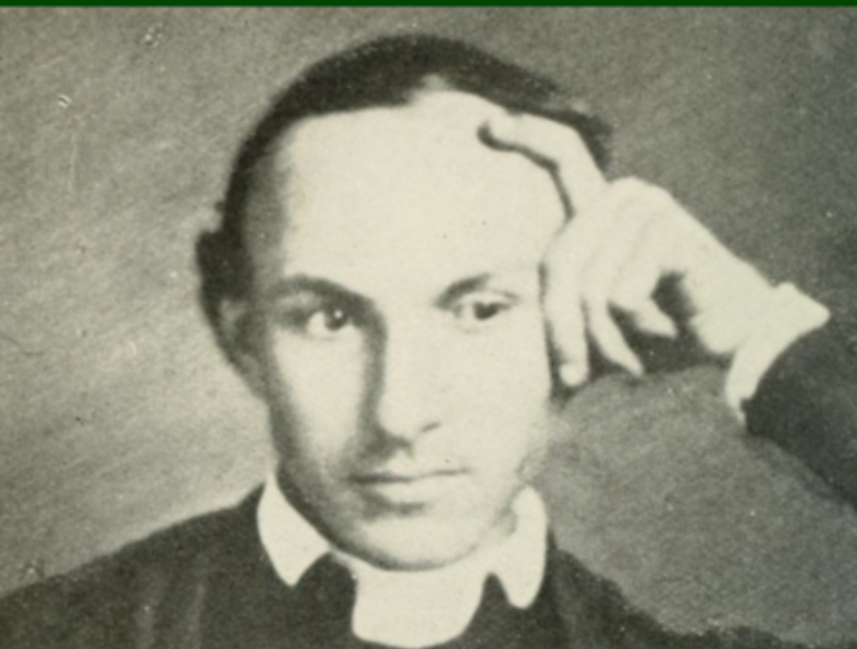


**Matthias Loy, editor**

**The Columbus Theological  
Magazine, Volume 2**



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"The history of the Church confirms and illustrates the teachings of the Bible, that yielding little by little leads to yielding more and more, until all is in danger; and the tempter is never satisfied until all is lost. – Matthias Loy, [\*The Story of My Life\*](#)

**Matthias Loy** was a zealous supporter of the Lutheran Confessions, and to that end founded and edited the *Columbus Theological Magazine*. Dr. Loy was Professor of Theology at Capital University (1865-1902), President of Capital University (1881-90), Editor of the *Lutheran Standard* (1864-91), and President of the Ohio Joint Synod (1860-78, 1880-94). Under his direction, the Ohio Joint Synod grew to have a national influence. In 1881 he withdrew the Joint Synod from the Synodical Conference in reaction to Walther's teaching about predestination.

"There is not an article in our creed that is not an offense to somebody; there is scarcely an article that is not a stumbling block to some who still profess to be Christians. It seems but a small concession that we are asked to make when an article of our confession is represented as a stumbling block to many Christians which ought therefore in charity to be removed, but surrendering that article would only lead to the surrender of another on the same ground, and that is the beginning of the end; the authority of the inspired Word of our Lord is gradually undermined.

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## COLUMBUS THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE

VOL. II.

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No. 1.

## INTRODUCTORY TO VOLUME II.

Our MAGAZINE began its career in troublous times. In some measure it owes its existence to the unhappy controversy which has changed the whole aspect of affairs in the Synodical Conference. The synods united in that body were of one mind in their devotion to sound doctrine. All recognized the word of the Lord as alone decisive in matters of faith and morals, and all acknowledged not only the right, but the duty of proving the doctrines promulgated by men in the Lord's name and of rejecting what is not in accord with the law and the testimony. But a doctrine which many were constrained to pronounce false was put forth within that body, and advocated with zeal and even vehemence by the largest and most influential synod in its connection. In spite of all remonstrances against their innovation, the leaders of the Missouri Synod persisted in spreading their Calvinizing opinions. In consequence of this Prof. Schmidt, of the Norwegian Seminary in Madison, Wis., commenced the publication of a monthly journal to counteract the baneful influence of the St. Louis publications. A colloquium held in January of last year, the design of which was to restore peace, if possible, ended in a formal declaration of war. There was nothing left even for the most ardent lovers of peace but to accept the situation and commend the consequences to God.

To us the path of duty now seemed plain. Believing the doctrine of election which Missouri advocated to be sub-



versive of fundamental truths of revelation and dangerous to the souls of men, we could no longer hesitate to put in our public protest against it. The vocation which the church had given us seemed to demand this of us, whether the work were pleasant or painful. We resolved, whatever might be the cost or consequences to us, to do, as best we could, what duty required. As it did not appear wise or warranted to use for controversial purposes on a subject so complicate as that of predestination the periodicals already existing in our synod, and as a journal in the English language devoted to Lutheran theology was widely recognized as a pressing want of the church, we established the COLUMBUS THEOLOGICAL MAGAZINE and by the blessing of God have carried it through the first year of its existence.

That our arguments and remonstrances would provoke replies was of course expected. No thoughtful man supposes that battles can be fought without firing on both sides. But we confess that we were not prepared for Missouri's mode of warfare. Perhaps such a confession is not creditable to our understanding. Those who have had controversies with that synod before, unanimously maintain that Missouri has but conducted the war in its accustomed style. This we are not prepared to dispute. But having labored so long in harmony with that synod, and supposing the sincerity of our purpose to be recognized by at least its older members who knew us well, we thought the solemn subject in controversy would be discussed in the light of the Scriptures, of our Confessions, and of history, with becoming dignity and without the indecent littlenesses of wounded pride and aroused resentment. We were disappointed. The Missourians not only adopted a mode of warfare which, in many instances, rendered it degrading to meet them on their chosen ground, but even in their assembled synod, where all the dignity and manliness of their body was presumably congregated, they pronounced, with apparently more carnal passion than pious deliberation, their anathema against the doctrine which we, following the great teachers of our Church, have confessed and defended, and explicitly declared that with those who publicly opposed them, as we and our colleagues had done, they would no longer sit in convention or have any conference. Our efforts

to expose the error into which Missouri had fallen were followed by a declaration on their part that church fellowship between us has ceased. Conscious that we were contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, and convinced that it would be sinning against God and His Word, against the Church and her Confession, if we receded from our position and accepted the Missouri innovation, we again had no choice but to accept the situation and commit the results to Him who reigns in Zion. Perhaps Missouri was too much excited to see the import of its hot and hasty proceeding; perhaps, accustomed as it was, like a spoiled child, to have its will, it assumed that its authority would be sufficient to secure the expulsion of its opponents from their respective synods; but whatever may have been its thought, the rent was made when its rash step was taken.

Had the will of Missouri been done the editor of the *MAGAZINE*, with several of his colleagues, would have been deposed, and the life would have been crushed out of the new periodical. That will was not done, and Missouri and its followers can hardly find words enough to express its disgust with Ohio's stupidity. Had our synod denounced those of its members who dared to oppose Missouri, and renounced all fellowship with them; had it declared that the *MAGAZINE* advocates a doctrine with which it is not in harmony and condemns what it is ready to recognize as divine truth; had it accepted the dictation of Missouri, that none of those who have opposed it shall be sent as delegates to the Synodical Conference, as Missouri can not sit and confer with such opponents; had it, in short, been the obedient servant of the St. Louis professors, whose will had hitherto been regarded as ultimately decisive,—all would have been well in the eyes of Missouri. But the Ohio Synod could not see matters in that light. It considered the subject. It could not pronounce condemnation against its professors who had opposed the Missouri innovation. On the contrary, it was in harmony with them. Instead of condemning the *MAGAZINE*, it accepted the periodical as its own, and resolved to establish a similar theological journal in the German language. That such conduct seems contemptible, outrageous, in the eyes of Missouri, we do not wonder. From its point of view that is

natural enough. But to men who can see clearly the action of the Ohio Synod will seem perfectly proper and right, and necessary under the circumstances.

The MAGAZINE has thus become the property of the Ohio Synod and is edited by its authority and under its supervision. But this does not change its position or its purpose. It will continue to defend the old doctrine on the subject of predestination against the innovations of Missouri, although such exclusive attention to this topic as circumstances required in the past year will probably not be necessary in the future. Much of the fog that hung around the new doctrine has been cleared away, and what Missouri means has become more manifest. While its doctrine can hardly be said to have assumed a shape so definite that its opponents could state it without incurring the risk of being charged with misrepresentation, it is now probably clear to most minds that it aims at introducing Calvinistic particularism without expressly rejecting the Lutheran doctrine of universal grace, with which such particularism is irreconcilable. This singular procedure has rendered the present predestinarian controversy peculiar. Missouri has made a new departure in more senses than one. Whilst theologians across the sea have been endeavoring for many years to find a basis of union between Christians of different confessions, and have abandoned the case as hopeless, or settled down upon the plan of ignoring differences, Missouri has not only suggested, but adopted and applied the new principle of accepting conflicting tenets as equally true and leaving to God the reconciliation between them. Accordingly, when Lutherans confess that God's grace extends over all alike and that He would seriously have all men to be saved, and the Calvinists confess that His grace singles out a few for salvation and that these alone are saved, Missouri teaches that both are right—that God really wants all men to be saved, and that He has resolved to save only some men; but we must not say that He did not want to save those who are not elected, and we must not say that He purposed to save any others besides the elect. We must take our reason captive and say nothing, but leave it to God's infinite wisdom to harmonize what finite reason finds contradictory. It is a principle that is applicable to

other doctrines as well as to election, and whether the "reformatory" movement will be confined to this one doctrine, time must show. As for ourselves, we shall resist the new "reformation" with such strength as God shall give us. It is false in principle and dangerous in results, both as regards its influence upon the doctrines of the Church and upon the spiritual life of its members; and we could not be faithful to our trust, if we did not use the sword of the Spirit against it. We cannot consent to recognize Calvinism as divine truth, even though it offer, in return, to admit the universality of divine grace and of the redemption; and those who allow themselves to be led into such a compromise with pernicious error will sooner or later find that their human speculations, according to which two conflicting doctrines may stand side by side in the Church, have been put to shame, and that the false doctrine, though admitted with the best of motives, "will eat as doth a canker." May Dr. Walther, upon whom the responsibility of the new departure mainly rests, retrace his steps before it be too late! His return to the "old paths" would, we are confident, restore the Missouri Synod to its former honorable position in this western world. Very few Missourians, we think, would be likely to continue in the devious ways of Calvinism, if he would abandon them.

Whatever may be the future of Missouri, upon which a dark cloud has settled now, the events of the past year have placed our synod in a position of higher responsibility than ever. We have no longer a stronger sister to lean upon, as we have been accustomed to do in the past. She was faithful to the Church of the Reformation, and God had greatly prospered her. But she has deviated from the old ways, and we cannot follow whither she would lead us now. We must wend our way without her company, and must labor the more energetically as we cannot in future avail ourselves of her gifts. In the English portion of our Church this will be felt less than in the German, as in the former language she had done and could do comparatively little. In this respect Missouri depended more upon us than we upon Missouri. But even in this respect the separation makes itself felt. Missouri assisted in circulating our periodicals, but has shown that this will be done no longer. All the more does it

behoove us to labor, not only in furnishing such publications as the Church needs, but also in sustaining and circulating them.

Our MAGAZINE was designed to meet a want that existed aside from the controversy on predestination. A Lutheran periodical devoted to theological discussion has long since been needed, and frequent expression has been given to the desire for such a journal. For obvious reasons the publications of the General Synod, whatever may be their merits otherwise, cannot be regarded as supplying the necessary aid for the study of Lutheran theology. While their range is as wide as that of our MAGAZINE, their confessional character is not definite and decided. We have the firm conviction that a periodical faithful in all respects to the symbolical books of the Ev. Lutheran Church, setting forth the old doctrines of the Reformation, endeavoring to make English readers acquainted with the treasures of learning and thought contained in old German and Latin folios, exhibiting the solidity and symmetry of the theological edifice erected by our fathers in an age less hurried and more thorough than the present, is what the Church has long since needed and now needs in the English language. This our periodical was meant in some measure to supply. Theology in all its departments—exegetical, historical, systematic, and practical—comes within its scope. Believing that such a journal can render an important service to the great Church of the Augsburg Confession, whose history and doctrines and claims are comparatively but little known to English readers, we regard it as worthy of some sacrifices to sustain it and secure for it a proper constituency. Our appeal is primarily to those who know and love this Church, and our trust is that such an appeal, both for assistance in furnishing appropriate articles and in circulating the MAGAZINE, will not be in vain.

If any one supposes that our unflinching adherence to the Confessions of the Ev. Lutheran Church implies a narrowness of scope which necessarily excludes all freedom of intellectual movement, we desire at once to disabuse his mind. We are not the advocates of a traditionalism that enthralis. Our old theologians, by the extent of their erudition and the profundity of their thinking, have merited

the honorable consideration which is accorded them; but they were not infallible, and it is in perfect harmony with their own principles and practice to subject their results to a rigid examination by applying the test of Holy Scripture. By that they must stand or fall. Even our public Confessions must submit to this test. The Lutheran Church has never asked any person to accept those symbols upon any other ground than that of their fidelity to the Scriptures. We do not claim that men are bound to submit to them for any other reason. They are not inspired. They are not authoritative in any such sense that when their meaning is ascertained the will of the Lord on the point in question is necessarily ascertained also. They might have erred in setting forth the divine will, and whether they have erred or not is a question which challenges examination and which only the Bible can decide. But that is far from admitting that the Church accepts her Confessions only so far as they agree with the Scriptures. Such a position is at war with the fundamental idea of a confession of faith. We believe and therefore speak. Faith comes before its utterance. First we believe with the heart unto righteousness, then with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. No one can honestly confess with the Lutheran Church so long as he does not in his heart believe with the Lutheran Church. But when he has her faith in his heart, he cannot confess that faith with a reservation, which implies that it is Scriptural only in part. Doubtful opinions are not faith. If one cannot accept the faith of the Church because it is Scriptural, he cannot accept it at all, and can therefore not be recognized as one of those who hold that faith and who rightfully bear the name to which those who hold it are alone entitled. The confession must be examined by the Scriptures before it is accepted. Those who think it to be in conflict with the law and the testimony, by which all doctrines must be tried, will be constrained to reject it; but that this places any restraint upon his liberty of investigation no reflecting person will allege. On the other hand, those who find it to be in accord with the Scriptures, and who therefore regard it as an adequate expression of the faith which is in their own souls, will cordially accept it; but neither will any thoughtful

man affirm that these have sacrificed their privilege of examining for themselves. The rights which some people claim under the cover of freedom of thought, as against the assumption of confessional obligations, are manifestly nothing else than the liberty to be governed by caprice, without any settled faith that would hold them to consistency, and yet to be recognized as brethren of the household of faith. Such claims we cannot admit, and one reason why we cannot admit them is that they are destructive of the very end at which they profess to aim. There is no true liberty where unbridled license reigns, and there is no true progress in theology where nothing is settled. The MAGAZINE regards the faith of the Lutheran Church as well established upon its Scriptural foundation, and can see progress only in going forward in these old paths, none whatever in going backward with a view of reaching the goal by some other route.

