had swept the early Christian world. Men are by *nature* Arminian. It is easy to believe that man has a say in his salvation, a contribution to make, a frame of mind for which he is personally responsible and without which God is powerless. Pelagius drops easily into a ministry to the elite in society who seem likely to be most amenable, since good breeding is easily mistaken for an improved nature. In such a theological environment it is obvious that Paul's insistence upon Predestination and Election will be toned down until it means no more than that God can foresee who will by nature be responsive and who will not. There are clearly some who don't respond and some who do. The difference is not in the sovereignty of Election but in the responsiveness of the individual. Some men seem to have a form of natural goodness which makes them more susceptible to persuasion, more amenable to reason, more sensitive to the overtures of God, more aware of personal need. Predestination in this view is simply based on foreknowledge. The decision to believe rests ultimately with the individual. Man elects for God, not God for man.

There is no doubt that in spite of this erroneous view of how God's grace is made effectual, the grace of God in saving some guaranteed the continuance of the Body of Christ as a vital living reality through these early centuries, even as it continues today. It is therefore no



hindrance to the work of God that those whose lives are effectively renewed do not at all understand the circumstances of this renewal or the theology which underlies it. It is not necessary to a vital Christian experience to comprehend, or even be aware of, the mysteries of divine Election and Predestination. Christian piety is possible without theology provided there is a true conversion; and alternatively, a sound theology is no guarantee of Christian piety. Wesley almost certainly saved England from a "French Revolution," though he embraced the Arminian heresy and left to his followers a legacy of piety without theology.

There is a warfare going on, an unending struggle between falsehood and truth regarding the nature of man and his destiny. This falsehood, which encourages man to believe he has powers of self-redemption (powers which experience nevertheless demonstrates he does not have), is prosecuted forcefully by means of propaganda in printed form that is cogent and reasonable and effectively produced. It is everywhere, in our romance novels, in our idealistic film themes, in our reconstructions of history, in our philosophy of education, and even, alas, in many of our churches. What is needed to combat this steady stream of propaganda is not merely piety and the ambiguous testimony of individual experience, but an equally reasoned and powerfully convincing presentation of the truth. In short, we need a recovery of sound doctrine rather than emphasis on emotional experience.

History has largely decided the fate of Methodism already. Thousands of church buildings which once housed active and devout Methodist congregations all over North America now stand entirely deserted or have been taken over by congregations whose mission is almost wholly social betterment on a worldly level and whose "theology" is nothing more than a humanism parading as Christian

endeavor. A substantial part of the so-called Christian community is either Pelagian or Arminian. That which gives to the individual equal power with God is either humanism, or it is a distortion of the Gospel. And such a distortion, being untrue, is really no Gospel at all. It is no Gospel to an utterly defeated human being to tell him that if he will cooperate with God in the right way God will save him.

What Augustine did was to preserve the Church of Christ in the West from losing sight of the truth of man's hopelessness and helplessness before God. He awakened God's people to the creeping disease of Christian humanism which was evident even then from the successes of Pelagius in Rome and from the growing "Arminianism" which was reflected in the writings of Chrysostom and Jerome and many other Christian theologians by the end of the fourth century A.D. If man did not have it within his power to save himself as Pelagius claimed he did, neither did he have it within his power to embrace the salvation of God made possible through faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ. Both erroneous views credited man with a kind of freedom of will that he does not have.

Man, Augustine argued, has freedom only in one direction. He is free when he sins. As a sinner, man can achieve a curious integrity when he makes no attempt to hide his sin. An Anglican Bishop said recently, "Modern young people are so delightfully wicked!" And Augustine spoke of the unabashed wickedness of pagan man as exhibited in his "splendid vices." Years before this, the Roman writer Scaevola is reputed to have said, "A totally evil man has an irresistible charm and excites the envy and admiration of those who dare not display their own true selves so completely. Total evil has a kind of virtue of its own, an honesty." This kind of freedom is like that of the free fall of the man who jumps from his plane and delays opening his parachute. There are virtually no experienced restraints.

The anticipated enjoyment of such an activity is like those who "promise themselves liberty" (2 Peter 2:19), yet are really wholly in bondage to gravity. They become momentarily "free among the dead," as the Psalmist put it poetically (Ps. 88:5).

What Augustine had learned by experience was that the human will is corrupted at the source. When unregenerate man struggles against the evil propensities of his nature, he does so by exercising his will--the dynamic force which lies at the root of those evil propensities. The very exercise of his will in this struggle has the effect only of making it stronger! Augustine found such a struggle spiritually self-defeating because it served in the end only to reinforce at the core of his being the source of the sinfulness he so much hated. The man who of his own will determine to overcome evil is defeating his own purposes by strengthening the very will that is the seat of his evil desires. The power for evil is self-reinforced, and thus self-reformation becomes a wholly self-defeating exercise. It is a vicious circle.

Quoting 2 Peter 2:19, Augustine expressed this idea by saying, "Of whom a man is overcome, of the same he is brought into bondage." The man who overcomes himself becomes in bondage to himself. And this self is sinful. It was one of the defects of Puritanism that by laying emphasis upon outward acts and concentrating energies on suppressing this or that particular fault, the man who overcomes is credited with having overcome sin itself. What he may suppress are only the symptoms, not the disease. But like the man who uses aspirin freely, there comes such ready and long-lasting relief that he is in danger of forgetting the disease itself and ignoring it until it is his undoing.

Or alternatively, a man can surrender to the disease and learn to accept it willingly; he can even learn to enjoy it. So sin also has its pleasures. As Augustine puts it:

What kind of liberty, I ask, can the bonds slave possess except when it *delights* him to serve sin? For he only is free in his bondage who does with pleasure the will of his master. Accordingly, he who is the servant of sin is free to sin. Hence he will not be free to do right until, being freed from sin, he shall begin to be the servant of righteousness.... "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8 36). And before this freedom is wrought in a man, when he is not yet free to what is right, how can he talk of the freedom of his will? (1)

Well, he can of course, but he can speak of freedom only in one direction. He acts freely when he does evil because that is natural to his will. It is a unidirectional freedom, the kind of freedom that the man enjoys in "free fall." Not until a man tries to reverse his course does he suddenly become aware of his bondage. Augustine became intensely aware of his bondage as soon as he tried to break out of it and govern his own unruly spirit.

Augustine argued rightly that man as created was truly free, free to sin or not to sin. Man in Adam lost this kind of freedom of will by an act of disobedience which was a demonstration of how free he had originally been. Augustine had a striking analogy: "A man who kills himself must, of course, be alive when he kills himself, but after he has killed himself he ceases to live and cannot restore himself to life." (2) But by the same token he will not even *want* to restore himself to life. So, again, he is "free among the dead." It is a kind of freedom. What is true of physical life is paralleled by what happens in man's spiritual life. Sometimes it is objected that a man can always refuse a

gift. He has this much freedom at least. But there is one gift which he cannot refuse: and that is the gift of life. He will not be *offered* it because he is dead. It can only be *conferred* upon him and it is not within his power to refuse it.

The intensity of Augustine's nature, and the seriousness of his search for holiness and for fellowship with God, set him pondering why that which he so earnestly desired was not at all within his grasp as a pagan, and still often eluded him even when he had been so wonderfully converted. Daily he wrote down his thoughts and it became the consuming passion of his life to understand why the human will is so corrupted by nature and so powerless for good.

Augustine saw man as not merely misguided in his search, or defective in his understanding, or blurred in his vision of the truth, or sick in the moral fibre of his being. He saw man as hopelessly lost, blind and dead. Man cannot respond to God's love merely by being told about it, any more than a corpse of a loved one can respond to the appeals of the bereaved. Man needs resurrecting first: to be made alive in order that he may love God, not to love God in order that he may be made alive. The initiative must always be with God. Nor can he hinder the grace of God. The dead cannot refuse resurrection any more than the dead can ask for it. Divine Election and sovereign grace, not human inclination, are what account for man's salvation. Yet it is human inclination that accounts for man's lost condition. The intending suicide acts according to his *own* will; but should he succeed he is certainly totally unable to undo what he has done, and even unable to wish it undone.