That with such a retrograde movement of the Lutheran Church and her theology we can have no sympathy, it is scarcely necessary for us expressly to assure our readers. On the contrary, we hold the assurance of faith, which has always characterized that Church, to be thoroughly Scriptural and to be the necessary antidote to the restlessness and uncertainty of human sentiment and speculation. Our time especially is sick unto death of such diseases. The science which is the boast of the present century is utterly powerless to satisfy the cravings of the soul. With all its progress and achievements, it has been a signal failure in the high office into which the inconsiderate zeal of its admirers have pushed it. Philosophy now, as always in the past, has found no means of stilling the longings of imperishable souls. Material interests have been promoted while infidelity has preached the "gospel of dirt," but souls have found no rest. Nor can they ever find rest without the message of mercy from that God whom they have offended, and without the good tidings from the eternal world whither all are tending. Surmises in regard to the hereafter cannot satisfy. Only the truth can make us free and hopeful and happy. That truth God has given us by revelation through the Spirit, and on that truth men can rely as proceeding from Him who cannot be deceived and who cannot lie. That truth has been given us to the end that we

might know it, and that by the grace of God we might be established in it. The Lutheran Church has no doubtful opinions to proclaim, but declares the truth of God in God's great name.

It is one of the worst symptoms of an evil time that doubt and vacillation are accepted even by many professed followers of Christ as the normal condition of the Church, instead of being deplored as a dangerous disease. When differences in doctrine come to the surface, the infirmity of the human mind and the duty of charity are urged as a sufficient reason for permitting error to go forth unchallenged and for recognizing the equal rights of errorists in the Church. That this must end disastrously is plain. Everything becomes unsettled. The human intellect is accepted as the only rule and criterion of faith and truth, and the imperfection and insufficiency of this rule is obvious. One man's mind is as authoritative as that of another. If the Methodist has a right to his opinions, so has the Baptist; if the Protestant is justifiable in preferring the decisions of his own judgment, so is the Romanist; if the Trinitarian can legitimately assert the right to think as he pleases, so can the Socinian; if man in Christendom has the right of absolute free thought, so has man in heathendom. On the principle implied in the plea, that the human mind is imperfect and that charity must tolerate all religious opinions to which such imperfection gives birth, there is no hope for any church, because there is no hope for Christianity. It is an abandonment of the organic foundation of Christianity at the outset, and all efforts to raise a superstructure are useless when the foundation is removed. The error is fundamental. What is said of the infirmity of the human mind and of the duty of charity is true. Nay, the truth should be more strongly stated. Not only is man prone to error in matters of religion, but the discovery of the truth by his natural powers is impossible. Natural religion is therefore multiform, and never was and never can be Christian. Christianity is wholly a supernatural revelation. The saving truth, to which the researches of science never approximate and of which human philosophy has never dreamed, is given by inspiration of God. But it is given that man may know it and enjoy it. God speaks plainly, and His Spirit leads into



the blessed truth all who will learn. It is an impeachment of the wisdom and mercy of God to allege that His truth alone can save us, and that He revealed it for our learning, but that no man can know it with certainty. The fact of a revelation implies the contrary; the express declarations of Scripture certify the contrary; the experience of Christians confirms the contrary. A revelation that could make us certain of nothing would be a revelation that reveals nothing. The entrance of God's Word giveth light. "Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on Him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8, 31. 32. Therefore the apostle speaks of "the knowledge of the Son of God" which is to be obtained to the end "that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." Eph. 4, 14. Just so far as we know the truth can we have faith. Faith is always certain, because it rests with confidence upon the word of the Lord, which presents the truth for our acceptance. When this is received as really the Lord's word, doubts vanish, and the assurance of faith renders the soul strong and firm.

It is therefore not with any proud thought of superiority in learning or in logic that the MAGAZINE presents itself as a teacher of truth. Its editors are conscious of the groundlessness of all such claims. But they presume that no thoughtful Christian will regard it as immodest on their part to claim, what they are ready to accord to any believer in Christ, whether of the ministry or laity; namely, that what they have known from the Holy Scriptures and believed upon their infallible testimony, is certain, and must be proclaimed and must be defended not as doubtful human opinion, but as unchangeable divine truth. We have much yet to learn; we have need to study the Scriptures daily; we deem it no shame with Dr. Luther to remain pupils of the Catechism: but what we have by the grace of God apprehended we propose, by that same grace, to hold fast, that no man take our crown. Our trumpet shall therefore give no uncertain sound. Our earnest purpose is to remain faithful to the Confessions of the Ev. Lutheran Church, because that is fidelity to the truth which

God has given us in His blessed Word. May God render all our work pleasing to Him, and bless it to the welfare of His Church and the glory of His name. L.

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## THE LUTHERAN DOCTRINE OF ELECTION: ITS SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE AND PROOF.

BY REV. P. EIRICH, HOBOKEN, N. J.

### ARTICLE III.

V. *The only cause which prompted God in the act of election was His mercy and the merits of Christ.*

We have seen in a former article that election is through faith — through sanctification of the Spirit and faith in the truth. Hence, as has also been shown, we were elected as being in Christ, as such who were divinely seen in Christ by faith. These were conditions, but not causes of election — conditions which divine grace alone fulfills. It remains to be shown what were the causes or the motives of election, what made our election possible and what moved God to effect an election, to predestinate unto eternal life. For again, faith, though a prerequisite and indispensable condition of personal predestination unto eternal life, is not a cause of it, just as little as it is a cause of justification in the strict sense of the term, or of salvation, or of the hearing of prayer. It is only regarded as an instrument which God used in forming the decree of predestination unto life, but an instrument which was not created by election but by the means of grace, and was looked upon as already existing in the divine mind when predestination took place.

The Bible mentions two causes of personal predestination — the good pleasure of God and the merits of Christ. Having predestinated us, writes Paul, through Jesus Christ *κατὰ τὴν εὐδοκίαν τοῦ θελήματος αὐτοῦ*; and being predestinated *κατὰ τὴν βουλήν τοῦ θελήματος οὐτοῦ*. (Eph. 1, 5. 11.) Election took place *according to the good pleasure of His will and according to the counsel of His will*. Past. Stoeckhardt asserts that these

two terms are *synonymia*, and then remarks that the one is wider than the other, neither of which is correct. For the good pleasure of the divine will does not in itself convey the idea of a fixed determinate purpose, as does the counsel of His will, and then both are equally wide in their import. For Christ was sent to procure salvation for all by His bloody death through the derterminate counsel of God, and the angels sang at the Savior's advent in the flesh, of the *eùdoxia* of the Father to men, to all men for whom Christ had become incarnate. It thus clearly appears that these terms are equally wide, and equally universal in their application to all mankind. Hence, there can be nothing said by the *boule* and *eudokia* of God out of which personal election flowed, which does not apply to all mankind. This is all-important. The fact that not all men are elected does not result from the good pleasure of God's will and counsel.

Dr. Walther indeed observes: "If we should say to God, why didst Thou elect *me*? He would reply: It was the good pleasure of my will. And if we were further to enquire: Why didst 'Thou will this? He would respond: It was the good pleasure of my will, and nothing more." (W. B. 1879, p. 26). This, besides being a conception *extra et contra scripturam*, as it ignores even the merits of Christ, is rank Calvinism. For the good pleasure of the divine will is declared in the angelic chorus to pertain to our entire lost race. How could it explain or assign a reason for the *discretio personarum*? The same applies to Past. Stoeckhardt's remarks, who finds the reason assigned in these words, why God elected *us, just us*. How can the *eudokia* of the Father's good pleasure assign a reason or motive, why out of all men, to whom it applies, only a few were elected? And, hence, when the apostle refers to the ground or causes of election, his purpose is not to show why God elected us in opposition to those whom He did not elect. That is not the point which he wishes to make. Past. Stoeckhardt might just as well argue, that because God loved the world He intended only to save a few out of the whole race. The apostle aims rather to show whence it comes, that there is an election or predestination *unto salvation* at all. It has its ground and source exclusively and alone in God's good pleasure and the counsel of His will. We see then that elec-

tion took place in accordance with the general plan of salvation, and not in contravention of it. The same counsel that brought forth human redemption and the plan of salvation, and the same good will of God that through the incarnation of the Son of God was procured for all, are also the sources of predestination unto salvation. If Missouri cannot reconcile the two, personal election and the general plan of salvation, that itself stamps its theory as unscriptural and heretical. This becomes still more evident when we are told that we were elected *δια χριστου*. We showed in a former article what the apostle means, when he says that God elected us *in Christ*, namely, as being in Him. Consequently, when he wishes to say, that our election or predestination took place *through* Christ, on account of Him, and His mediation, as the *causa meritoria*, he writes expressly, that it occurred *δια χριστου*. Logically, therefore, the counsel of redemption precedes that of personal predestination—the latter being the condition and source of the former. There could have been no predestination unto life, if there had been no predestination of the redemption of mankind. But the causes of election are general, as the merits of Christ are general, as God's good pleasure to man is general, and the counsel of His will are general. Evidently, then, there is no cause in God why personal election should not be general, no cause for the difference between the elect and the non-elect. That is the very marrow of Calvinism. Whoever holds this is a Calvinist, although he may differ with Calvin on minor points. He is not a Lutheran. And the apostle in assigning the causes of election purposely, and as though he had had the New Missouri heresy in his eye (for we can consider it nothing else), prohibits and repudiates any such notion, as though the differences of election and non-election were in God. The very causes and, indeed, all of them that are named as those out of which election springs, apply to all men. Let St. Louis men show, if they can, what it is that Christ procured for the elect and purchased for them, which He did not procure and purchase for the non-elect. If Christ bought the grace of election for some, and that is what election through Him means, He purchased it for all; yea, if He procured the act of election for some, He procured it for all. And it is a simple matter of justice, and not of grace

even, that God should not withhold from men what Christ has bought and procured for them with so great a ransom. In this sense John writes (1 John 1, 9) that God is *righteous and just* to forgive us our sins. The same applies to the causes of election. That not all are elected has not its cause in God, *is not ascribable to the causes of election*, as St. Louis really holds, but to men, who make their election impossible. According to the Missouri argument we would have to change the apostle's syllogism (Rom. 8, 32) and say, If God spared not His own Son but delivered Him up for us all, He will also freely give all things to *some*. Hence the causes of election, *the good pleasure of God and the merits of Christ*, are not designed to show the reason why "*we, just we*" are elected, or assign the reason also for the *discretio personarum*, but solely and alone for men's election. In a similar sense the love of God and the merits of Christ are the only causes of our salvation, but they assign no reason why *just we* are saved. They show the causes of salvation, or are the causes, but certainly do not account for the difference, why some are saved and others are lost. And exactly so is it with the causes of election; for they are the same absolutely, as we have seen, with those of our salvation.\*

Whilst then the New Missouri doctrine puts into the Bible what is not there, and regards the mercy of God and

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\*The opposition is not between the elect and the non-elect, between *our* election and *their* non-election, but between *our* election and *our* non-election. In short, the causes of election are not discriminating between men. To illustrate, St. Paul says (1 Pet. 1, 3), that God has begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Would it be correct to hold, that he here assigns a reason, why God has begotten us, again *just us*? Not by any means! But he gives the cause why we are *begotten again* in contradistinction to being yet in our old sinful condition. There is no opposition between different men, but between two different states, between that of regeneration and the old condition. So when Paul says (Tit. 3, 5) *according to His mercy has He saved us by the washing of regeneration, &c.*, the meaning is not that God has saved us, *just us*, in contradistinction to others, whom He did not save, but that He saved us in contradistinction to leaving us in our former condition of sin and death. And exactly so is it with the passages that assign the causes of our election: they do not discriminate between *us* and *others*, but between *election* and *non-election*. The thing is so evident, that it looks like willful blindness not to see it. But Missouri's eyes are holder.

the merits of Christ as discriminating among men, whereas they actually pertain to all equally, it is really worse than out and out Calvinism. Calvin was shrewd enough to see, that if election is thought to have taken place in Christ, or on account of His mediation, it is inevitable, either that all men should be elected or that the absolute decree must fall, and election have regard to faith, by which Christ is appropriated. And hence he placed personal election before redemption, and made the latter to depend on the former. But this blindfolded modern Missouri heresy teaches that Christ procures redemption for all men, but not salvation, not faith, by which alone it can be reached—that is, not election, from which, as it is claimed, persevering faith and salvation alone can come. Thus we would have a divided Christ—a Christ who purchased the grace of election for the elect, and a Christ who purchased every thing for the non-elect up to the point of election, upon which salvation, as its last ground, is claimed to rest. There it stopped short. Or, if it had been purchased for them, could God be so unjust as to withhold it, if it depends not upon man's appropriation by faith? Truly, this Missouri new foundling is a heresy so grave that every sincere Lutheran should regard it as his bounden duty to fight the monster to the bitter end. It interpolates the Bible, virtually divides Christ, and in reality makes Him a Savior only of the elect, as salvation is claimed to come only from election. And we feel persuaded that every sincere Christian among them, aside from those few who have been seized with the infatuation, would repudiate the doctrine, if they knew what it really is. But the leaders so represent it as if it consisted only in this, that God elected some men of His free grace, and did not elect others simply because they believed not, of which Past. Kuegele lately furnished an example. But that is shameful double dealing. If there were nothing more of it, we could subscribe it also.

The passage 2 Tim. 1, 9, which Past. Stoeckhardt also comments, contains nothing new, even according to his own theory. Besides, it does not treat of personal predestination specifically, and therefore we will not treat it at large. For the purpose and grace, according to which we are here said to have been saved, and which grace was given us in Christ

Jesus before the world began, was manifest by the appearance of our Savior Jesus Christ. But this grace that was manifest in Christ is grace universal. Paul to Titus (2, 11) expressly says, that the saving grace of God has appeared unto all men. But grace in Christ is given in the mind of God eternally unto all men, although not accepted by all. And according to that purpose and universal grace we were called and saved. The fact that the pronoun *us* is here used decides nothing, and does not show that the elect only are meant. Paul, when he treats of election in the 8th chapter to the Romans, says in the same connection that God had delivered up His Son for us all and would with Him give us all things; yet Christ was certainly not delivered up only for the elect. So in this case. Nothing is here said of election or predestination. When the Formula of Concord (§ 44) refers to this passage, namely 2 Tim. 1, 9, it does it in the sense in which it refers to John 3, 16, (§ 67) to wit, that God loved the world, etc. And in the same way our dogmaticians treat the passage sometimes to show the general plan of salvation, and then also in connection with personal election, as a part of that plan. (See Gerhard de elect. § 3 et § 205.)

But whilst we pass this passage by, we feel constrained to say something concerning another point which Past. Stoeckhardt makes. He argues that because the good pleasure of God and the merits of Christ are alone named as the causes of our election, all regard to man's conduct as an additional cause is excluded. And so far he is right *in fact*, although not in inference. It does not follow, that because these are the causes no regard was had to anything else. It does not follow, that because God is said to have *saved us and called us with an holy calling* (1 Tim. 1, 9) that this salvation is without faith, because it is not expressly mentioned. An argument from silence in a certain passage is no argument. And Past. Stoeckhardt is nearly always unfortunate, and proves too much, when he tries to be particularly smart. He infers apodictically from 2 Tim. 1, 9, because it is there said that we have been saved and called, not according to our works, that faith is therefore also excluded. He insists upon it. If he is right, as he is sure that he is, then it follows, that we are actually *saved* without faith. For Paul says, that God has

saved us. And if because it was not according to our works, faith is also excluded, then God not only predestinates, but actually saves us without faith. Does Past. Stoeckhardt really hold this? We cannot believe it, although he does himself the great injustice of arguing it.

And when Past. Stoeckhardt asserts in a general way, that because our works are expressly excluded as a consideration in personal election, faith must therefore also by inference be excluded, we do not only totally dissent, but we must regard this as doing away with grace itself. Our works are indeed put in opposition to God's eternal grace, but never faith. If grace and faith are opposites, how is faith ever to lay hold upon grace? If we would be saved by the works of the law, we have fallen from grace, (Gal. 5, 4). Is that also true, if we would be justified by faith? So far is it from being true, *that we wait for the hope of righteousness by faith, and that faith in Christ Jesus availeth everything* (Gal. 5, 5. 6). Salvation, in order to be by grace alone, must be without faith, according to the St. Louis heresy. But so far is it from being true, that there is any antagonism between grace and faith that the apostle denies, that the one can be without the other. Therefore, says he, *it is of faith, that it might be by grace*. Rom. 4, 16. Let these words be noted against the senseless chatter of Missouri, *that grace alone excludes faith*. The apostle reverses this shibboleth of Missouri and affirms, that *it must be by faith, if it is of grace*. Grace comes by promise, and if it is grace, it must be by faith. So far are the two from being antagonistic, that the one, in a sense, depends upon the other. Do away with one and the other falls. If salvation is by grace, it must be by faith, and if election is by grace it must be by faith. There is no grace pertaining or belonging to us in any possible way, except by faith. Whatever election elects us to, must be by faith, if it is an election of grace. Grace and faith, as pertaining to man, are correlatives and are mutually dependent, we may say, as are gift and acceptance. The very idea of grace, the apostle means to say, includes that of faith. But works and grace, and equally works and faith, are opposites. Hence no inference can be drawn whatever from works concerning faith except that of opposites, that where works are excluded, faith is implied.



It is a singular fact that where in the Bible and our confessions works are expressly excluded from election, as a consideration, faith is nowhere excluded, and St. Louis must infer it with the above break-neck argument of putting faith and works on the same line.

The case of Esau and Jacob (Rom. 9) which Past. Stoeckhardt also cites and treats at length, is an example and illustration, in which the individual parts cannot all be pressed. In this respect it resembles a parable. The very first clause shows this, to wit, *before they had done either good or evil*; as also the other, *Jacob have I loved and Esau have I hated*. In election God certainly had no such neutral persons before Him who had neither done good nor evil. And what is denied as a reason why one was to serve the other was works. *Not of works*, it is expressly said. Works in the dogmatical sense may not be meant, as Past. Stoeckhardt allows, but all that is meant which the two persons were by nature. And in that there was no difference between them. Neither is it Lutheran doctrine that God in predestination had regard to the natural state of men, to see which was morally better, but to Christ apprehended by faith,—by faith too as God's gift and the Holy Spirit's work, and that is something very different. (See Note at end.)

VI. *Election is unto obedience, the sprinkling of blood, adoption, conformity to Christ, the praise of divine grace and salvation, and is thus a cause of our salvation by sanctioning and confirming final faith foreseen and all that results from it.*

We will begin this paragraph in the exhibition of the Scriptural evidence for the Lutheran doctrine of election by the exposition of 1 Pet. 1, 1. 2. Let us first see what its meaning cannot be, by stating how Past. Stoeckhardt understands it. St. Peter here says that his readers had been chosen *through* sanctification of the Spirit *εις ὑπακοήν και ροντισμὸν αἵματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ*, *unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ*. The first clause, to wit, *through sanctification of the Spirit*, we have already commented on, and ascertained its meaning to be equivalent to *faith of the Spirit*, or faith which the Holy Spirit works. That the clause means this Past. Stoeckhardt also holds. He remarks:

"Sanctification of the Spirit and faith of the truth both designate the same act, the same *habitus* of man—the first as the *habitus* given and produced by the Holy Ghost, hence according to its cause—the latter according to its essence and contents, as the acceptance of the Gospel" (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1880, p. 233). And subsequently he observes: "It means, when applied to election, that God resolved to save the elect through faith, which is equal to being elected unto faith." And in the passage under consideration he understands the term *unto obedience* as meaning *unto obedience of faith*, and remarks concerning it: "What we have been compelled to infer from Eph. 1, 5, to wit, that if God has elected us unto adoption He has also elected us unto faith, we find here directly expressed in plain words." *Lehre und Wehre*, 1880, p. 237.

This then is the acropolis of Missouri. This is the guarantee for its new doctrine, with which they have confused the minds and oppressed the consciences of men and brethren and have caused grief and tears which only the last day will reveal. Let them apply the poor man's plaster as much as they please, that it is only wounded vanity, blind reason, and selfishness that cause opposition to their new doctrine, the day of judgment will teach them something else. And let them glory in this controversy which they have wantonly provoked and against which Chemnitz in his day so earnestly uttered warnings; there is a Judge before whom every servant of His either stands or falls. But Past. Stoeckhardt is right in holding that such a mysterious doctrine as this of election, must be stated in the Bible in clear and express words, as, indeed, every doctrine of salvation must be so expressed somewhere in the Scriptures. And here, in the words that we were elected *unto obedience*, Past. Stoeckhardt finds the doctrine clearly expressed, expressed in plain words, that election was made *unto faith*, or that *faith flows from election*. But we would only ask, does *unto obedience* say in plain words *unto faith*, when obedience, according to Past. Stoeckhardt's own showing, has two meanings, namely, *obedience of faith* and *obedience in personal holiness*? Would that be stating a doctrine in plain words?

But aside from this, let us put all the parts of the passage 1 Pet. 1, 1. 2 together as Past. Stoeckhardt interprets

them. We get the following: God has chosen you in sanctification of the Spirit, which means *in the way of faith* and is equal to *unto faith*, unto obedience, which again is *unto faith*. God then has elected us *in the way of faith unto faith*, or *unto faith, unto faith*. Now we submit to any candid mind, whether this can be the meaning of the passage, whether the apostle can mean to say so absurd a thing, and whether this is not handling the Scriptures with frivolity! Is this to treat God's Word with fear? What good can all his pious exhortations do, as the November number of *Lehre und Wehre* contains them in an article headed, "*The natural man receiveth not*," etc., as long as he deals with God's Holy Word in so frivolous a way? Indeed, the whole article is an abortion, an attempt to construct the St. Louis doctrine of election from the Christian consciousness, as Prof. Hofmann does with regard to his system. It seems that Past. Stoeckhardt belongs to his school. Why, give us a single passage that clearly and in express words says, that God has elected us *unto faith*, or that *faith flows from election*, and our controversy with you is at an end, and our sword will go into its scabbard. But to appeal to Christian consciousness without any explicit Word of God, is a dangerous, un-Biblical and un-Lutheran principle. You may beguile simple Christians in that way, but you are responsible for thus having taken advantage of them.

But to return. We feel persuaded that every candid reader will agree with us that Past. Stoeckhardt's exposition of the passage in question needs no other disproof than the simple statement of what it is. It is its own best refutation. If then election took place through faith, as this passage tells us, or sanctification of the Spirit, which, as we have seen, means the same thing, the *obedience unto which it was made* cannot by any possibility mean *obedience of faith*, or faith simply, otherwise we would have an election *through faith unto faith*, or according to Stoeckhardt *unto faith unto faith*. Such an interpretation is *absolutely* excluded.

Obedience in the New Testament sometimes means faith, sometimes what is understood by good works or personal holiness of life. Of the first class are passages like these, Rom. 1, 5; 16, 26, where the obedience of faith is spoken of; and Rom. 15, 18; Rom. 16, 19, the obedience of the Gentiles, your obedi-

ence (of faith) is come abroad to all men, &c. Of the latter class are 2 Cor. 7, 15; 10, 6, where it is said that the Corinthians had shown their obedience by having received Titus with fear and trembling, and that their *obedience* would be fulfilled; Rom. 6, 16 *obedience unto righteousness*; Philem. 21, having confidence in the obedience, &c. The latter sense of obedience can alone be meant in 1 Pet. 1, 2, as we have already seen. It is true, as Past. Stoeckhardt observes, that faith and justification are closely connected ideas, but faith and obedience in holiness are also closely joined together, as the latter is the fruit of the former. And if we with Calov, Hofmann and others construe: God has elected us through faith unto obedience (in holiness) and sprinkling of blood, we have the correct meaning. The latter clause is equal to the imputation of the blood-bought merits of Christ, or the propitiation thereby made, as all prominent commentators agree. It is God's act in personal justification, the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to the believer, which logically and in fact follows faith.

Now the only objection that can with any show of plausibility be urged against this interpretation is the circumstance, that obedience thus intervenes between faith and the divine act of justification, or the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. But this difficulty will vanish on closer inspection. As faith in the preceding clause is spoken of as the product of the Holy Ghost and therefore as a divine work *in man*, the apostle would show to what faith is related. He mentions *obedience* or personal holiness first, as also a *divine work in man*, and then states that this faith, as it has its fruit in holiness or obedience, is also related to forgiveness of sin, the forgiveness which the Christian daily needs even after his conversion. In short, he proceeds from the Holy Spirit's work *in man* up to the divine declaration of justification. Viewed in this way there is nothing incongruous in the fact that obedience comes first and the pardon follows, which we continually need throughout our pilgrimage, although we walk in newness of life. And besides, the logic of the Holy Ghost in the inspired Word does not always agree with our human logic. Thus Paul, when he speaks of the fruits of the Spirit (Gal. 5, 22), puts love, joy, peace, &c., before faith, although the former

are the conjoined works of the Holy Ghost and the believer. We would suppose that faith ought to have been put first. Any doctrine that rests upon no better ground than human logic, as applied to the Word of inspiration, is built upon sand. Election *unto* faith then is a doctrine *extra et contra scripturam*. Eph. 1, 5, Paul says that God has predestinated us *εις υιοθεσιαν* through Jesus Christ unto Himself. The term is correctly given in our English version by adoption, only the idea of *unto* sonship, or as children, must be included. We had not been children before, but through Christ this adoption as children had been secured for us, and through predestination it had been destined to us, that we should have and possess it. In one place—Rom. 8, 23—where it is said that we wait for the adoption, to-wit, the redemption of our bodies, the word refers to our final deliverance as children; for the apostle explains it epexegetically by the *redemption of our bodies*, which he puts in opposition to the adoption. This passage shows that God at last adopts us as children of glory, ministering an entrance to us into His glorious kingdom. In other places the context, not the word can alone decide whether this adoption in heaven is meant or our adoption as God's children here on earth. Thus Rom. 8, 15 we read that we have received the Spirit of adoption, through whom we say Abba, Father. The Holy Ghost is called the Spirit of adoption, because He works that in us, namely faith, through which we receive adoption. Gal. 4, 5, 6 we learn that Christ through His incarnation and obedience purchased adoption for us. He redeemed us from the law that we might receive adoption. And as God's sons or children, He has given us His Spirit, so that we cry Abba, Father. But God's paternity implies our sonship, or the fact that we are His children. Hence that adoption is meant, which we already possess here on earth. In the passage under consideration it is not certain which adoption is meant, that which we obtain when we enter heaven, or that which we already possess on earth. But whether the one or the other is intended, does not affect our argument materially. For although adoption is through faith, as obedience or holiness is a fruit of faith, it does not follow that faith is a result of election because adoption is. We showed in a former article conclusively, as we think, that election is through faith, and

hence it must be unto all that to which faith entitles us—adoption and eternal life. Adoption no more includes the idea of faith than holiness does, but it presupposes faith. And how this is to be understood we learn from passages such as this: *Ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.* (Gal. 3, 26). And as God has chosen us through faith, has chosen us as those who were in Christ by faith, He must certainly also have predestinated us to adoption. But it certainly is no just inference that because God has predestinated us unto adoption, He has also predestinated us *unto* faith, by which it is obtained, by which we become children. For adoption not only presupposes faith, but also the means of grace and the redemption of Christ, which took place, as we are expressly told, *that we might receive the adoption of sons.* (Gal. 5, 6). Does Past. Stoeckhardt therefore also include redemption in personal election as a result of it? He would doubtless answer: No, we were predestinated through Christ; hence we cannot have been predestinated unto Him. But in like manner we were elected through faith as such who were in Christ, and hence we cannot have been predestinated unto faith also. Guess-work here will not do, and wild inferences will not serve in a doctrine so mysterious as election, where reason is in the dark and God's explicit Word alone can guide our steps. If he takes pleasure in guessing, we cannot stop him, but we will have nothing to do with it. And what would he say if we were to launch forth on the sea of human possibilities!