The question of the bondage of the human will as it sets itself against the will of God was the crucial issue in Augustine's thinking, and his works upon the subject constitute the basis of Luther's *Bondage of*

*the Will* and of Calvin's absolute assurance that salvation is entirely the work of God. Augustine's thinking along these lines was undoubtedly largely stimulated by his conversations with Ambrose. Ambrose had said, in fact, "If you are an unbeliever (when you die), Christ did not die for you." (3) Nothing could be clearer than this. The Election of God is sovereign. No man elected to salvation could possibly die or be killed unsaved. If he died unsaved, he was not one of the elect. There was no thwarting of the purposes of God in this.

Towards the end of his life, Augustine went back over his works and sought to remove some of the potential contradictions that arose as a consequence of his developing understanding. He published his thoughts under the title *Retractions*, by which he meant not "withdrawals" but "redrawals" or "re-views." But he did correct a few earlier statements. Thus he wrote in one place: "I could never have asserted that God in choosing men to live had any respect to their faith had I duly considered that faith itself is His own gift." (4) This agreed entirely with an observation he had made regarding John 15:16: "Since Christ says, 'Ye have not chosen Me,' I would fain ask whether it be scriptural to say we must have faith before we are elected. and not rather that we are elected in order to our having faith." He returned to this theme again and again. Common faith is the possession of all men: faith in the word of a friend, in the laws of nature, in the witness of one's own senses (what one hears and sees as being real). But *saving* faith is entirely a work of God and beyond man's natural ability. "God hath from the beginning elected you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and *belief* of the truth" (2 Thess. 2:13). Election is first: faith with respect to the truth of God comes as a consequence. So "as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed" (Acts 13:48) and no others. This was the theme about which Augustine structured his thinking during the last half of his writing ministry. As he put it:

Whatsoever persons are through the riches of divine grace exempted from the original sentence of condemnation are undoubtedly brought to hear the Gospel, and when hearing they are caused to believe it, and are made likewise to endure to the end in the faith which works by love. And should they at any time go astray, they are recovered and set right again. (5)

Here are Election and eternal security. Later he adds: "All these things are wrought in them by that God who made them vessels of mercy and who, by the election of his grace, chose them in his Son before the world began." And here then is Predestination. As Augustine put it elsewhere: "The grace of God does not *find* men fit to be elected, but *makes* them so....The nature of the divine goodness is not only to open to those who knock but also to *cause them* to knock and ask." (6) Thus John wrote, "We love Him, because He first loved us" (1 John 4:19).

The crucial issue is this. Some men respond and some do not. Why do some and not all men respond to so manifest a good as the eternal salvation of their own souls? Because they are different! In what way? In some way that makes them better judges of what is good? Or just a kind of natural disposition less hostile to the things of God? Are not all such distinguishing marks, if they really exist, but evidences that all men are *not* equal before God, that it is *not* out of the same lump that some are made vessels of honor while others are made vessels of dishonour? But we know these things are not true. It is "of the same lump" that both kinds of vessels are made (Rom. 9:21). There are not any differences between men (1 Cor. 4:7) as there are no differences in the responsiveness of the bodies of the dead. Their response is wholly predictable: it is nil. The spiritually dead are all alike: dead and unresponsive unless first quickened by the Spirit of God. The Psalmist cried: "Quicken us and we will call

upon thy name. Turn us again, O Lord God of hosts...and we shall be saved" (Ps. 80:18, 19). It has to be God's initiative, not man's; for "the dead know not anything" (Eccles. 9.5).

Augustine did not believe that man could or did will to be saved. But rather he believed that God graciously converted his will. He was "made willing" by God's grace. Man is an entirely passive participant in this work of God. Just as we may change a man's mind by demonstration of a truth without destroying the mind's power of independent thought, so God can change a man's will by gracious intervention without destroying the will's power of independent expression. Demonstration is to the mind what persuasion is to the will. Neither is destroyed by the change which may be brought about in each case. Augustine gladly admitted that man is capable of exercising saving faith, for clearly the converted man is doing just this. The capacity for exercising this kind of faith is present in man but is dormant until it is awakened by the Holy Spirit and given a direction and a content and a character which were formerly entirely foreign to it. To the unregenerate soul, the things which we as the Lord's children believe are simply "unbelievable." There is no way unaided man can change the character of his faith for himself. Saving faith is a gift. Man has "power" to exercise saving faith but there is no power but comes from God (Rom. 13:1). (7)

This empowering of God is not, however, applied to a creature who has not the requisite capacity for receiving and exercising it. In the elect, saving faith acts upon what Luther refers to as a "passive aptitude" in man. It is a passive aptitude but it is an aptitude implanted in human nature by the Creator which distinguishes all men from all other creatures, angelic or animal. It makes man unique in that he is a potentially redeemable creature. Man does have the power to exercise will. It is only that his will is corrupted in



such a way that it is by nature in opposition to the will of God. Because we are conscious of volition, we suppose our volition is free. What we discover by experience is that our freedom of will is unidirectional. We are truly free only when we sin, for we are then acting according to our nature, a fact which accounts for the pleasures of sin (Heb. 11:25). It comes as a surprise to many people, when they make this discovery.

Originally Augustine had allowed that man has some freedom of choice in the matter of his salvation. In his work *On the Predestination of the Saints* (III.7) he had written: "The grace of God consists merely in this, that God in the preaching of the truth reveals his Will; but to assent to this Gospel when it is preached is our own *work* [my emphasis] and lies within our own power." But in his *Apology* (XVIII.vii.8) he says: "I have erred when I said it lies within our power to believe and to will." Pelagius had held the maxim, "It is mine to be willing to believe; it is the part of God's grace to assist." In this manner the Gospel of Jesus Christ had been corrupted almost unrecognizably. But such was the enormous influence of Augustine's pen that the Church of Rome was convinced of the propriety of his rejection of Pelagianism and they officially condemned it by the Synod of Orange in 529 A.D. By contrast, the same Church slowly rejected his doctrine of the Total Depravity of man. With this rejection went also the eclipse of the truth of Predestination and Election. Growing emphasis was placed upon formal membership in the Church of Rome, assent to its dogmas, and participation in its sacraments and its ritual. The works of Augustine were seldom studied or even read by Luther's time, except among a few persecuted fragments of the Body of Christ such as the Waldensians.

The cardinal truth of the sovereignty of grace and the total incapacity of man had been recovered by Augustine and explored in a way

entirely new. It was he who had crystallized the theology of Predestination and Election which are the corollary of man's total incapacity and helplessness and God's sovereign grace. The Reformation was essentially a revival of Augustinianism, as Augustinianism was a recovery of Pauline theology; and Paul's theology was a clear enunciation of the Gospel as applied to man's need.

I cannot do better to set this in historical perspective than to quote from a great theologian of the recent past, Benjamin B. Warfield. In his book *Calvin and Augustine* (pp. 320f), he wrote:

The great contribution which Augustine has made to the world's life and thought is embodied in the theology of grace, which he has presented with remarkable clearness and force, vitally in his Confessions and as a thesis in his anti-Pelagian treatises....

A new Christian piety dates from him in which, in place of the alternations of hope and fear which vex the lives of those who, in whatever degree, hang their hopes on their own merits, a mood of assured trust in the mercy of a gracious God is substituted as the spring of Christian life. And a new theology corresponding to this new type of piety dates from him; a theology which, recalling man from all dependence on his own powers or merits, casts him decisively on the grace of God alone for his salvation. Of course, this doctrine was not new in the sense that it was Augustine's invention; it was the doctrine of Paul, for example, before it was the doctrine of Augustine, and was only recovered for the Church by Augustine, though in that age, dominated in all its thinking by the dregs of Stoic rationalism, it came with all the force of a new discovery...

It required ten years before the revived Paulinism attained even a fully consistent positive enunciation (first in the work *Dediversis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum*, A.D. 396); and, though the leaven worked steadily thereafter more and more deeply and quietly into his thought, death intervened before all the elements of his thinking were completely leavened...

His doctrine of the Church he had received whole from his predecessor, and he gave it merely the precision and vitality which insured its persistence. His doctrine of grace was all his own: it represented the very core of his being; and his whole progress in Christian thinking consists in the growing completeness with which its fundamental principles applied themselves in his mind to every department of life and thought...