Eph. 1, 4, the inspired penman says that God hath chosen us that *we should be holy and without blame* before Him in love. If Past. Stoeckhardt is right in his argument, that because we were predestinated unto adoption we must also have been predestinated unto faith, as faith and adoption are closely connected ideas, he would have to assume here also, that we were elected unto faith, because personal holiness comes from faith and is a fruit of faith. If he delights in such rationalizing he must have his swing, but let him, at least, cease his claim that his conscience is bound and held by God's *explicit* Word. Let him guard against confounding his own notions with the express declaration of the Holy Ghost.

Whom God foreknew He also did predestinate to be con-

formed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren. Rom. 4, 29. The Formula of Concord understands by this conformity to Christ conformity in suffering. It is there said: "Again, as Paul shows this comfort, Rom. 8, that God in His purpose ordained before the world began by what crosses and sufferings He intends to make His elect conformed to the image of His Son, and that their crosses must work together for their good, &c." (Muell. p. 714). But Past. Stoeckhardt puts in his *alterum censeo* by remarking: "If we examine the apostle's words closely, we will not be able to withhold our assent from the interpretation of the latter, of those namely who confine this conformity with Christ to conformity in glory." But his reasons for so thinking we cannot consider worthy of serious refutation. Paul had spoken of the sufferings of the Christians at Rome, and had told them that these sufferings must work together for their good. This leads him to speak of predestination, doubtless for the immediate purpose of showing them that these sufferings had not come upon them by accident, but in conformity to divine predestination for their good, as thus they were conformed to the image of Christ, the divine Head of His spiritual members. And this is doubtless the conformity to the image of Christ, which is primarily meant. But, of course, this conformity here in suffering is prophetic of a conformity there in glory, as Paul joins the two ideas together in a similar manner when he says, "If we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him; if we suffer, we shall also reign with Him." 2 Tim. 2, 11. 12. It is true, where Christ is named at other places as the First-begotten, He appears as the risen One, as the glorious Son of God, as Stoeckhardt remarks, but the risen Savior appears also with the scars of His past sufferings. And the being dead with Christ comes before living with Him. Another objection to Past. Stoeckhardt's interpretation is the circumstance, that whilst Christ calls His believers brethren here, the saints in heaven are never so called. Conformity in glory does not include the idea of brethren. That is confined to this sublunary sphere.

Furthermore, God has predestinated us *to the praise of the glory of His grace*, wherein He has made us accepted in the Beloved, and *that we should be to the praise of His glory*, who first

trusted in Christ. Eph. 1, 2-8. These clauses are of general import, and mean to say generally that predestination was made for the purpose of magnifying and extolling the free grace of God. It does this not by *procuring* grace, bringing it about, and meriting it—this was done through the mediatorial office and work of Christ, but to extol and praise it. And that again is done by its effectual and unerring application to the elect, carrying the good work of the Holy Ghost in them to a glorious consummation. Our election and predestination in sanctioning and confirming the results of the means of grace foreseen, of our adoption, holiness and salvation through faith in those, who through the gracious influence of the Holy Ghost were in Christ. And this praise of the glory of the grace of God and that we might be to the praise of His glory, might be monuments of its effectual working, commences here on earth, is continued from day to day, as we proceed upon our pilgrimage, and swells into one unceasing anthem when we reach the glorious goal. In those who do not block up the Holy Spirit's way, but permit Him to begin and carry on His work, and who are thus brought unto Christ and predestinated, as such who in God's omniscience are seen in Him, the grace of God is magnified, and they are made thus to be to the endless praise of divine glory.

And, finally, believers are predestinated or called unto salvation. 2 Thess. 2, 13. *God has called you from the beginning*, says Paul, *unto salvation*. Past. Stoeckhardt here lays down the rule, *When it is not expressly said that we are saved here already, the term (namely, salvation) means the future blessed life*. But this is a rule *extra scripturam*. Indeed, the Bible knows nothing of such opposition between the salvation which we are told to possess here on earth in hope and by faith, and the future salvation in glory, as Past. Stoeckhardt supposes. Both are the same salvation, only differently possessed—here we are saved by the hope of faith—there by actual vision and enjoyment; here our salvation is yet on trial and may be lost, there it will be established forever. Hence, Paul can say that God *has saved us according to His purpose* (2 Thess. 1, 9) and that He has elected us *unto salvation* (2 Thess. 2, 13), speaking of the former salvation as already accomplished,



when yet its subjects had not yet actually entered their inheritance as children. But election being through faith unto the sprinkling of the blood of Christ, unto adoption and obedience, it must be unto all that also, to which faith and perseverance entitles as, unto final and eternal salvation. Besides, the opposition and contrast which the apostle makes between those elected unto salvation, and those that would believe a lie and perish, goes to show that eternal salvation is meant (2 Thess. 2, 13).

The fact that we are predestinated through faith (but not *unto* faith) unto salvation, has a retrospective evidence and proof; namely this, that the faith *through* which we were predestinated must be *fides finalis*, as it is only through this faith that we can obtain eternal life or salvation. Only he that continues unto the end, shall be saved. And those whom God foreknew as being in Christ by faith unto the end, He predestinated, and those whom He predestinated He also called, justified and glorified—they are made to reach eternal life. Rom. 8, 39.

VII. *Election took place in eternity, before the world began, before the foundations of the world were laid.*

In treating our subject the fact that election took place in eternity and before time began has been repeatedly alluded to. It is a characteristic of this act, that it was eternally done. And the Bible expressly teaches it. Paul says 2 Thess. 2, 13, that God has chosen us *απ' ἀρχῆς*, *from the beginning*, unto salvation. This is the beginning in which it is said John 1, 1, that the Logos was, already existed. When the beginning came, when time began, in the beginning emphatically, election had already been made, and thus it is relegated to eternity. And the same apostle writes Eph. 1, 4, *God has chosen us προ* (before) the founding of the world. With the creation time commenced and our election had taken place prior and before it, i. e. in eternity. And the grace by which we were saved and called in time was given us in Christ Jesus *προ* (before) the eternal ages, *ante secula seculorum*. All this proves conclusively that predestination dates back to eternity, is an eternal, immutable act, and the result of an eternally fixed purpose. And upon it our salvation rests, as upon an immovable rock, which the storms and conflicts of time cannot

reach nor move. It is immutable as the Eternal Himself is immutable.

VIII. *None of those elected unto eternal life can ever be lost.* They will all reach the end of their faith, namely eternal life, although they may fall from grace temporarily.

That election is certain, immutable, and unfailing, appears from the fact, that it is *unto* eternal life. It does not follow from the counsel of God's will simply to save men, that they will actually all be saved, as Past. Stoeckhardt supposes. For of the Pharisees we are expressly told, that they rejected the counsel of God when they refused to come to the baptism of John. That counsel of the divine will is, therefore, conditional, otherwise it certainly could not have been rejected. And Paul, when he had preached to the Ephesians the whole counsel of God, in no way intimates, that this included the actual salvation of all those who had heard him, although it certainly pertained to them all according to God's gracious purpose. And the general and whole plan of salvation is also the result of a divine counsel and purpose, as we have had occasion to show. But although it pertains to all, it is yet limited in its application to actual salvation by the condition: "He that believeth shall be saved—he that believeth not shall be damned." And in the *Articulis Visitatorii* it is declared to be a Calvinistic error, when it is taught that the elect and regenerate cannot lose faith and the Holy Ghost and *be damned*, although they commit all manner of great sin and vices, and that those who are not elected must be damned and cannot obtain salvation, even if they were baptized a thousand times, communed daily, and lived holy and unblamable lives, as they were able. It would not be uninteresting to see an authentic interpretation of Missouri upon these words.

But the counsel and purpose of election in its strict sense sets in where the counsel of redemption and general salvation ceases and has accomplished its work in the foresight of God, and eternally fixes, sanctions, and confirms its result. *Personal* predestination does not procure redemption or the means of grace or the gift of the Holy Ghost, by which faith and perseverance in the faith are wrought and produced. It does not work salvation, like baptism and the means of

grace, but it fixes and confirms their results. Hence it is unchangeable. And this is expressed by the terms election unto life and predestination. Hence too predestination in this sense is not conditional as regards the future. Its conditions, if we may so speak, lie back of it. *Election* foreseeing and foreknowing the salvation of the elect, as the Formula of Concord says, also fixes and establishes it irrevocably, and thus becomes a cause of this salvation on a lower line, and in a secondary sense. Consequently we are told that it is impossible that the elect should be deceived (Matth. 24, 24). God will shorten the days of the last tribulations and conflicts for the sake of His elect, (Mark 13, 20), thus showing that it is not by mere force and irresistible grace, as Missouri holds, that He saves them, but by limiting and abating the tribulations and temptations that assail them. And not only are the gifts and calling of God without repentance, so that God never revokes what in His omniscience He has foreseen and what by His grace He has accomplished, but He also fixes it by His resolution and will. As touching election His children are beloved (Rom. 11, 5). His sheep who hear His voice and whom through His Gospel He has made His own and in addition predestinated unto life, shall never perish and no one shall pluck them out of His hands. (John 10, 28). Those whom He has predestinated according to the purpose of His will must reach the goal of their predestination, God Himself, in His unchangeable truth, will, and omnipotent power, is their guarantee. Temporarily they may fall from grace and faith, as the examples of David and Peter go to show and as the Bible teaches.

But this of course could not be, if there were a predestination unto faith, as Missouri holds. Calvin clearly saw this; hence he denied the possibility of even a temporary lapsing from faith and grace on the part of the elect. But Missouri in its blind staggers heaps contradiction upon contradiction by maintaining that election is *unto* faith, and yet that faith may come and go and the elect may believe awhile and then apostatise, and believe again, whereby the whole doctrine of election is made to rest upon a foundation of quicksand and is overthrown. For if God has predestinated unto faith, has predestinated men to believe in Christ, and

be converted, so that conversion comes originally from election, is it possible that this faith could entirely disappear for years and years in the predestinated individual, only to emerge in his dying hour? Does God ever call men unto Christ for a while? And still more, does He predestinate men unto conversion and faith temporarily, to fall away again and to return to it perhaps only in their dying gasp? And as election will and must prevail, and in this respect is very different from the Gospel call, it would inevitably follow, that God Himself predestinates, desires and designs this believing and falling away again, only to be saved in the end. If election is unto faith and gives so little guarantee of its success, that faith may come and go, the whole doctrine of election is thereby put in jeopardy. There is no stronger proof against the St. Louis allegation, that election is unto faith than its own teaching, that faith may be lost by the predestinated individual, so that only salvation in the end is sure. It will be thus seen by the blearest eye, that the Missouri doctrine of election unto faith, and the possibility of a temporary falling away from faith are not only incongruities, but destroy one another. But we have already seen, the Bible knows absolutely nothing of personal predestination unto faith. Faith is not to be wrought by the power of predestination, but by the persuasive influence of the Holy Ghost through the means of grace—it comes by preaching and by preaching alone.

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NOTE.—The ways of error and false doctrine are sinuous, and one error begets another, and so on in endless and even arithmetical progression. This the Missouri fathers in the promulgation of their election doctrine have experienced, we hope, to their sorrow. Dr. Walther formulated the *status controversiæ* on his side by stating that *faith flows* from election in the narrow sense, which certainly means that election is the cause and faith the effect. But when it is now shown them that if election is the cause and faith the effect, election, as the singling out of men from the rest, must have been made without faith, and that this makes superfluous the doctrine of justification or destroys it, they seek to obviate the objection by

asserting that election and the giving of faith to men in foresight were one and the same act. But this evidently means that election and faith are both causes. How can election and faith stand related as cause and effect, if one act effected both? To argue against the Lutheran doctrine they maintain that faith flows from election, but to ward off the blow that this destroys the doctrine of justification by faith, they assert that election and the giving of faith in the eternal mind of God are one. Thus they have leaped from one horn of the dilemma to the other, and back again, as Vogt's aborigines of the *genus homo* in a Brazilian forest leap from limb to limb, till at last with immense straddle they have sought simultaneously to mount them both. But it is a vain effort, although it must be acknowledged that they of late have shown themselves able at once to stride almost the North and the South pole. A cause cannot be a cause and effect at once to the same thing, unless we should concede a logical mystery here. And that is what matters have actually come to. From Biblical mysteries they have advanced to logical mysteries. But to us the great mystery is how men can be so infatuated as not to see the folly of such a course. No; St. Louis must either surrender the point with which it started out, namely that faith flows from election, and that therefore election is the cause and faith is the effect, or it must let go the Lutheran doctrine of justification in its central position and regard it only as an appendage to its election doctrine. If election, however, and the bestowal of faith are regarded as one act, justification may still stand in a feeble way; but if faith flows from election, justification in its primary import goes overboard and will only occupy a place in the index of systematic theologies. We say again—election and the giving of faith cannot be one act and yet the latter be an effect of the former, so that election is regarded as *unto* faith. The two are utterly irreconcilable; the one destroys the other. They are absolute contradictories. And it is evident too, that the St. Louis magnates only have been driven to this harbor, that election and the giving of faith are one act, by stress of weather. If they really mean this, they make election to consist in conversion, and the controversy on election must then draw to a close, and the question will only be concerning conversion, whether,

namely, grace is irresistible or resistible by all. If they affirm the latter, all controversy ceases and we are left with regard to election where we began, and peace is restored.

Of course a great many of their wild theories will then go as chaff before the whirlwind. Past. Stoeckhardt's arduous labors in the way of torturing Rom. 8, 29 will prove an utter failure and Prof. Pieper's article *On the Conception of Election* will go the way of all flesh. For these were all intended to show that whom God *had* made His own by an effective act of His will He predestinated, and whom He predestinated He called, and whom He called He justified, and that this was all in *this order in the divine mind*. It was Prof. Pieper's battering ram with which the walls of our dogmaticians were to be ground to dust, that election set in with the sinner and then in regular gradation the call and justification followed *in the eternal mind of God*. And Past. St. as the modern Hercules undertook to slay all our theologians since three centuries as Stymphalian birds, by showing that God by means of His *prognosis* made men His own and subsequently predestinated, called and justified them, justification coming in as a work of supererogation. The St. Louis men ought to keep in mind to-day what they wrote yesterday. A good memory serves a good purpose in such critical cases. Such a memory would have kept the St. Louis *doctor subtilis* from writing in the Dec. Number of L. u. W. p. 561: "*We have from the beginning expressed ourselves in this way*. For only in such a case can we speak of a mystery for human reason in the work of conversion. If we did not teach such a *vocatio efficax* with all who hear the Word, if we taught a *vocatio* which in its nature was less *efficax* with some hearers, it would be clear to human reason why they are not converted. Just because we teach the same gracious and efficacious will of God to all men, who are in the same total corruption, we meet a mystery which human reason cannot penetrate." As a flat contradiction of this we would refer the reader to our extracts collected from their lucubrations and given in the August number of this MAGAZINE; for instance: "He gives to every one enough grace to be saved, *but He does not give to all EQUALLY*." We call that the law of adaptation. But we rejoice to see this progress toward the truth, even though it is made through a *lapsus memoriæ*. The blows of truth have not been wholly in vain.

## ROM. 9, 18.

BY REV. C. H. ROHE, DETROIT, MICH.

A prodigious thing is this New Missouri doctrine of predestination. Everybody else conceives of election as one undivided act upon a number of units with a twofold result; namely, that one unit is taken out, accepted, and destined for one purpose, and the other unit is left for another purpose. But New Missouri logic is able to accomplish the extraordinary feat of conceiving of the eternal election of God as two distinct, entirely separated and parallel acts, *running counter to each other*, whose causes as well as results are as widely different as heaven and earth. In other words: From all mankind, wholly equal in sin and spiritual death and redemption through Jesus Christ, God selects certain persons. Of *this* act of God the cause is the good pleasure of His will, without any consideration whatever whether the objects of His selection believe in Christ Jesus or not, and the *result* of this act is that the persons thus selected are in time brought to faith and continue in faith until their end and are saved. All the rest of this same mankind, whose individuals are until the very last moment before God's selection takes place as like in every respect before His eyes as one grain of sand is to another, He does not so select, and the cause of this non-selection is not the good pleasure of His will, but the unbelief of those not selected; in which unbelief, however, the selected lucky ones were before being selected their exact alter ego, and the result of this their non-selection is—nothing; for they are damned, not because of their not being selected, but because of their unbelief, whilst the others are saved solely in consequence of their election. The eternal selection of the one is the last cause of his faith and salvation; in inverse order, however, unbelief is the last cause of the non-election and damnation of the other. Before the act of selection began God had no reference in the least to the faith or unbelief of those He was going to select, but with regard to those whom He was going to leave out He first reviewed their precedents, and finding nothing but sin and unbelief in them, although they were redeemed by Christ as fully as the other, He passed

them by, notwithstanding the fact, that He had discovered precisely the same thing in those He did select.

It is a downright psychological impossibility earnestly to accept and believe as God-given truth this contradictory, abstruse, and grotesque theory; and, leaving aside all other considerations for the nonce, it is overthrown by the single declaration of the apostle Rom. 9, 18. Here Paul says: "So then He hath mercy on whom He will, and whom He will He hardeneth" (Revised Version). In order not to subvert the above described theory of election New Missouri's exegesis of this sweeping assertion must be the following: "God hath mercy on whom He will," that is, although the human race is fully redeemed by the death and resurrection of Christ, yet this universal grace must be set in operation, so to speak, and brought to its intended effect in the individual by the particular grace of election, and this particular grace God bestows on whom He will, without all reference to any cause or condition or prerequisite or merit or demerit on the part of the sinner. He elects and foreordains unto faith and eternal life whomsoever He chooses according to His unconditional, absolutely free and sovereign pleasure. "And whom He will He hardeneth," that is, He does *not* harden whom He will. For before hardening the heart of a sinner, before rejecting him from universal as well as particular grace forever, God first has regard to the conduct of those who are to be rejected towards the means of grace and the workings of His Spirit in their hearts. Whoever first hardens himself by his own innate malice and willful resistance against the gracious offers of the Holy Ghost, him does God by an exercise of His righteous judgment harden positively, effectively, and eternally; so that he who first *would* not believe, now *shall* not and *can* not believe. What Paul therefore wishes to say is this: God on the one hand elects unto faith whom He pleases, and this election is the cause of their faith; on the other hand He rejects in view of unbelief, and this unbelief is the cause of rejection.

Now, what would Missouri say, if I on my part should turn around and interpret in this fashion: "God hath mercy on whom He will," that is, God does *not* have mercy on whom He will, but He elects those who deserve it, He elects



in view of their merits, and their own righteousness is the cause of their being elected; "and whom He will He hardeneth," that means exactly what the words say, namely, that God hardens and rejects whom He will according to His absolutely free, angry pleasure, without any regard whatever to the merits or demerits of the sinner? Would not Missouri justly throw up its hands horror-stricken and cry out: "Heresy! blasphemy!" But I modestly ask: Why is Missouri's interpretation on this passage right and mine false? Why is Missouri justified in denying or rather qualifying the "whom He will" in the second half of the sentence, whilst I am not justified in denying or qualifying the "on whom He will" in the first half? What right has Missouri to accept the words of the first half exactly as they stand, but not the words of second, if I have no right to accept the words of the second half precisely as they stand, but not the words of the first? Why is Missouri allowed to consider the first half as a light by which other passages of Holy Writ are to be illumined, and at the same time to look upon the second half as obscure words which must *receive* light from other enunciations of Scripture, if I am not allowed to adopt the same method, only reversing the parts? What is the difference?

I only too willingly acknowledge that my interpretation would be the hight of absurdity and blasphemy. Would to God that the Missourians would as frankly confess their exposition of the words of the apostle to be equally absurd and blasphemous, and then abandon it forever! By the exercise of principles of interpretation as exemplified in this instance by Missouri the holy contents of the Bible must become an incoherent conglomeration of doings and sayings which may be shaken up according to the whims of the perverse heart of man, and then present the most astonishing kaleidoscopic views, from the infallibility of papal authority down to the soul-freezing negations of atheism. Guided by the rules of common intelligence and sound logic, as the explanation of all human language requires, we must understand the apostle in the words under consideration either to say: "God elects whom He will, according to the good pleasure of His will, without regard to faith or anything else on the part of the sinner, *and God rejects, hardens and condemns whom He will, ac-*

ording to *His absolute sovereignty, without regard to unbelief or willful resistance on the part of man,*" or else we must accept Paul as declaring: "God *elects in view of faith* and rejects in view of unbelief." If it is blasphemy to say that God from eternity relegated a sinner to impenitence and hell without respect to the fact that the sinner by his own malice first hardened himself in impenitence and unbelief, it is the same horrible crime against the majesty of God to say that He accepted and elected a sinner unto eternal life without regard to the fact that he through the grace of the Holy Ghost is in Christ Jesus by faith.

Accepting the standard of David, Ps. 36, 9: "In Thy light shall we see the light," as its rule of interpretation, the Lutheran Church does always let the Scriptures explain themselves, let the clearer passages shed their light on the darker ones that treat of the same substance. Thus in this instance, when the apostle says: "God hath mercy on whom He will," we of the Lutheran Church understand him to say: God hath mercy on whom He has *revealed* that He would have mercy, and when the holy writer finishes his sentence: "And whom He will He hardeneth," we understand: He hardens whom He has *revealed* that He would harden. Now on whom will He have mercy according to His own revelation? The answer is found, for instance, in the words of Christ, who came to make the innermost heart of God known to us, John 6, 40: "This is the will of my Father, that every one that beholdeth the Son and believeth on Him, should have eternal life;" conf. Jerem. 3, 12. 13. And whom does His revealed Word tell us that He would harden? As full an answer as might be desired is given Prov. 1, 24-33: "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at naught all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof.

Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning away of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil." Comp. further Isaiah 65; 2. Thess. 2, 9-14. In the light of such declarations as these, and many others that might be adduced, the sentence of Paul is as clear as the mid-day sun: it is the eternally determined and revealed will of God to have mercy on those who will not maliciously resist His Spirit, when He sets to work to lead them to penitence and faith in Jesus Christ by the means of grace, and at the same time it is His eternally determined and revealed will to harden those who by willful resistance to His Spirit and the means of grace first harden themselves, as Pharaoh for instance did. Comp. Formula of Concord, sol. decl. XI, § 85, 86.

May Missouri fill our American Zion with joy by recanting unreservedly its new-fledged doctrine of particular election unto faith, by which mischief enough has been done already and by which it is helplessly involved in endless dilemmas, contradictions and untenable positions against the Word of God, otherwise so clear and lucid. But if the Missourians intend to hold on to this tenet, which is nothing less than the prolific principle at the bottom of all Calvinistic errors, then let them do away with the absurd theory of rejection in view of unbelief; and if they persist in making Paul say that God has mercy and elects whom He will without regard to faith, then let them interpret the inspired writer consistently and proceed: And He hardens and rejects unto impenitence and damnation whom He will without regard to unbelief: and thus let them come out with their Calvinism fairly and squarely, so that all Christendom, and even the simplest-minded child of God, may know beyond the possibility of a doubt, who they are, and then beware of them! It will not do to say with reference to this verse of Paul what Dr. Walther said in *Lehre und Wehre* with regard to that famous passage of Luther's in his introductory remarks to the Ep. to the Rom.: "I insist that my interpretation of the first half is correct; but the second half I do not understand." No, this will not do.

## P R A Y E R .

The prayer of the upright is the Lord's delight. It has the promise of every good gift; it availeth much. The Spirit of Christ, and abiding in the Christian's heart, is a Spirit of prayer. The godly pray always. Such is the teaching of Holy Writ concerning the high usefulness of prayer and the close relation it sustains to the inner Christian life. Nevertheless, its real nature is little understood, its efficacy often doubted, and its exercise sadly neglected even within the church. Indeed, many plausible and captious considerations are urged to its disparagement, especially in so far as it includes the element of supplication, petition and intercession. Besides, they who engage in this unholy work of derogation generally do so with a show of profound wisdom and in forms of an extraordinary godliness. They tell us that to importune an allwise and infallible God to give ear to the cry of an individual and for the special benefit of the latter to order the affairs of His kingdom, whether of might or grace, is, after all, only the emanation of a proud and presumptuous heart. The entire course of events, they say, is so unalterably determined and fixed by an eternal and unchangeable mind that it must be utterly useless, yea an act of contempt, to expect the great God to effect a change. We are furthermore asked to believe that, since all things, including the thoughts and desires of our hearts, are already known to God even better than to ourselves, we but dishonor Him by telling what is so well known to Him already. Then, also, our personal affairs are said to be too insignificant to be at all noticed by the great Lord of heaven and earth. At another time again we are told that we are to pray indeed, not however for the purpose of moving the heart of God to grant our requests, but by prayer so to discipline our own hearts that they may no more desire the things requested. Lastly we are reminded of the fact that quite often men ask but they receive not. Now, if men professing an intelligent and strong belief in God so reason concerning prayer, yea, if language such as this is heard within the house of God, what wonder that from without we hear the very idea of an effectual prayer pronounced an absurdity and that, in the

very face of holy God, experiments are instituted to demonstrate its vanity?

That men who so twaddle about prayer speak of things they know nothing about, is evident to every Christian; but how any one professing Christianity can echo their sentiments and esteem them great wisdom, it is difficult to understand. The Christian's God is a God who heareth and answereth prayer; and that He is both able and willing to hear and answer is by no means the least among His praises. Therein is He distinct from all false gods; and thereby do we know Him as highly exalted above every power that may be named in heaven and earth. The ability to hear and the good will to accept of prayer are divine attributes, and to offer them with the certain hope of wise and gracious hearing is a Christian's prerogative and blessed privilege. Such is our faith; and we purpose in the following pages to give a reason for the faith that is in us.