It is Augustine who gave us the Reformation. For the Reformation, inwardly considered, was just the ultimate triumph of Augustine's doctrine of grace over Augustine's doctrine of the Church. This doctrine of grace came from Augustine's hands in its positive outline completely formulated: sinful man depends for his recovery to good and to God entirely on the free grace of God; this grace is therefore indispensable, prevenient, irresistible, indefectible; and being thus the free grace of God, must have lain in all the details of its conference and working, in the intention of God from all eternity...

If the necessity of prevenient grace was thereafter [after the second Council of Orange, 529] the established doctrine of the Church, the irresistibility of this prevenient grace was put under the ban and there remained no place for a complete "Augustinianism" within the Church, as Gottschalk and Jansen were fully to discover. Therefore, when the great revival of

religion which we call the Reformation came, seeing that it was on its theological side a revival of "Augustinianism," as all great revivals of religion must be (for Augustinianism is but the thetical expression of religion in its purity), there was nothing for it but the rending of the Church.

#### References:

1. *Enchiridion*. XXX.
2. *Ibid.*
3. Quoted in Jerome Zanchius, *Absolute Predestination*, p. 20.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 62.
5. *On Rebuke and Grace*. XIII.
6. Quoted in Loraine Boettner, *The Reformed Doctrine of Predestination*, p. 102.
7. Augustine, *On the Spirit and the Letter*, LIV, IX.

## **From Augustine to the Reformation**

**by Arthur C. Custance, Ph.D**

It would be a rare thing indeed for a man as prolific with his pen as Augustine was to live a long and eventful life without ever modifying his theology. Inasmuch as he had written down his thoughts in both the earlier and later stages of development, it was inevitable that there should be some divergence of opinion in what he wrote. The intensity of his experience was reflected in the depth of his conviction at each stage of his spiritual progression, so that he warned at one time to recognize nothing but the crucial importance of the Church as an institution for the mediation of God's grace to

man and for the preservation of truth. Later, the same intensity underlies all that he writes about the appalling depravity of human nature. Augustine was a man of deep feeling.

It thus came about that two diametrically opposed streams of theology stemmed from one man's thoughts, the Roman Catholic and the Reformed theologians both drawing the inspiration for their particular theologies very largely from the writings of this one profound Christian scholar and philosopher: the Roman Catholics from his earlier writings, the Reformers from his later ones. In the confrontation which finally occurred between Luther and the Roman Catholic Church and which came to a head in the Council of Trent (1545-1563), both parties appealed for their authority to the same great "Father" of the Church, Augustine.

Augustine had owed his conversion to the church in Rome and as a consequence, not unnaturally, came very early to believe that the Church of Rome was the sole vehicle of God's grace. But as his Christian understanding matured, his interest was turned from the vehicle of God's grace to the object of it and he became increasingly convinced that spiritually man was utterly impotent. In his own struggle to rise above the rebellious nature that was part and parcel of his greatness as an original thinker, Augustine discovered the Total Depravity of his own heart, and his writing was occupied increasingly with the exploration of this fact. Thus his earlier writings placed more emphasis upon the Church as God's vehicle of blessing and his later ones upon sinful man as the object of God's grace. These two emphases were later to lead on the one hand to the claim of the Church of Rome that it is the sole vehicle of man's salvation on earth, and on the other hand to the commitment by the Reformers to the position that man is totally depraved. The first led to the arrogant claims of exclusiveness as God's agent of salvation

which were to characterize the Roman Catholic Church, and the second led to the tremendous emphasis upon the sovereignty of God which was to characterize the great *Confessions* of the Reformers.

But it was to be centuries before this confrontation would come to such a head as to split Christendom into two opposing camps on a scale which was to become worldwide. Meanwhile from Augustine to the Reformation one has the impression that true faith was virtually eclipsed, and that centuries of almost complete spiritual darkness intervened. Here and there a few kept the faith in almost total isolation but no substantial body of believers existed in Europe with sufficient status to seriously challenge the Church of Rome. At least this is the impression one is apt to gain. Of course, it was not entirely so. It was rather that giants stood at each end of this bleak corridor of time who shone so brightly that they seemed by their very brilliance to darken the road between, even as a searchlight casts deeper shadows by its power to concentrate its beam. William Cunningham in his *Historical Theology* remarked in this connection:

The substance of the matter is this: the apostolic fathers (prior to Augustine) generally use the language of Scripture upon these subjects, but they scarcely make any statements which afford us materials for deciding in what precise sense they understood them. They leave the matter very much where Scripture leaves it, and where, but for the rise of errors needing to be contradicted and opposed, it might still have been left. He who sees Augustinian or Calvinistic doctrines clearly and explicitly taught in the Bible, will have no difficulty in seeing also plain traces of them at least in the works of the apostolic fathers; and he who can pervert the statements of Scripture into an anti-Calvinistic sense, may, by the same process, and with equal ease, distort the apostolic fathers. (1)

And Cunningham said with keen insight, apropos of the conflict which was to come at the time of the Reformation:

Calvinists and anti-Calvinists have both appealed to the early Church in support of their respective opinions, although we believe it cannot be made out that the fathers of the first three centuries gave any very distinct deliverance concerning them. The important topics did not become subjects of controversial discussion during that period; and it holds almost universally in the history of the Church. that until a doctrine has been fully discussed in a controversial way by men of talent and learning taking opposite sides, men's opinions regarding it are generally obscure and indefinite, and their language vague and confused, if not contradictory. (2)

These long years of apparent barrenness were not without their flashes of light and many great figures emerged to keep alive a testimony to the truth. What was lacking was not persecution but open controversy between contestants who had power enough to force their opponent to meet them on a more or less equal footing. The persecuted "minorities" of these intervening centuries were not silent or ineffective, but they were never in a position to force the issues into the open as Luther did, and Calvin, and the Reformers generally.

It was this open confrontation along a wide front with the backing of powerful men with strong convictions, and wealth and independence, that seems to have made the difference. For it allowed the contestants to hone their terminology and crystallize the issues in an entirely new way, and it gave men "handles" with which to wield the weapons of truth they had now seized so firmly and begun to use with such effectiveness. As a consequence, the Council of Trent was

virtually forced upon the Roman Catholic Church and it marked the *end of the reformation* of that Church for several centuries, even as it marked the *beginning of the revolution* among Protestants.

And so the lines of divergence between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism really have their roots in this one man, Augustine, \* although the process of divergence was not to be made manifest fully until the convergence of two circumstances which were largely responsible for the Reformation. The first was an almost total breakdown of Christian morality in the Roman Catholic Church, and the second was the appearance of a new spirit of free inquiry and independence in every area of human endeavor, including the exploration of the true meaning of the Gospel.

\* It was Pope Gregory (I) the Great (540 604) who took certain aspects of Augustine's theology and made them explicit as a foundation for the exclusiveness of the Church of Rome. Augustine's theology thus became the religion of the Middle Ages and underwent but little further development. (See "Gregory I", in *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, ed. S. M. Jackson (Grand Rapids: Baker. 19691).

Pelagius had come to Rome at a crucial moment, for there stood to oppose him one man, Augustine, who could best profit by the challenge to the true Gospel which was presented by his humanism. There thus were opposed what are really the only two wholly consistent positions with respect to man's salvation. Either man is his own savior, or God is his savior. There is really no middle ground that is logically defensible. If man plays any crucial part whatever, he must in the end have the final say. If this is the case, every man in heaven will have reason to boast, since it will have been by his own



will that he has gained admission. But it was pride that caused Satan's fall (Isa. 14:12, 13) and Satan who caused man's; so pride is probably at the root of all man's sin. And a heavenly community assembled on such a basis as to justify pride could scarcely be a heaven. The issue is clear. The salvation of man must be all of God, or heaven is worthless and we have hope only in this world--a bleak prospect indeed!