There are found in the Israel of all times those of whom the Lord says: "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoreth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me." These have the form of prayer; but they have none of its substance and power. With their hearts afar from God they cannot possibly pray. "God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him, must worship Him in spirit and in truth." Prayer is an activity of the heart. It is the spirit's converse with its God—the worship of the newborn man within us. It is the soul's adoration of the divine Majesty; her praise of Him who is so wonderful in counsel and excellent in working; her Sanctus unto the Most High and Holy One; her sense of guilt finding vent in tears; her Litany unto "the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth;" her recourse to the cross on Golgotha; her hymn of full pardon and perfect peace; her offer of the gold of devotion, of the frankincense of good-will, and of the myrrh of a lively hope; her key unto every good and perfect gift of God; her happiness going forth in thanksgiving to her Benefactor; her longing to be with the Lord forever; and, in the glory above, her everlasting doxology. Such is prayer, that priceless boon secured for men by the blood of Jesus and bestowed on us who believe in

Him and who are by this faith become a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that we should show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvellous light.

When St. Paul inquires: "How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed?" he neither asks for information nor does he expect to receive any. It is plainly a question of negation, and intended to emphasize his conviction that an unbeliever cannot pray. Such a person may talk about God, and even unto God; but he can do so only in contradiction to his own sentiments and in mockery of Him whose existence he denies. He may say a prayer, but pray to God he cannot. He has neither a heart whence a true prayer must arise, nor a living God unto whom to direct it. Whoever in his heart denies the being and the personality of God, cannot in sincerity address Him. Prayer in its very nature precludes both atheism and pantheism. It is an affection and a motion peculiar to a believing heart—a heart that believes and loves a living personal God and as such communes with Him. Prayer is faith pleading the promises of divine grace; it is hope waiting upon the Lord and reaching for the good that is to come; it is love praising the greatness and goodness of God. Without faith, without hope, without love, prayer is impossible; but where these are, there is prayer in truth. These are the true priestly qualifications in the temple of God, and indispensable to every one who will serve acceptably at His altar.

"For, behold, he prayeth!" With this assurance would the Lord allay the fears of Ananias when He directed him to inquire for Saul of Tarsus, who was known to breathe out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of Christ. Saul prayeth, that is, he is converted; so the Lord Himself would have us conclude. They who pray are a people "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," even the sons of God. These cry out unto God: Abba, Father! It cannot be otherwise. For they are not only children simply by declaration, and so called merely; they have also received filial hearts. They are not only adopted, but they have besides received the Spirit of adoption. They are verily begotten and born of God. He is in-

deed their Father. As their Father they know, fear, love, trust, obey and honor Him. It is their nature to be thus affected toward Him; and true to their nature they cry: Our Father! Prayer is the pulsation of a heart quickened by the Spirit of God; and, whether with strength or in weakness, the heart that is spiritually living must beat in prayer. Let it wholly cease to so rise and fall, and we may be sure that with its cessation the godly life, whereof it is an index, itself is extinct. The soul of the godly man, because it is spiritually alive, is necessarily a praying soul. The true and sincere prayer is entirely spontaneous. It cannot be coerced. It is the sweet savor of a plant that grows, not at Sinai, but at the manger in Bethlehem and at the foot of the cross on Calvary. When the holy law was given, there were thunders and lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking and greatly quaking; but there was no prayer; rather the people stood afar and trembled. Yet when a second time the heavens were moved and God came down and, as the first-born son of Mary, was laid in the manger at Bethlehem, then too there was great fear, but a fear that turned to joy so great and bold that men began to vie with angels in giving glory to God on high. Only by the light of the Gospel shining in on the heart of man can it be made to live and breathe in prayer unto Him who so quickens it. Whatever element of a legalistic and compulsory nature may attach itself to the prayers of the children of God, it does not belong to them, but constitutes their imperfection. There is found in our Western plains a wonderful growth, called the compass-plant, because its leaves invariably point northward. Longfellow, with a thoughtfulness as beautiful as it is appropriate, makes it the emblem, let us say, of our dear Christian faith. The picture, as it presents itself to his mind, is given in the following lines from his "Evangeline":

"Patience!" the priest would say, "have faith, and thy prayer will be answered!"

Look at this vigorous plant that lifts its head from the meadow:  
See how its leaves are turned to the north, as true as the magnet!  
This is the compass-flower, that the finger of God has planted  
Here in the houseless wild, to direct the traveler's journey  
Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste of the desert.

Such in the soul of man is faith. The blossoms of passion,  
 Gay and luxuriant flowers, are brighter and fuller of fragrance;  
 But they beguile us, and lead us astray, and their odor is deadly:  
 Only this humble plant can guide us here, and hereafter  
 Crown us with asphodel flowers, that are wet with the dews of ne-  
 penthe."

Faith is the Christian's compass-flower, planted in his heart by the finger of a merciful and loving Father; and by a God-given nature all its own, it points not north, but heavenward. And this impulsive, constant and pertinacious look of faith unto heaven is prayer. "O God, Thou art my God; early will I seek Thee: my soul thirsteth for Thee, my flesh longeth for Thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see Thy power and Thy glory, so as I have seen them in the sanctuary. Because Thy loving kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise Thee. Thus will I bless Thee while I live: I will lift up my hands in Thy name. My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise Thee with joyful lips: when I remember Thee upon my bed, and meditate on Thee in the night watches. Because Thou hast been my help, therefore in the shadow of Thy wings will I rejoice. My soul followeth hard after Thee: Thy right hand upholdeth me." Psalm 63, 1-8. Here behold a soul which, loosed from the weight of sin by the hand of grace, careers in its freedom to the very throne of God, and prays!

We read of Hannah, the wife of Elkanah, that "she was in bitterness of soul, and prayed unto the Lord, and wept sore . . . And it came to pass, as she continued praying before the Lord, that Eli marked her mouth. Now Hannah, she spoke in her heart; only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard." 1 Samuel 1, 10. Though her voice was not heard, yet the Scriptures affirm that Hannah prayed. The spoken word is, accordingly, not essential.

"Prayer is the soul's sincere desire  
 Uttered or unexpressed,  
 The motion of a hidden fire  
 That trembles in the breast."

We sing a Bible doctrine when we so sing from our hymnals. Nevertheless, to clothe with words the longings of a prayerful



heart, and to give voice to its desires in speech and melody, is both natural and useful. Only we must be careful not to confound the form with the substance, the saying or singing of a prayer with the prayer itself. It is natural to pray aloud; "for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." And then it is very useful, too; and that in various ways. Between the thoughts of the heart and the sound of the voice there consists a very close and somewhat mystical inter-communication. Not only do our thoughts find expression in the spoken word, but the word so spoken also reacts upon the soul that gave it birth, more fully defines its thoughts, strengthens and, at times, reassures it. A lonely wanderer in the dark of night, to quell his fear of evil, will likely take to talking aloud with himself, to whistling, or to singing; and it does him good. In him we have the prodigy of a man who from his own want supplies his wants; for he draws courage and comfort from himself who is in need of them, and that too by the sound of his voice. Again, a melody in the heart can never be so sweet but what it can be made more sweet by the voice of music, even to the same heart that has indited it. Thus it is with prayer. The soul that prays will often, if not always, be led to pray with greater clearness and an increase of fervor by praying aloud. The greater importance of the spoken prayer lies, however, in what may be termed its didactic or pastoral and congregational uses. Children, whether in years or understanding, must be taught to pray. To do this we must do more than see to their regeneration and spiritual growth in a general way, more than pray for them and tell them to pray; we must pray in their hearing. Then, too, we are often required by prayer to edify and comfort the sick, the needy and the sorrowful. Here, again, our prayer must be spoken and heard in order to accomplish its object in full. "Else, when thou shalt bless with the spirit, how shall he that occupieth the room of the unlearned say Amen at thy giving of thanks, seeing he understandeth not what thou sayest? For thou verily givest thanks well, but the other is not edified." 1 Cor. 14, 16. 17. Lastly, as children of the one Father in heaven and as partakers of the same Spirit, we are constrained from within with one mind and with one mouth to glorify our common Father. The profit and the beauty of

joining many hearts and lips in one great service unto God are matters of general Christian experience. Worship around the family altar and in the sanctuary make the use of formulated and spoken prayers indispensable. And wherever the Lord Himself openeth the lips to show forth His praise, there we may be sure that both the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts will be acceptable to Him, our Strength and our Redeemer.

The Evangelist St. Luke tells us that as Christ "was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven . . .," chap. 11, 1-4. From this record we may learn several things. It establishes beyond all dispute the propriety and divine legitimacy of employing for the purpose of worship certain given forms of prayer; it teaches us how to pray in giving us an exemplary form; and then, in the prayer given, the things are pointed out for which we are to pray. "Since this prayer has for its author the Lord Himself, it is without doubt the highest, noblest and best prayer. For had He, our good and faithful Master, known a better, most assuredly He would have imparted it to us. By this we do not mean to say that all other prayers which are not so worded, are on that account worthless. For, before the birth of Christ, many saints have prayed" (and prayed truly and acceptably) "though they had not this form. Our meaning is that all prayers, in so far as they comprise not the sense and substance of this, are of a questionable character. The Psalms indeed are fine prayers; yet, although they fully include, yet do they not as clearly express the properties of prayer as is here done. Hence, it is a mistake to place others as in any way equal with the Lord's Prayer." (Luther, Erl. 21, 162). In whatever way we may look at it, the superlative excellency and perfection of this prayer can never be fully told. Yet we cannot forbear to name a few. It presents all the parts of a complete prayer. From beginning to end it maintains the form of address and invocation. It points to the One, true, personal, living and loving God above, and to Him as the Father of us all. Our common guilt and helpless condition it presupposes as evident. It requires

us to lift up none other than hearts truly contrite and penitent. Taking as a matter of fact our poverty and needs, our weakness and dependency, it leads us on to confident petition. And so closely does it bind the many into one, so wisely and well does it interlink the concerns of men, that none can pray it except he pray for all. Though few and simple be its words, yet there is no good thing found in heaven and earth but what it were here named or herein comprehended. The importance of things spiritual is here made paramount to that of all others; and the subordinate relation of the earthly to the heavenly is here closely set forth. In its every petition it indeed reminds us of our personal wickedness, want and woe, but it is done only to leads us to the mercy, the fulness and the happiness of our God. In its repetition we begin with the thought that though we are the children of God in heaven, still we walk as strangers and pilgrims in a land of sin and sorrow and afar from our Father's house; but we close it forgetful of every earthly thought and weight, and our souls go out in thanksgiving and praise to Him whose is the kingdom, the power and the glory for ever and ever—to Him who in all things and throughout all time is our God and Father. Lord Jesus, teach us to pray, to pray Thy prayer!

In the early part of the Christian era there existed for a century or two a certain monastic sect which, among other strange vagaries, entertained the notion that the only exercise obligatory on, and really befitting saints was that of saying prayers. On this account they were appropriately called Eucharites. Always praying or pretending to pray, and doing work of no kind, they depended altogether on others for their sustenance. To them prayer or, better said, the rehearsal of prayers without interruption, was everything, and the only thing needful to accomplish anything. Whatever this their fanaticism may have availed, we are sure that it never secured them the bread and meat due an honest laborer. But is it not written, Pray always, pray without ceasing, pray everywhere? True, but it is not written that we are to pray aloud always and everywhere. "But when ye pray," says Christ, "use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do; for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them." Matt. 6, 8. To him who knows what be-

fore God constitutes a true prayer, the passages of Scripture enjoining us to pray at all times and at all places, can present no great difficulties. Their meaning is that we shall live and labor always and everywhere in the Spirit of prayer. "All the works of a believer are, in themselves, so many prayers, is a saying ascribed to Jerome; and another proverb reads thus: Whoever labors faithfully, prays doubly. And it must be so said for the reason that a believing person fears and honors God in his work, being ever mindful of His precepts." Luther. Erl. 23, 215. So long then as we, in Christian faithfulness, do the work of our calling we also continue in prayer. Nor is such the nature of prayer that we must be necessarily conscious of it. Though the thoughts of love are not uppermost in the heart of a child, but quite often make room for thoughts of other things, yet who would conclude that then the child has ceased to love its parent? So, too, the child of God, whether waking or asleep, never ceases to love and trust his Father in heaven, and to breathe unto Him in prayer.

But, if such were possible, we might appear before the Lord with hearts twice broken and contrite with supplications never so fervent, and praise never so upright, unless we appear in Jesus' name it will avail us nothing. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." It is upon the multitude of the Lord's mercy that David of the old Covenant would enter into the house of prayer. And Daniel, pleading for the restoration of Jerusalem, cries: "O my God, incline Thine ear and hear, . . . for we do not present our supplications before Thee for our righteousness, but for Thy great mercies." The kingdom of God is a kingdom of grace, but its grace and truth are by Christ. Unto Him is given all power in heaven and in earth. In Him is all the fulness of God. He can create and destroy; He can open and close; He can give and withhold, even as He will. And His good pleasure is made known unto us in this His own word: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, He will give it to you. . . Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full." John 16, 24. Hereby are opened unto us our Father's house and heart and

hands, so that all things have become as though they were our own. But he that would enter and take must enter by Christ. In order that our Father from His fulness may fill the emptiness of our hearts, these must pray in Jesus' name. That means: they must draw near unto God in obedience to His gracious will; they must urge only His mercy and merits; and they must fully trust His promise. Prayer is a privilege dearly purchased; and it is the good will of Christ, who obtained it for us, that we diligently avail ourselves of it in order that we may be made happy. Every good gift and every perfect gift cometh down from above, from the Father of light; but we do not deserve the least of them; they must be and are all given for Jesus' sake. All then that we need to do is to come unto God with our hearts and hands open and they shall be filled; but we must draw near with full confidence of receiving our petition. Christ will not have us doubt His word; for our fears and doubts are a reproach to Him in whom all the promises of God are yea and amen.