It might be thought that there could be many alternatives, each tending more or less to one or the other extreme and all of them offering equally reasonable paths to salvation. But logical analysis shows that these alternatives do not form a succession of options approaching more and more nearly to the truth until they effectively merge in a continuous series from salvation achieved by man alone to salvation achieved by God alone. They do not have this character at all. Every alternative which attributes to man any part whatever in securing his own salvation ultimately falls within a single category which must be titled under the general heading, "Man is his own savior." And the other alternative, that which makes God the sole and absolute savior of man's soul, stands entirely by itself as the only representative of the other category. There are but two categories.

Inevitably, when man plays any role whatever he plays the crucial role, for fulfillment ultimately hinges entirely upon himself. There can never be an equal partnership, for in such a cooperative process man, and not God, must always have the last say. Man either does or does not perform his part: if he does, he is saved; if he does not, he is lost. That is the end of the matter. The part which God plays is secondary in this scheme of things.

The truth is that every theological system that allots to man some responsibility in the saving of his own soul inevitably ends up by

making man his own savior. And hereby we see an illustration of the principle that error can assume a thousand forms but the truth has only one, even as a line can be crooked in a million ways but straight in only one. So salvation as a cooperative exercise can be presented in many different forms, but there is only one way that is the true way and it is not cooperative at all.

Now, it would be natural, were there various degrees of self-help genuinely open to man, to conclude that some men stand a better chance of helping themselves than do others. And were this true, there would be every reason to suppose that God, whose foresight is perfect, would take note of such differences in potential and would elect to salvation those whom He knows would be most likely to respond to his offer of help--if that kind of help is really the true nature of saving grace. But saving grace is not an offer of help. Saving grace is unmerited favour--favour (not rewarded), and unmerited because it is not contingent in any way on foreseen human response.

While it is clear, accordingly, from many intimations in Scripture that Election to salvation is not based on foreseen worthiness or any kind of merit resident in the individual but is based solely on God's good pleasure, it is also clear that there is another kind of election which is not to salvation but to the performance of specific tasks which require special gifts, special endowments. And such endowments are themselves the result of God's providential oversight of the distribution of genetic materials, and the ordering of circumstance. And both of these factors, being of his arranging, are assuredly foreknown to Him who thus obtains them. Such a form of election to service clearly applies to the saved and unsaved alike. Thus we have Judas among the elect (John 6:70, 71), but clearly not to salvation; and certain angels (1 Tim. 5:21) who also were not elected to salvation for we know that they never fell. In both

instances election must be to a role to be played in the working out of God's purposes. Moreover, the Lord Jesus Himself was elect (1 Peter 2:6), but certainly not to salvation.

But the Election which is unto salvation and is related to the destiny of fallen man is a biblical principle which has been admitted by the great theologians of the Roman Catholics and Protestants alike. In the latter case it is admitted equally by the Calvinist and Arminian branches of the Protestant community. But the problem is, On what is this Election based? On divine foreknowledge of the response of the individual?

It does not seem that the Bible as a whole supports any such view. Only one passage of Scripture can be appealed to in this regard--Romans 8:29: "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." But a closer examination of this passage indicates that the word rendered "foreknow" in this instance does not have the simple meaning of foreknowing that we commonly ascribe to it in English (see pp. 134ff.).

The problem is that an Election to salvation based on nothing that can be to the credit of the individual seems wholly arbitrary and the non-elect appear to be appointed to reprobation by a process that is equally arbitrary--and therefore inherently unjust. For if God has predestinated some to be saved for no apparent reason, has He not automatically condemned the rest to be lost for no apparent reason? But the proposition is a *non sequitur*. If all men are sinners to begin with (an assumption few will dispute), then all men are *already* under judgment. Men are not placed under judgment simply because they are not elected to salvation. Predestination to judgment is conditioned by the fact that the wages of sin is death (Rom. 6:23) and all have sinned (Rom. 3:23). We live in a universe that is

governed not only by natural law but by spiritual law also. These spiritual laws are as absolute in their operation, barring miracle, as the material laws are--barring miracle. The stone is destined to fall to the earth if it is not held up; the soul that sins is destined to judgment if it is not redeemed.

Election to salvation is a reflection of the will of the Creator who determined to perform a miracle in order to reverse the spiritual law which operates everywhere in the universe. But the performance of the miracle of redemption is not the *cause* of the fate of the unredeemed. It is a sovereign act which God has every right to perform when and where He will. He does not need to act to bring the rest to judgment--they are *already* under condemnation by their own choice.

But it has never appealed to the natural man to be warned that he is under judgment and cannot redeem himself, nor improve his standing in the sight of God by his own good behaviour. Pelagius was realistic enough to admit that the improvement of human nature was not likely, but he did see it as possible, as a goal to strive for by education, cultural conditioning, and good breeding. The virtue of Jesus Christ, as he saw it, was not in some penal aspect of his sacrifice but in the example He set by it and in the principles of living which were part and parcel of his teaching. To teach men that no amount of effort on their part would avail to improve their standing was, he felt, a counsel of despair. Unlike Luther he did not view such despair as being "near to grace." Besides, such a proposition clearly undermined any incentive to holiness even in the Christian. Man cannot be blamed for failure if his constitution is such that failure is inevitable. Why then should he strive to be good? And Pelagius had many followers. As we have seen, not a few of the Church Fathers

were already teaching that man must do his best to merit the grace of God.

Pelagius regarded it as a fatal mistake to suppose that the nature of man could be so corrupt that his will is powerless to obey God's commands. For it seemed to him essential to the very notion of morality that in all sin there is a personal assent, and that without this assent there could be no guilt. He was therefore driven to conclude that in a newborn child there could not possibly be either guilt or sin, since there is no power of assent. What makes the innocent child to become guilty is actual sin, inspired by example. (3) If such a child could be brought up to follow the supreme moral example of Christ, he could inherit eternal life. And Pelagius was convinced that such a thing would happen if the circumstances were favourable enough. We should therefore seek to create those favourable circumstances.

Granted that there is no root of corruption inherited from Adam, the newborn child could be viewed indeed as a clean sheet, with all the potential of maintaining that purity provided that the circumstances are such as to eliminate bad example. If, on the other hand, the newborn begins life already corrupted by sinful nature, the situation is very different. The heart of the problem was then, as it is now, to know precisely what it is that has been inherited. Is it some sort of disease that inevitably and fatally corrupts the spirit in due course, or is it a spiritual corruption to which is added imputed guilt? And can infant baptism wash away either the corruption, or the guilt?

Pelagius was convinced that the spirit of the child is uncorrupted to begin with, and even after committing actual sins and thereby becoming guilty the individual still retains some of the goodness with which God had endowed man in Eden. When Pelagius spoke of *grace*

this is what he meant, this remnant capacity for goodness. (4) His use of this term, to which he applied his own personal meaning, at first confused his contemporaries who assumed his orthodoxy. They apparently supposed he meant by grace what they meant, but gradually it became clear that he was far from orthodox.

In time, due to Augustine's relentless pursuit, Pelagius was declared a heretic and his Christianized humanism was temporarily nipped in the bud. Though his followers in England (whence he had originally come) carried on his teaching, Pelagius himself seems to have withdrawn from the fray and disappeared from history, probably dying in Egypt.

Almost immediately after Augustine's death in 430 A.D., a reaction set in against his teaching regarding the spiritual depravity of man. If grace alone makes man acceptable in the sight of God, the call to a life of holiness by way of preparation to receive this grace has little practical importance. If Augustine was correct and man has no power to prepare himself, he therefore has no responsibility for doing so either. This seemed a clear invitation to spiritual indifference if not outright lawlessness.

One of Augustine's contemporaries was a man named John Cassian, an introvert with a great love for the contemplative life of the monastery and a yearning for holiness and purity. He was probably of Scythian stock, coming from somewhere near the Black Sea and uprooted by the turmoil of the period that witnessed the sack of Rome by Alaric in 410 A.D.

Settling in southern France near Marseilles, he established a monastery. Many people in those turbulent days were attracted to the life of retreat. Here, convinced in his own soul of the fundamental truth of Augustine's assessment of human nature, and

having supported him in his attacks against Pelagius, Cassian now devoted himself to the working out of Augustine's theology as a way of life. But as he observed the effects of the doctrine of free grace upon those who joined his community, he came to the conclusion that Augustine had gone too far.

Men (and women) came to him, desiring to live a life of holiness that they might make themselves worthy recipients of the grace of God and receive the free gift of his salvation. Cassian found it necessary to encourage them to persevere when the flesh and the world proved too much for them. But he soon faced a dilemma--if such a striving after holiness contributed nothing towards ensuring the grace of God unto salvation, then on what basis could he persuade them to continue the struggle? If Augustine was right, the incentive towards godliness was undermined. If such preparation of the soul was not at all necessary, then would not God extend his salvation equally to those who took advantage of their freedom and lived immoral lives and to those who struggled earnestly to prepare themselves?

Cassian did not at first suppose that good behaviour formed the basis of man's salvation, but reason suggested to him that it must surely predispose God to look with favour upon the earnest endeavor of the suppliant and, though it was still an act of pure grace, to be more ready in granting salvation to the prepared soul. But Augustine had insisted that the grace of God preceded any such personal fitness. Man was not called upon to seek to be holy in order that he might be the recipient of grace; he became the recipient of grace in order that he might be holy.

Cassian's theology was, of course, not the theology of revelation but of common sense. The kind of preparatory holiness which he was promoting came to be known as *precedent grace*. and in a very real

sense it was a reflection of the natural grace which Pelagius believed remained to man even in his fallen state. In Cassian's view it did not contribute directly to the salvation of the suppliant but it predisposed God to look upon him with more favour. Cassian did not suppose that man could ever achieve that measure of holiness which would merit eternal life but he did believe that man contributed something by proving himself worthy of God's favour and grace. And he was convinced that unless this was true, the whole concept of monastic life and man's endeavor to seek after holiness would be without purpose. He was not Pelagian in his theology, but in a sense he became the founder of *semi-Pelagianism*. He was by nature strongly drawn to cloistered life at a time when cloistered life had a tremendous appeal to those who saw the impending collapse of Western civilization. And he saw this kind of life in jeopardy. As a result he made his fears widely known, even though he still considered himself a true disciple of Augustine in every respect.

One individual who learned of these new doubts about Augustinianism was a man named Prosper Tyro of Aquitaine (c. 390-463), about whom comparatively little is known save that he had been an ardent disciple of Augustine though he had never actually met him face to face. Prosper attempted to answer Cassian's criticisms but without apparent success. Accordingly, he wrote to Augustine and asked him to intervene. As a consequence Augustine wrote two treatises: the first was entitled *On the Predestination of the Saints*, and the second *On the Gift of Perseverance*. In the first, Augustine reaffirmed that Predestination is in no way based upon foreseen merit in the elect. All a man's strivings in his own strength to achieve holiness of life apart from the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit are in vain, and Augustine explained why this is so. In the second treatise Augustine showed that the Perseverance of the Saints, by which he meant (in modern terminology) the eternal



security of the believer, is not dependent upon the good works of the individual believer which would result from his conversion, but entirely upon the constancy and unchangeableness of God's elective choice. Both these replies clearly downgraded the importance of good works or holiness of life in so far as these were regarded as contributing to a man's salvation. Good works were not relevant to salvation. They were, however, relevant to man's fellowship with God and his enjoyment of his Christian life. The reason for "being good" was not to the end of being saved but to the end of living a holy life pleasing to the heavenly Father. These two treatises were sent to Prosper and a coworker named Hilary, and although neither appears to have made any great contribution of their own, Prosper himself did become a leading representative of Augustinian theology after Augustine's death. Yet he departed from one facet of his master's teaching, which others have also found difficult: namely, that Christ died only for the elect. This doctrine was to be termed Limited Atonement by the Reformers who, like Augustine and Calvin, saw it not merely as a view logically consistent in the light of the sovereignty of grace but as the plain teaching of the New Testament.

Gradually Augustinian theology was emasculated by Roman Catholic theologians as a whole, who retained only his emphasis upon the Church of Rome as the sole vehicle of God's dealings with man and the sole channel of salvation. Through the succeeding centuries, semi-Pelagianism became the basic theology of Catholicism; less and less attention was paid to the spiritual impotence of fallen man while more and more was paid to the remnant grace and inherent goodness of man's religious impulses. Man could not be saved apart from the sacrifice of Jesus Christ but that sacrifice alone was not sufficient in itself. It was necessary that man not only accept the Lord's sacrifice but that he strive sincerely after holiness in order to balance the debit account of his own sinful ways. Neither man alone

nor Christ alone could save him. Human grace and divine grace must be wedded. Penitence and penance made up for what was lacking in human grace, and God for Christ's sake would then forgive what remained of offense after man had done his best. Baptism, as a rite with magic that worked whether performed by believer or unbeliever, restored the capacity of a person for salvation; good works and faith in Christ's redemption did the rest.

Here and there individuals appeared on the scene who recaptured something of the theology of Augustine in its wholeness, but some of these overemphasized one aspect of this theology and some another, and the wholeness was distorted into a new error. One of these was Gottschalk of Orbais (c. 805-869), who argued that if God had predestinated some men to salvation, He must necessarily have predestinated the remainder to reprobation. "There is a twofold predestination," he said, "of the elect to blessedness, and of the reprobate to death." Augustine had come to this conclusion also, as Calvin was later to do.

But like Calvin, Gottschalk was not altogether convinced that this was a logical corollary. It is not essential that the non-elect be driven to reprobation. They may merely be allowed to have their own way, being passed by and permitted to remain in the way they had freely chosen for themselves. But Gottschalk was so insistent that he came very near to making God the author of sin.

This unhappy man whose life was so plagued by misfortune and injustice that he was attracted by the works of Augustine, who had also experienced much misery in life, had been placed as a child in a Franciscan monastery at Orbais against his will. Subsequently in 829 at the age of twenty-four he was officially released from his vows on the ground that he had been coerced as a minor. Unfortunately his

abbot Rabanus Maurus refused to let him go, arguing that all such vows were irrevocable. As a means of escape from his wretched predicament, Gottschalk immersed himself in the study of the works of Augustine.

Looking deeply into his own soul he saw in himself what Augustine had seen. And he came to realize that both he and the Church were carrying semi-Pelagian hearts under a cloak of pretended Augustinian orthodoxy. But the issue which really captured his imagination above all was the fact of Election, and in due time he became trapped in the logic of Double Predestination. Whether he wholly believed it or was merely writing in the hope of resolving the problem for himself, is uncertain. At any rate his superiors assumed that this was his opinion and that he was in fact guilty of making God the author of sin. Neither he nor his superiors considered the alternative possibility that God did not *need* to predestinate men to be lost in the sense that He predestinated the elect to be saved. He had only to leave the non-elect to suffer the consequences of their own free choice.

What was very clear to Gottschalk was that little or no importance could be attached to the natural goodness of man or to any supposed works of merit performed before conversion. God's elective choice was in no way influenced by precedent grace, whether witnessed at the time or foreseen. As he wrote and preached about his convictions, especially during a lecture tour of northern Italy, he aroused much consternation in many quarters, and the authorities decided it was time to act.

Gottschalk was accused of heresy, tried, and condemned. He was allowed no opportunity to defend himself or present his own case in a reasoned form. He was flogged mercilessly and imprisoned under

cruel conditions until his death. Even some of his foes protested at the unchristian character of his treatment. Yet he died without recanting and apparently with great peace of mind, holding firmly to his Augustinian theology. He is one in a long line of martyrs for the Gospel, and in a manner of speaking his was the last personal protest against the corrupted *theology* of the Roman Catholic Church until Luther awakened to the truth some six hundred years later. Some of the great figures in church history who came later protested against the morality of the Roman Catholic Church but they did not, like Gottschalk, have a clear vision of the Church's theological error. As J. L. Neve observed, semi-Pelagianism retained its great hold upon the Church's theology throughout the entire Middle Ages. But one of the ironies of this circumstance is that because of the breadth of Augustine's theological sweep, even this fundamental departure from his position was justified as orthodox by appeal to certain of his earlier writings (which he had later retracted) and came to be known as "the preaching of Augustine" (*Sermo Augustini*) (5)

The result was inevitable. Precisely because man's will is utterly corrupt, his strongest exertions to build a credit balance in the sight of God only carried him further and further in the corruption of all that was holy, until the religious communities which had started out to make themselves the guardians of truth and purity of life became the most appalling dens of iniquity. The corruption of the good always produces the greatest potential for evil.