“And this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He heareth us: And if we know that He hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of Him.” 1 John 5, 14. 15. Notwithstanding all appearances, all reasoning, all scepticism to the contrary, prayer is always heard and accepted of God. If any ask and receive not, it is because they ask amiss. The acceptable prayer must spring up in faith, arise in Jesus' name and accord with the will of God. Unto a prayer that in any way comes short of these things no promise is given. Say you that, only petitions according to God's will being granted, the limit of our desires are thereby greatly reduced and our expectations accordingly quenched? Very true, if you include among these the wishes and prospects that are both foolish and hurtful; otherwise not. Things vain and injurious our Father cannot and will not give us. He loves us too wisely and well thus to deal with us. On the other hand, His thoughts and His will with blessings to bless us are boundless. He “is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us;” and He is as willing as He is able, so that in the direction of things good and salutary for us,

there is no limit set to the desires of our hearts. In this matter of prayer, as in spiritual things generally, we are but children, and we speak as children, we understand as children and think as children; so that "we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which 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 the will of God." Rom. 8, 26-27. Nor is the fear that we may sometimes ask foolishly because of our ignorance, in any way to deter us from making known our requests unto God. Let us do so, but with the heart, submitting our own will to the will of God. He knows what things to bestow and which to deny. If we are apt to mistake a stone for bread or a serpent for a fish, not He. His unerring wisdom and fatherly goodness will every time give unto us, not so much according to our words as according to our needs and—our desires; for, after all, it is ever a blessing that we seek.

It remains for us pertinently to apply the wisdom of God here gathered in answer to the foolishness of men, whereby these would perplex and mislead our Christian minds and beguile us of the happy trust we have obtained concerning prayer. For this purpose we return to the objections urged against it, as they are presented in the first part of our paper. Presuming the ability and the right to judge the hearts of others, they discover by a sagacity all their own that prayer is necessarily nothing better than the outpouring of a proud and arrogant heart. But what says He, unto whom "every one that is proud in heart is an abomination?" He says: "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications." Zech. 12, 10. If the supplication of our hearts is but another name for its presumption, as these men would make us believe, how then can holy God give us the spirit of the one while He abominates the spirit of the other? If our prayer is but an expression of human pride and selfishness, how can our heavenly Father affectionately invite us to call upon Him, how can the Holy Spirit move us to prayer, and how can Christ secure for it a gracious hearing? No, we will rely upon the judgment of God rather than upon the pro-

nouncements of men wise in their own conceit. He can in truth search the hearts of men and know its secrets; from Him no thought can be withholden; and He finds that only a humble and submissive heart can pray; and hearts that do so pray there are, thanks to His own gracious creation. To those who would interpose their fatalistic views of divine government between our God and our prayers, we have but the one answer to make that, predetermining all things from eternity, certain it is that a compassionate God has also determined to regard the needs of His own children, to incline His ears to their cry and to grant their requests. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose." Rom. 8, 28. Most true is it when others premise that all our wants and longings are present to the all-knowing God; for Christ says: "Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? . . . for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things." Matt. 6, 31. 32. Likewise it is written: "And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." Isa. 64, 24. But when they conclude from these facts that prayer is superfluous, yea, a reproach to omniscient God, they grievously err; and they are guilty of disesteem toward Him who invites us to be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to let our requests be made known unto Him. (Comp. Phil. 4, 6). People who can conceive no object of prayer other than that of communicating information to God, must have very little Christian knowledge. Of prayer they certainly have none whatever. It is in no way intended to impart knowledge to the mind of God; He has enjoined it for our benefit. In its exercise we are to become more fully conscious of our own true condition, of our entire dependency on Him in whom alone is our help, of His marvelous readiness ever to save and bless us, of the fact that all we are and all we have is by His grace, and lastly, of our bounden duty to serve, thank and praise Him. So conscious, and in this consciousness abiding and increasing we, in our prayers, bow before our heavenly Father that He may lay His hands upon us and bless us; we extend

our hands unto Christ our Savior that He may take them and be our guide and passport, our strength and safety; and we open our hearts that the Spirit, our Comforter, may fill them with all spiritual blessings according to His good pleasure. And, unto every soul thus appearing before the Lord God, the promise is: Be it done unto thee, even as thou wilt! But he who appears not, or appears vaunting his own self-sufficiency and with hands crossed in carnal security and with his heart closed to everything save to the things of earth, must be left desolate.

But God is said to be so great and we and our affairs are so small that He cannot be expected to notice us, much less take account of everybody's little troubles and requests. True, we cannot over-estimate the greatness of Divinity, and to make humanity more worthless than it is, is not a human proclivity. But they who would hold up to us the infinite greatness of God to His discredit as the Hearer of prayer, must have a very poor conception of true greatness. Certainly, our God and our God's greatness they do not know aright. To know all things, whether high or low, whether great or small, whether good or bad, is characteristic of divine greatness; and to regard each one of them more according to its needs than according to its worth, is the highest glory of divine goodness. "Great is our Lord, and of great power: His understanding is infinite. He telleth the number of the stars; He calleth them all by their name." (Ps. 147). "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered." (Matt. 10.) He who knows beforehand the sands on the sea-shore, the rain-drops in a shower, and the days of time, and whose eyes are upon the ways of man and who seeth all his doings, He is truly great; and great in this that He heareth prayer, so that all flesh cometh unto Him. And as to our own littleness and worthlessness, as to the smallness of our affairs and the faultiness of our desires, we have this happy confidence that all these are made great and worthy in the sight of God, not by our prayers, but by Christ, who represents us in them by the Spirit He has given us.

Another, and the last error noted, is that whereby the



main object and use of prayer are held to be the discipline and change of the heart praying. Here it is made a means of grace: an ignorant heart is to be enlightened and a sinful heart to be sanctified by its own utterances! Here we may say, in passing, that in so far as the word of God is made a part of prayer, in so far is it and is it operative as a means of grace; but we must hold fast the distinction between the divine word, by means of which God comes and deals with us, and our own prayers, through which we draw nigh unto God. The former, not the latter, is the proper means of grace. The way the error in question is arrived at is as follows: God, in His gracious will and purpose, is perfect and His mind cannot be changed, no, not by the prayers of Christ even; and if not by the Child most dear to Him, much less by us; hence we are to pray, not presuming thereby to change the Father's will, but to bring our own will into conformity with His; when this is accomplished our prayer is heard. To show up the fallacy and absurdity of the argument at once, let us say that, according to it, a sinner seeking pardon has attained the object of his search when he desires pardon no longer; asking for my daily bread, my petition is granted only in this that I no longer want it. In the above reasoning there is a strange mixture of truth and error. It is true that God is perfect in His wisdom and mercy and that in Him "there is no variability nor shadow of turning." It is just as true, also, that our prayers are neither able nor intended to change the Father's mind; it is best just as we find it. For this very reason, however, it is a mistake of the worst kind to think that prayer is effectual only in us and not before God; that there is no other than a disciplinary use for it. When the Christian properly asks for a blessing, it does not occur to him to make God willing to vouchsafe the good thing desired; he confidently presupposes that willingness. The burthen of his supplication is that the good will, which God has notwithstanding it and before He is appealed to, may be actually accomplished. The divine will to us and to all men is supremely kind, and He is fain to fill the hearts of all unto overflowing with the good things of His love, but men will not let His will be done; we pray that it may be done unto us; and in answer to our prayer it is done, always done,

though the season and manner of its doing are God's own. But many have not because they ask not. Jesus invites, saying: "Ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full!"

C. H. L. S.

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SOME TESTIMONIES OF THE AUTHORS OF THE FORMULA OF  
CONCORD IN REGARD TO ELECTION.

Translated from "Altes und Neues" by G. H. S.

I.

David Chytraeus writes in his commentary on Rev. p. 373: "The norm and rule of the last judgment will be a simple, easily comprehended, certain and irreversible one. The book of life, the determining criterion of judgment, which refers to all mankind in the same way, without any respect of persons, is expressed in plain and clear words in the passage: 'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already.' All those then who are not inscribed in the book of life of the Lamb will without distinction be cast as condemned into the eternal fire, as is stated at the end of this book. And at the close of the 21st chapter he adds that no one can be a citizen of the holy Jerusalem, or of the heavenly church, who has not been inscribed in the book of life of the Lamb. But in this book of life are inscribed, elected to eternal life, all men who believe in Christ, the Lamb of God that bears the sins of the world, and the Giver of eternal life, and who persevere in this faith unto the end. This faith shows itself during life-time in works of mercy or good deeds towards our fellow-men, or is exhibited in all the duties of love toward God and our fellow-men, and shines before other men. Therefore those who are inscribed in the book of life are in Matt. 25, 34, called 'the blessed of the Father,' who shall inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. For all the nations shall be blessed, that is, they will be delivered from sin and death, they obtain the inheritance

of the heavenly kingdom and righteousness and eternal life, solely and alone from the Seed of Abraham, since He has been apprehended by faith, Gal. 3. And Eph. 1, 3. 4, we read: 'God 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.' Therefore Paul says, Rom. 6, 23: 'The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' And Eph. 2, 8: 'By grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, lest any man should boast.'"

## II.

On Rev. 13, 8, the same Chytraeus writes: "Although the multitudes of those who without any scruples worship idols is great and vast, and although even in the mass that composes the Christian church the majority, either charmed by the power or the conquests of the beast or overcome by fear, fall away from the true God and worship the beast, nevertheless God at all times preserves among the human race a holy seed, or a church of those elected to eternal life. These are they who are inscribed in the book of life of the Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world, that is, those who, before the foundation of the world, from pure grace on account of His Son Jesus Christ, who is our Savior and the Lamb that was slain for the sins of the world, have been called and elected by the preaching of the Gospel to eternal life, that they might to all eternity rejoice in the wisdom, justice, life and salvation from God, and thus praise and glorify God. But in this expression (whose names are inscribed in the book of life) the figure is taken from the usual custom of cities and corporations that have certain books in which the names of the citizens are kept on record. But here we must not imagine that God has Stoic tablets or the tablets of the Fates, on which the names of certain persons are enrolled who of an absolute necessity must be saved, whether they hear or despise the Word of God, whether they believe in Christ, the Lamb slain for our sins, or not, and in a like manner the names of others who of a necessity must be condemned. But rather we should remember that we are to form our conclusions concerning election and predestination from nothing except the Word of God, who is true and just or alike disposed toward all, and in

whom there is no respect of persons, and also from the promise of the Gospel, which is general and offered gratuitously. Thus then are inscribed in the book of life, or elected by God to eternal life, all men who believe in Christ, the Lamb of God that bears the sins of the world, and persevere in this faith to their last breath. As we read in John 1, 12: 'As many as received Him, to them He gave power to become the sons of God.' Rev. 2, 10: 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.' Eph. 1, 4: 'He hath chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world.' 1 Pet. 1, 20: 'Ye are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot; who verily was fore-ordained before the foundation of the world.'"

### III.

In his explanation of the Catechism Chytraeus writes p. 84.: "Predestination is the eternal decree of the will (mentis) of God, by which He of free grace and mercy on account of His Son has selected an eternal church, that is, persons who are pleasing to Him and are heirs of eternal life. The members of this church are all those individuals who receive the Gospel of Christ in faith and persevere in this faith to the end of life, according to the words: 'Blessed are they who die in the Lord.' 'Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.'"

### IV.

When the Huber controversy broke out, and the Wittenberg and Wuertemberg theologians referred election only to the believers as such, and Huber taught that all men were elected, the aged Chytraeus also, the only surviving co-author of the Formula of Concord, was forced to raise his weighty voice. It decided against Huber and for his opponents; for which reason Hunnius afterwards (but still during the life time of Chytraeus) expressly appealed to the fact that this Rostock prince of theologians had read and approved of his writings on predestination. If Chemnitz before that time had already refused in so many words to call election particular, "because this might be understood as if God's intention had not been to save all men," in the case of Chytraeus

it becomes still clearer and more precise in which sense the authors of the Formula of Concord stand so closely and firmly on the general promises in treating of the doctrine of election. If, namely, among the acts of grace on the part of God for the welfare of men, at least election to salvation were simply particular, then too the gracious will of God to save sinners would also be particular in its innermost essence; for whomsoever God did not will to elect, him He also did not will to save. But if, on the other hand, the gracious will to save sinners is universal and in this universal character earnestly meant, then God must have on His part desired to save all. Chytraeus and his Rostock colleagues accordingly write to the Wittenberg theologians, under the date of July 4, 1595, as follows: "In reference to the use of the expression 'universal election,' we repeat: If it is not satisfactory to call the will of God in Christ, according to which He earnestly desires the salvation of man, a universal predestination, it is not in place to raise a controversy on account of the words, if only the beneficial, comforting doctrine is adhered to. For if there is an agreement with regard to the thing itself, we should be yielding in reference to the use of certain words. And since we do not doubt that in this whole matter of election there is among us devout harmony, we can on both sides retain the mode of expression concerning the universal election, namely in that sense and in that connection in which the foreordination proper to salvation, which is the point in controversy, concerning which the Formula of Concord treats, truly and really is a universal one in reference to all men, Jew and Gentile, who in faith have learned to know the Son of God and Savior of the world and remain therein unto the end of life: just as also the righteousness of God by faith in Christ Jesus is universal with reference to all and over all that believe. For here there is no distinction, Rom. 3. But those who do not believe remain under the judgment and wrath of God to eternity. Therefore, too, they are not called elect, but reprobates." In the same letter we read further: "The merciful will of God, which burns with love for the human race, is this that all men shall be elected, justified and be saved in Christ, namely through faith in Christ. But since all do not believe, God does not regard all without distinction as elected

to whom He grants righteousness and eternal life in Christ, although He desired concerning them all that they should have been elected and saved, if they had believed. We have several times told Huber, and repeated it during our last conversation when he took leave of us, that the real and complete definition of election, according to the Holy Scriptures and the Book of Concord, does not only embrace the merciful will of God or the merits of Christ and the universal promises of the Gospel, but also true and persevering faith in this mercy of God and in Christ, the Mediator and Savior of the whole human race, because Christ avails nothing without faith, and all the promises of the Gospel expressly demand faith."