The kind of holiness that self-effort thus produces is not sanctity but sanctimoniousness, and there is something pitifully powerless about it. It is a "form of godliness but denying the power thereof" (2 Tim. 3:5). It is powerless because it springs out of the activity of the corrupted will of natural man. Just because it is an expression of man's sinful will, it only confirms that will, making it stronger even

while appearing to suppress it. If circumstances later encourage the enjoyment of sensual things, it is all too easy to slip from one kind of exercise that seems to have the appearance of purity, into the opposite kind which has all the earmarks of debasement. The man who has so strengthened his will that he can resist great temptations may later reach a position where he can exercise the same will power to get what he wants even when it is evil. And this happened all too frequently when "holiness" achieved by self-control was afterwards rewarded with authority and power over others. What transpired in monastic life may well have inspired the Reformers to declare that good works done out of Christ, precisely because they are expressions of human willfulness, no doubt "partake of the nature of sin," as the Church of England in Article XIII has aptly expressed it.

Approximately two hundred years after Gottschalk, Anselm was born in Aosta in Piedmont in 1033 of a pious mother, Ermenberga, and an indifferent though well-to-do father. From a very early childhood his mother's influence played a strong part in his development and he occupied himself in meditation on the things of God as he grew. His relations with his father were much less happy, and when he was a young man he left home to travel in France. In due time under Lanfranc he became a monk in the monastery of Bec. In 1063 he became its prior, and finally in 1078 its abbot. In 1093 he was called to be Archbishop of Canterbury. (6)

In a remarkable number of ways Anselm was like Augustine: in his gentleness, in his love for man and for God, in his contemplative nature, in his desire for holiness of life, and in his zeal to suppress his baser nature. Augustus Neander in his *General History of the Christian Religion and Church* says, "He was the Augustine of his age." What gave him his great importance was the unity of spirit in which he thought and did everything, a harmony between life and

knowledge which in his case nothing disturbed. And love seems to have been the inspiring soul of his thought.

He was constantly occupied with public duties appropriate to each station of his life as he rose to become Archbishop. Rather like Augustine he felt himself throughout to be a wretched sinner unworthy of his office and privately longing to be free to return to a life of contemplation. When he died in 1109, in spite of the many conflicts in which he unwillingly became involved, he seems to have had no enemies but was completely at peace with God and everywhere revered by man.

There was one important difference, however, between the two men, Augustine and Anselm, namely, in the turmoil of the former's life as he grew up as contrasted with the comparative tranquillity of the latter's.

Both men agreed absolutely upon this fact, that faith precedes understanding. Interestingly, both seemed to have based their conviction in this not upon Hebrews 11:3 ("through faith we understand...") but upon the Septuagint version of Isaiah 7:9 which reads: "If ye believe not, neither will ye at all understand." Anselm's principle of handling Scripture was to sit down as a little child before the Word of God and accept its statements. Then, believing, to seek for understanding. Augustine's guiding principle had been that obedience to the Word in faith was the key to understanding it: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God" (John 7:17). Similarly Anselm wrote: "Self-confident human wisdom will sooner break its own horn than succeed in overturning this rock." Faith, he held, precedes intellect. (7) In Anselm we find heart and mind beautifully balanced. Yet he made singularly little use of Scripture itself... (8)

In his *De Libero Arbitrio* ("Of Freedom of Will") Anselm controverts any idea of free will in man as being the power to choose between good and evil. (9) Man has only the power to choose between evils and since he sometimes chooses the lesser evil, he appears to be choosing the good. Pelagius had argued that the effect of Adam's Fall was not inherited by his descendants, that every man is born as Adam was created, with complete freedom to choose between good and evil. This freedom is partially but not wholly lost as the individual matures, and this loss can be corrected by following the example of Jesus Christ. Anselm, with Augustine and Paul, denied this possibility. Since salvation was an absolute good, man could not choose it. The realization of this truth seems to have sprung out of Anselm's own experience with himself, as it had with Augustine. Augustine appears to have tried always to bring his thought captive to Scripture, combining the Word of God with every means at his disposal in order to base his theology on something more secure than experience. This policy transformed Augustine's thinking and theology and gave it a more secure foundation, besides vastly illuminating it. Anselm agreed with this principle entirely but did not exploit the Word of God as Augustine had done. Consequently their agreement is more implicit than explicit.

Increasingly as time went by, the emphasis in so-called Christian life had been shifted towards making man responsible for the preparation of his own heart to merit the infusion of the grace of God. This had not improved the spiritual life as a whole: it had tended only to increase the severity of the penalties imposed upon those who were manifestly failing. But this, too, had little effect in correcting the steady decline in Christian morality. Men remained selfish and inhumane and carnal as they had always been. And the question began to be asked, Why do Christian principles generate so little genuine goodness? Why if some men so earnestly desire to be

holy, and if the reward for holiness of life is so great and the penalty for failure so terrible, do not men of good intent achieve their goal? Was there, after all, something really wrong with man's *will* to good?

Such was the lasting influence of Augustine's thought upon the centuries following that a number of Church councils still paid lip service by denying man's free will in the matter of salvation. Anselm in this spirit wrote not only his *Dialogue on Free Will* but also a treatise on the harmony between foreknowledge, Predestination, grace and free will. But while the theologians in their councils admitted that the will of fallen man was in bondage, the authorities in their religious houses in whose hands were the lives of the Church's flock continued to operate on the principle that man's will is free and therefore responsible to do something about achieving holiness. (10)

Anselm struggled to reconcile the apparent contradiction. He used an analogy: the will of man has a capacity for good as the eye has a capacity for light. But so long as the eye is in the dark its capacity is ineffective and undiscovered. The capacity of man's will for good is like this, latent only until the sunlight of God's grace shines upon it. (11) By Luther's time this "capacity" had become a "passive aptitude." It was an aptitude because it was already present waiting to respond, but it was passive because the light that effects this response must be supplied from outside. It was a light *receptor*, not a lamp. The eye of the soul is blind until God shines into it. It is God, not the eye, who gives the light of the knowledge of his glory (2 Cor. 4:6). Until God moves in the will, according to Anselm, the will is impotent towards spiritual good. Yet God does not bend the will by force. The will is drawn in such a way that it follows without resistance as if impelled by an inner necessity.



There is a deeply rooted feeling in the heart of man that he ought to contribute something of his own to his salvation. This contribution has taken a number of different forms. The most obvious contribution he can make is good works, but good works can operate in several different ways. They may secure his salvation directly by some kind of overbalance against his hurts, or they may predispose God to favour him and grant him salvation as a gift otherwise unattainable, or they may be added to the weight of merit in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ which by itself is not sufficient. In most cases, the salvation is viewed as a cooperative effort. Yet it has always been felt by theologians that the idea of cooperation is not a worthy one. And so the effort is made to introduce cooperation without letting it *appear* as such.

Many Roman Catholic theologians took the position that man must prepare himself to merit the grace of God without which he cannot be saved. Arminian theologians have modified this somewhat and now take the position that while man cannot by good works merit the grace of God, he can prepare himself to receive it by declaring his willingness to do so. The end result is much the same; the one is as much a cooperative process as the other, and Roman Catholics have as easily adopted the non-resistance alternative as they adopt the preparatory works alternative. In either case, man plays a vital role in his own salvation. Thus while Lutherans today teach that man's vital role is non-resistance of the Holy Spirit, the older Roman Catholic theologians like Cardinal Robert Pullein held virtually the same position. Pullein, who died in 1146, wrote:

As often as grace offers itself to anyone, the individual either acts in cooperation with that grace or, rejecting it, still goes on in sin. The first cause of all goodness is grace. But the free will also has a part to perform, though a subordinate one. Free will also

has some merit; namely this, that it *ceases* to resist the divine will (emphasis mine). (12)

The contrary will that resists the grace of God is not constrained to yield against its own inclination but is inclined to a willingness by the same grace. This was the logical maneuver by which some token acknowledgment was made to the autonomy of man's will. It was in effect the same device by which Lutheranism (though not Luther himself, I think) was to skate around the problem of the sovereignty of grace.

Luther was to struggle with this same problem and arrived at much the same conclusion, speaking of how the Spirit of God "sweetly breathes" upon the will to cause it to act "not from *compulsion but responsively*" (his emphasis).

Like Luther, Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274) had also postulated a "certain susceptibility" in man which was required for the operation of grace. But Aquinas traces even this susceptibility to the "preparation of God." He was nearer to Augustine in this than Anselm had been.

In his *Summa Theologica* written between 1265 and 1273, Aquinas adopted a technique for the expounding of his theology which others before him had employed, including Anselm in his famous little work *Cur Deus Homo*. This involved a kind of question-and-answer approach which in Aquinas took the following form: first, the stating of the question; second, the presentation of opinions contrary to his own; third, his own view of the matter; and fourth, his reply to each of the contrary opinions treated seriatim. In dealing with the matter of free will he begins by posing the question: "Can man merit eternal life without grace?" (Q. 109, art. 5). This is one of ten questions

appearing in the section of his work under the general subject of the "Grace of God."

The first contrary opinion, which Aquinas terms *Objection 1*, is stated as follows: "It would seem that man can merit eternal life without grace. For our Lord says (Matt. 19:17), '*If thou wilt enter into eternal life, keep the commandments,*' from which it would seem that to enter into eternal life rests with man's will. Hence it seems that man can inherit eternal life of himself."

A second contrary opinion, *Objection 2*, is given as follows: "Further, eternal life is the wage or reward bestowed by God on men according to Matthew 5:12, '*your reward is very great in heaven.*' But wage or reward is meted by God to everyone according to his works, according to Psalm 62:12: '*Thou wilt render to every man according to his works.*' Hence, since man is master of his works it seems that it is within his power to reach eternal life."

It is interesting to note how subtly error can creep in through the back door and color all that follows. The very form of Aquinas' question ("Can man merit eternal life without grace?") starts the process of reasoning on the wrong foundation. Grace by definition is *unmerited* favour and eternal life is a gift. If we ask whether man can merit eternal life, we start with an impossibility, and it is no wonder that we end up with a falsehood. And as the error in the question is subtle, so the error in the final answer is subtle.

Aquinas then presents his own view as follows:

Man, by his own natural powers, cannot produce meritorious works proportional to eternal life, but for this a higher power is needed, namely, the power of grace. And thus, without grace man cannot merit eternal life; yet he can perform works leading

to a good which is connatural to man such as *to man in the fields, to drink [convivially?], to eat, or to have friends, and the like*, as Augustine says in his third *Reply to Pelagians*.

Aquinas' reply to *Objection 1* takes the following form: "Man, by his will, does works meritorious of eternal life, but as Augustine says in the same book, for this it is necessary that the will of man be prepared with the grace of God."

In reply to *Objection 2*: As the Gloss [i.e., comment] upon Romans 6 23 ("the grace of God is life everlasting") says: *it is certain that everlasting life is meted to good works, but the works to which it is meted belong to God's grace*, What is more, it has been said that to fulfill the commandments of the law, whereby their fulfillment may be meritorious, requires grace.

So here we have Aquinas on the old question of the relation between good works, grace, and eternal life. Grace is necessary to enable man to perform meritorious works of which the reward is eternal life. So has the Gospel been eroded. These good works are within man's reach if he is assisted by the grace of God. Man is saved *with* grace, not *by* grace. Man and God thus cooperate, God enabling man to merit life.

Aquinas' next question is, "Can a man by himself and without the external aid of grace prepare himself for grace?" His hypothetical opponent suggests that "man prepares himself to grace by doing what he has ability to do. And if he does God will not deny him grace." In support of this proposition, his opponent quotes Matthew 7:11: "*God giveth* the spirit to them that ask Him." His own view is that "man cannot prepare himself to receive the light of grace except by the gratuitous help of God moving him inwardly." And in support of this, Aquinas quotes John 15:5: "*Without Me ye can do nothing.*"

So we conclude that even though man must work to merit eternal life, he will not even initiate such work without the enabling of God's grace. And thus in the final analysis we seem to be back with Augustine. However, a complication has been introduced. For even though the grace of God lies at the very heart of man's salvation, it is nevertheless a salvation *merited by good works*. It might seem that Aquinas was not in essential disagreement with Reformed theology as to the receiving of grace, but in truth this grace serves a different purpose in each. For the Reformers, it was the beginning and the end of man's eternal life, and the good works which he performed were an expression of something he already possessed. In Aquinas, grace was to enable man to achieve eternal life by his own efforts.

In his exposition of the *Thirty-Nine Articles* of the Church of England, E. Harold Browne said succinctly, "In philosophy Aquinas was a realist; in theology, a disciple of Augustine; and therefore opposed to the belief too prevalent among the Schoolmen, that the gift of grace was dependent on the manner in which men exercised their purely natural endowment." (13) The Church of Rome produced many great minds that harboured strange combinations of profound truth and profound error. One often wonders how it could come about that the conflict between the two did not become more apparent to the individual.

Thomas Aquinas, who thus presumed a grace that conditioned the will, also presumed a predestination which involved such a conditioning. But he held that it is possible to distinguish what proceeds from a genuine free will so conditioned and what from predestination. He wrote, "All leads back to the goodness of God. To this must be traced the reason why some are predestinated and others reprobated." (14) He might have noted Romans 2:4 in which

Paul asserts that it is the goodness of God, not the goodness of man himself, that leads men to repentance.

Again Aquinas wrote: "It was God's will to manifest his goodness to a part of mankind--those whom He had foreordained to this end, in the form of mercy sparing them; to others, the reprobate, in the form of punitive justice. And this is the reason why He elected some and rejected others; and the ground of this difference lies only in the divine will." (15) Here we have a clear enunciation of the principle of Unconditional Election, and yet Aquinas still struggled to find some way of so presenting the case as to allow man freedom of will. While his doctrine seemed to annihilate the concept of man's free will, he still argued that this is not really what he meant but rather that by divine intervention God constrains the will of man in another direction. (16) But if this is an imposed change, a change that God effects in man willy-nilly, is this not an overriding of man's will? Aquinas answered: "God brings it about that man should freely will the change he experiences and thus all constraint is removed. For to suppose otherwise, namely, that the man did not will the change which is a change in his will, would involve a contradiction." Such was the subtlety of reasoning of the Schoolmen.

These endless chains of "therefores," without constant reference to Scripture, inevitably left men no wiser and no clearer than they were before.

If the individual can by his disobedience lose his salvation, then it follows that he can in this "lost" position gain back his salvation by appropriate acts of obedience. And so there is once more restored to man a crucial role in his own salvation. The pull towards Arminianism is to man what gravity is to the material world. It is a subtle ever-acting downward pull that is never absent and that, once

yielded to, causes an increasingly rapid debasement of the truth of the Gospel. The believer's intelligence has constantly to be brought into subjection to the revealed Word of God as a monitor of his thoughts. Like Abelard we try first to understand in order that we might believe. But understanding is not the basis of faith. Understanding is only the basis of knowledge. Faith requires a positive exercise of will, and demonstration of any theorem removes the necessity for exercising will. We merely assent. Unfortunately many people assent to the Gospel, supposing that they are thereby believing it.

The determination to restore the place of free will in the exercise of saving faith, on the ground that by this means alone could the incentive to holiness be maintained, was logical enough if there was any merit in such holiness as exhibited in the unredeemed life. But there is no such merit. Indeed, the notion that there is such merit in man is in fact offensive to God for it reflects unfavorably upon the sufficiency of the sacrifice of Christ for man's salvation if man himself must also make his little contribution. As for holiness *afterwards* this is a different matter entirely, for then such holiness is meritorious because it is now an outgrowth of the life of God in the individual.

But Aquinas, not recognizing the significance of the new birth and its attendant inward revitalizing moral power, championed the benefits of uncertainty, of insecurity, of lack of assurance, and of the practical necessity of *not* believing in the eternal security of the believer, in order to provide the incentive otherwise lacking. Better, then, to retreat from the world with its temptation whereby one might easily lose one's salvation and to take refuge from its conflicts in the monastic life of sheltered contemplation.

But here men gradually surrendered the witness of the Holy Spirit in the inner life and increasingly substituted the man-made and humanly enforced disciplines of the monastery. These disciplines were interpreted and exercised by strong men who often became ambitious and unscrupulous when they found themselves invested with absolute authority over their fellow men. Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. (17) Religious corruption is extremely dangerous because it tends by its nature not to be tempered by conscience. Here and there a few notable souls served God with great zeal and effectiveness, but the great majority became "princes" in the community or in the world. Theological error has many unforeseen consequences.

It has sometimes been asked, Where was Protestantism before Luther? This question in effect supposes that what we now see as a recovery of the true Gospel, which for fifteen hundred years had been almost lost sight of, was in reality a novel invention. Opponents of true evangelicalism could not believe that God would really permit the total eclipse of the truth and leave men in darkness for so many centuries. Had not the Church of Rome during those previous years leavened the whole of European society and created a Christian civilization, as well as evangelized the heathen world in Africa and America? Admittedly, the Catholic Church had its faults and needed cleansing and restoring in its faith from time to time, but surely the truth was never so completely lost that a total revolution of theology was needed! The Western world had been kept Christian, or so men like Chesterton assured us, more Christian in fact than it had been since Luther and Calvin and the Reformers shattered that monumental unity which was Catholic Christendom.

But is this really so? Was this monumental unity an organic unity of the Spirit or merely a religio-political unity preserved essentially by a



civil and hierarchical aristocracy working hand in hand for each other's mutual worldly benefit?

The need for reform was increasingly evident as the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries rolled by. In England John Wycliffe (1320-1384) thundered against the Church of Rome and the abuses of religious orders even in his own country where they were less powerfully entrenched than in continental Europe. It is true that in some ways he had comparatively small influence upon England herself until considerably later, but by means of his teaching and preaching in Oxford (where many Bohemian students from Prague were studying) he had a more profound theological influence on the continent through the followers of John Huss.

His theology was clearly Augustinian, though like Gottschalk he went beyond Augustine in the matter of Predestination and virtually made God responsible for man's Fall and therefore for all his subsequent sin. He categorically rejected the idea that man before his conversion can contribute anything by his moral behaviour towards influencing God's sovereign decision to grant him the grace of the Holy Spirit needful to conversion. Dyson Hague considered that five of the Thirty-Nine Articles of the Church of England (Articles X-XIV) could almost be taken word for word from Wycliffe's writing. (18)

Article X is most explicit:

The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon God. Wherefore we have no power to do good works pleasant and acceptable to God without the grace of God by Christ preventing us that we may have a good will...

Article XIII is equally explicit in this regard:

Works done before the grace of Christ and the inspiration of the Spirit, are not pleasant to God for as much as they spring not of faith in Jesus Christ, neither do they make men meet to receive grace or [as the School authors say] deserve grace of congruity [i.e., as a consequence]: yea rather, because they are not done as God hath willed and commanded them to be done, we doubt not that they partake of the nature of sin.

These ideas are directly contrary to the teaching of Thomas Aquinas but fully in harmony with that of Augustine, who summed up his position on the matter of works done out of Christ by using the words of Scripture: "What is not of faith is of sin" (Rom. 14:23).

Julianus of Eclanum (380-c. 455), a Pelagian theologian, postulated the case of a heathen who covered the naked and did works of mercy, and asked, "Is this act of his therefore sinful because it is not of faith?" Augustine replied unequivocally, "It is sinful." And with this Wycliffe concurred because, while the act itself was good towards man, it was not pleasing to God since it was prompted by a corrupt will as an expression of a sinful self. (19) We only need to reflect upon the reaction of a man who has done a good deed (let us say, he has sent an anonymous gift to a person in need) when someone else is given the credit for it! The true motive is quickly made apparent. And a good deed may thus prove to be a work of iniquity even when done in the name of the Lord (Matt. 7:22, 23).

God often turns such works to truly good ends, yet in themselves they may be works of iniquity when performed out of Christ because they are expressions of a fallen nature. Indeed it was argued in Wycliffe's day that "a man sinneth the more by how much the more he laboureth to dispose himself to grace." Or to put it in plainer

language, a man's good works are all the more sinful when they are undertaken with the express hope and purpose of predisposing God to favour the doer by granting him salvation upon the strength of them.

When performed by the unbelieving in aid of the Lord's children, works are rewarded in this world, the reward being a form of kudos. But when they are judged in the moral light of eternity, they can be seen only as works of iniquity. Wycliffe saw clearly the unreality of man's supposed natural goodness, and he recognized piety in the unredeemed for what it was. He spoke against it fearlessly as a snare and a deception, for unredeemed men were being easily persuaded to emulate the saints of the past in the belief that they would thereby make themselves more worthy of receiving God's grace and a passage into heaven. The Gospel had become superfluous except as an assist to men's natural goodness. The grace of God served only to crown the grace of man. There was a need to return to the biblical position which states in no uncertain terms that "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6).

It is an extraordinary thing that while Wycliffe continued to thunder away against the heresy of salvation by good works he remained essentially at liberty and unharmed by the religious authorities of his day, and he died peacefully in his bed at the good age (in those days) of sixty-four years. He has rightly been called the "Morning Star of the Reformation," not merely because he cried out against unrighteousness in high places but because he called for a return to the Gospel.

Various reformation movements within the Church of Rome had been witnessed before Wycliffe and were to be witnessed after him, as for example in Florence under Savonarola from 1490 until his

death eight years later. These were genuine outcries against the gross wickedness and immorality of the Church. But they were doomed to failure because, while the righteousness of God was exalted and the sinfulness of man was exposed, there was no attendant proclamation of the Gospel of personal salvation by regeneration which is the only basis for any true reformation of the Church or of society. Reformation must always start with regeneration, and regeneration is a personal matter. It is such individuals who then become the salt not for the building of a perfect society but for the preservation of a society from total corruption. A return to the teaching of Paul and of Augustine was what was required, and it was not very far in the future.

Meanwhile the Church's denunciation of the evils of the world were nothing compared with the world's denunciation of the evils of the Church. The famous troubadours or popular singers of the day took as a major theme of their songs the avarice and heartless greed, the cruelty and arrogant use of power, and the craftiness and treachery of all kinds which compacted together blatantly and without shame in the courts of the Church of Rome. (20) Something had to change or be changed.

The change was to come not by a more persuasive call to holiness but by a rediscovery of the fundamental fact that man is spiritually so completely dead that he is without the power to win the approval of God by good works unless God has first of all granted him new life and a saving faith to believe in the total sufficiency of the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ to make him once more acceptable in the sight of God. Man is lost and cannot by any means save himself by his works or even prepare himself to be saved. Salvation is entirely an act of grace dependent upon the sovereign will of God and made effective in the life of the individual only in God's time. Luther

rediscovered this truth and proclaimed it; Calvin worked it out and made explicit its implications.

Augustine's influence and teachings had never been entirely lost, but neither had they been preserved entire by any one individual, after the passing of Prosper. Gottschalk was clear on the fact of Predestination and Limited Atonement, and he was probably reasonably clear on the Total Depravity of man and on Irresistible Grace. His position on the Perseverance of the Saints was perhaps sound, but it was implicit rather than explicit. The wholeness of Augustine's soteriology was gradually being eroded and the logical cohesion of his theology was not again to be worked out as a total system for centuries. The implications of the Gospel were not exploited in strictly biblical terms as Augustine had exploited them, until Calvin published his *Institutes*. Thomas Aquinas, the great master of the Medieval Schoolmen, caught some of Augustine's vision of the whole, but Aquinas' view was muddied by erroneous embellishments and fanciful extensions dependent entirely upon human reason that introduced all kinds of error which Augustine would have repudiated. These embellishments were soon made the basis of a whole new set of propositions which were far from the pure Gospel, and the Gospel itself was virtually submerged in a sea of error.

John Wycliffe seems to stand out from the mainstream as a lone figure and yet there is no doubt that he stood firmly in the tradition of Augustine. As the harbinger of the Reformation formed a further link in a continuous chain which reaches from Paul in the New Testament through Augustine, Prosper, Gottschalk, and Anselm, to Luther, Calvin, and the Reformers.

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