## V.

Dr. Jacob Andreae, beside Chemnitz at least one of the main authors of the Formula of Concord and in reference to the historical side of its production by far more active than Chemnitz himself, in the year 1574 published a disputation on predestination in which thesis 10 reads as follows: "Predestination and election by grace is the eternal decree of God to this effect, that He will save those persons who are penitent and believe in Christ the Savior and only Redeemer of the world." Thesis 172: "It is God's immutable will that all should believe in the Gospel and that those who believe shall be saved," Mark 16. Thesis 173: "Nor does the universality of the promises of the Gospel contradict the particularity of election," (that is, by the fact that election is restricted to a few, or that only a few are elected.) Thesis 175: "For God has not promised salvation to all promiscuously, but only to those that believe." Thesis 176: "Hence the particular election is embraced in the universal promises." In addition to this Andreae, in this disputation of the year 1574, opposes an unconditional election in the following words: "Whoever seeks for predestination in an absolute decree of God, because God's prescience is absolutely certain, leads men to believe that such a decree necessarily brings about the salvation of certain persons who under no circumstances can be condemned, but effects the damnation of others so that they cannot be saved. The result of this is that believers, being perplexed when considering this divine

prescience, cannot be cheered up by consolation; and, on the other hand, Epicurean-minded men thereby open for themselves and others the door for transgressions; because the hidden will of God is regarded as having decided, all our efforts avail nothing . . . . The reason why all have not been saved is because many spurn the divine grace which God offers to all in Christ. That it cannot be accomplished by human powers must be received, but does not change the doctrine. For all are to hear Christ and by hearing are to come to faith. Whosoever then despises the preaching must accuse himself and not a secret decree, just as his conscience accuses only himself. The doctrine of an absolute decree also makes useless the application of the word and the sacraments. Reprobation by an absolute will, without the foresight of unbelief, is blasphemous. Whoever hears the word, which he cannot indeed believe by his own powers, to him the Holy Spirit has been promised, who works that all who hear also believe. This going to preaching, willing and hearing, God demands as outward obedience and instruction unto Christ, without this already effecting regeneration. But man can do this, namely hear the word which is the organ of the Holy Spirit, or he can refuse to hear; but he has not the least measure of power for assent, as Erasmus taught, but the assent is entirely the work of the Holy Spirit."

## VI.

Twelve years later and six years after the adoption of the Formula of Concord, Jacob Andreae issued what was probably his last discourse or treatise on the doctrine of predestination. In this are found the following theses: 5. "The Word of God teaches us of God as the revealed, that no absolute decree had been formed concerning the human race, neither with reference to salvation nor condemnation, but that in Christ Jesus are elected as many as believe in Him; and that those are condemned who do not believe in Him." 18. "But that the call is called universal, but the election particular, has as its cause this, that the decree of God with reference to those persons who are to be saved is not an absolute one, but has its restrictions." 19. "For since we are elected in Christ all the instruments and means that are necessary to come to

a knowledge of Him, which we by synecdoche comprehend in the name faith, are embraced in this expression in Christ." 20. "It must then be said that according to the revealed word, and according to the God revealed therein, the selection has taken place in Christ in this wise, that whosoever will believe in Christ and will receive Him as his own Savior, shall not doubt that he has assuredly been foreordained and elected to eternal life." 21. "But if a person will not believe, but will neglect or stubbornly despise the preaching of the Gospel, let him thereby assuredly know that he is in no manner foreordained and elected to eternal life, according to the words of Christ: 'Whosoever will not believe shall be damned.'" 31. "Just as the selection presupposes the merit of Christ and a knowledge of Him by true faith, so the decree of condemnation presupposes unbelief and rejection of Christ." 90. "The unalterable and eternal truth thus remains: As those who through faith have been justified and saved have been elected in Christ to eternal life, so no one has been created, ordained or destined for eternal condemnation by a secret and absolute decree of God, but all those condemned are eternally lost only on account of their unbelief."

## VII.

In the year 1586 the colloquium at Muempelgart took place. The main debater on the Reformed side was Theodore Beza, on the Lutheran side Jacob Andreae. Among the sentences which Andreae and L. Osiander, over their own signatures, rejected as "entirely contradicting the Word of God," the following is also found: "The cause of condemnation and election is on the one side the eternal loving kindness of God, inasmuch as He foreordained to salvation whom He wished, and, on the other side, His eternal hatred of evil, inasmuch as He ordained to just condemnation whom He wished; but that He ordained these to salvation and those to condemnation has no other cause except merely His own will." Among those sentences that Andreae set up as remarks against Beza's theses we also find some very important expressions. Beza, e. g. had written that "it was not only very silly, but also blasphemous to think that if God had wished to save every single individual, He would not have been able to



accomplish what He desired, or to make the effect of the divine will dependent on the decision of man." Andreae answered: "God does not wish, according to His absolute will, that all men should be saved, for in that case all men would necessarily be saved, for who could resist His will? But He wished it by means of a restricted will in Christ, outside of whom He saves no one. This Christ He offers to all men through the preaching of the Gospel, and the use of the Sacraments. He who resists is lost, not through God's will, but through his own wickedness." To the expression of Beza that "the mercy of regeneration belongs to the elect alone," Andreae remarks: "But the election does not receive its limits by an absolute decree, but in Christ, who calls all men to repentance. Therefore no one should exclude himself from the number of the elect, but we should say with Augustine: 'If you have not been foreordained, do your share that you may be foreordained.'" Beza maintained this sentence: "It is just as false to say that unbelief is a cause of the divine decree to condemn some justly, as it is false that the foreseen faith or the good works are a cause of the foreordination or of the election, which is the doctrine of the Pelagians." Andreae answered: "It is terrible to hear that Beza dares to deny that unbelief is the cause of the decree of God to condemn certain persons. For Christ expressly says: 'Whosoever does not believe is condemned already.' Further: 'The Holy Spirit will judge the world on account of sin, because they did not believe in me.' Further: 'Whosoever does not believe will be damned.' . . . . Faith in Christ is not the work of nature or of our human abilities, but a work of the Holy Spirit. When it is then said that faith is a cause of election, this contains no element of the Pelagians, who ascribe to natural powers that which is the work of the Holy Spirit alone."

### VIII.

Christopher Koerner writes in his commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, on Rom. 8, 29: "The first step in the actions of God to glorify His children is the foreknowledge of God: for He has from eternity foreknown and accurately perceived those who were to be saved. The second step is predestination, since God has for Himself foreordained, deter-

mined and decided to whom He would grant salvation, and has elected only these out of the whole human race. The third step is the calling, as Paul says: 'Those who are called.' For in their time the elected are called through the Word and Sacrament, and invited to obtain the blessings in store for them. The fourth step is justification, for He has justified those elected. For these, if they believe on the Son, He receives in mercy, having forgiven their sins for the sake of the Mediator. Finally follows the fifth step, which is glorification."

## IX.

Martin Chemnitz, to whom our opponents appeal as one of the main supports of their strange doctrine of election, repeatedly draws attention to the fact that the decree of election virtually has the same import as the counsel of salvation, and all that belongs thereto and flows from it and depends on it. Our opponents tear asunder the counsel of salvation as something universal and the decree of election as a decree of salvation referring merely to the elect, to the exclusion of the others. But Chemnitz, wherever he speaks of this topic, sees in the plan of salvation at the same time also the plan of election as its real crown and summit. Chemnitz knows nothing of two distinct plans that, contradicting one another, run parallel to each other. When therefore he treats of that main topic that God, from mere mercy alone and without being moved by "any cause within us," has formed His gracious plan for our salvation, he refers this to the entirety of the plan in reference to the whole fallen and condemned human race. In this manner the rejection of the "cause within us," in the matter of our election, vocation, justification and sanctification, receives an entirely different meaning from that which our opponents find in it. For they maintain that we dare not think the granting of eternal life, which takes place in reference to certain sinners through their election, as dependent on the foreseen apprehension of the merits of Christ in faith, because in Him alone the lost sinner can obtain from God the forgiveness of all his sins and thereby then also life and salvation. The choice of certain persons is represented indeed as being in essence the bestowal of eternal life, but the foreseen faith, taken strictly as the apprehension of the

merits of Christ, is stated to have been no prerequisite of this granting, but only the fruits and results of it. That is even claimed to have been the meaning of the fathers when they rejected every "cause within us." With this compare the following grand testimony of Martin Chemnitz, taken from his explanation of the verse: "For God so loved the world." "It is explained here how and why it took place that the incarnate Son of God took upon Himself our deliverance, because, namely, in the secret counsel of the Triune God this decree of our salvation had, out of inexpressible mercy, thus been formed, that it is fixed that we are saved without any merit on our part, out of the pure grace and love and mercy of God, and that we are to be assured that this election, justification, and sanctification by faith, for Christ's sake, is valid before God. But we will briefly show how these words are to be judged. For by using a word that designates past time, (God) "has loved the world," he leads us to the consideration of what is more explicitly stated in the passages Eph. 1, 4. 5; 2 Tim. 1 9; namely, that God, before the foundation of the world, and before the time of the world, out of grace, according to the purpose and good pleasure of His will, has foreordained and determined to save us through the blood of the Lamb, to receive us unto sonship, and to make us pleasing unto everlasting life. For the Son of God did not hit upon the thought of salvation in a sudden impulse or without deeper consideration, but this was decided in the secret counsel of the Triune God before the time of the world. Therefore all these things are fixed and legal. And of course at that time, when before the time of the world we were not yet in existence, there could be no reference to the merits of the world. And in order that no one may think that God possibly foresaw something in us or that there had been in us some cause on account of which God had judged us worthy to look upon us and free us, Christ places God in contradistinction to the world, that is, to man corrupted by sin. For God is the highest good, sufficient unto Himself, requiring no one and is no one's debtor, having many thousands of angels who do His will. Man, however, is dust and earth, like a withered flower or vanishing smoke. What then is man, the miserable creature, that He is mindful of him, and the son of man

that He visits him? Ps. 8, 4. Yes, the whole world lies in wickedness, 1 John 5, 19. The carnal mind is at enmity against God, Rom. 8, 7. And God is a jealous God who does not wish sin, but punishes and condemns it. The God who is of such a character has not cast aside and condemned such a world, but rather without any merit on its part, against that which it had deserved, has loved it; that is immeasurable, incomprehensible and unutterable mercy. As Paul says, Rom. 5, 8: 'But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; for scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet preadventure for a good man some would even dare to die.' But we must not think that God even loves or sanctions sin, or that He does not concern Himself as to whether men resist or are obedient, or that men, when they remain in their vices, are pleasing and acceptable to Him. For this openly militates against the whole doctrine of the law, of which not even a jot will pass away or fall to the ground without being fulfilled, Matt. 5, 18; Rom. 3, 31. But in the word 'love' is embraced, as is explained Eph. 2, 4, also mercy, namely that God, foreseeing the lamentable corruption and the deplorable destruction of the whole human race, of immeasurable mercy and pity sorrowed because the whole human race must so miserably perish, and that He, moved by that compassion and mercy, had formed the thought and the determination to save and redeem the human race, although He passed by the fallen nature of the angels which had by far been more perfect than ours, and left them in deserved condemnation. For also this consideration glorifies God's love toward us. But in order that contradictory or conflicting wills be not attributed to God, the idea is always to be firmly adhered to that this decree of election was formed on the mediation of the Son of God, who offered Himself as a ransom. For this love and mercy of God toward the sinner is founded on Christ as the Mediator." (Harm. Ev. p. 243.)

## X.

How unscriptural it is to conclude that as "God has from eternity out of grace, on account of the merits of Christ alone, granted to the elect eternal life, therefore in this eternal

granting of salvation faith in Christ does not come into consideration," is clear from the fact that God's eternal decree already, as the Gospel reveals it to us, consists in this very thing, that "all who believe in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." In his explanation of the words Chemnitz clearly proves that according to God's eternal decree salvation is indeed entirely a gift of pure grace, but that it is in perfect harmony with this, that already in the eternal counsel of God the rule "Whosoever believes shall be saved" had formed a link in the chain of the decrees concerning election. For thus also does the Formula of Concord expressly mention this as an eternal decree of election, that God desired to receive all those who would receive Christ in faith unto sonship and heirship of eternal life, but outside of those who received Christ would save none.

Chemnitz writes on the words "that whosoever believeth on Him," &c., as follows: "This Christ has acquired for us by His merit that in the judgment of God, on account of our sins, in accordance with the sentence of the law, we do not become subject to the destruction of eternal condemnation, but that we, as believers, obtain eternal life for His sake. And just thereby He shows that outside of Christ we are in the net of eternal condemnation, and have no part in eternal life. But at the same time he shows that faith is the ordained means through which we receive, apprehend and appropriate that grace of God and that merit of Christ for our deliverance from destruction and for eternal life, so that it becomes our own. In the law many distinct and impossible works are asked; but these benefits of Christ God offers us in such a manner through the service of the Gospel that, by simply bringing faith with us, which also the Holy Spirit works in us through the Word, we become partakers of the merits of Christ and are joint possessors of them. In this way our salvation is entirely a blessing of God, and depends entirely on God. And in order to invite the whole world to the participancy in the merits of Christ and in order to cut off every excuse for the unbelievers, He says: 'Whosoever believeth in Him.' These words contain also a consolation for our unworthiness: You may be a sinner of any character whatever, of any condition of life, of any age, if you only truly believe in Christ you will be saved. For he that believes shall not perish, but have everlasting life. But

that true faith is contained only in true repentance, and is afterwards active through love, will be explained elsewhere. Here we will only explain what Christ says, namely that it is not demanded that we are to make ourselves worthy and acceptable to participate in the merits of Christ by our works, or that we are to add something to the satisfaction rendered by Christ, but only that we receive by faith, as it were, with the hand of a beggar, the sufficient satisfaction of Christ and His complete righteousness, which is offered us in the Gospel, and this in order that the promise may stand sure, Rom. 4, 16. And from this the conclusion is drawn as to how and why faith justifies, vivifies and saves; namely, not by taking reference to its virtue and character, but because it receives Christ with the merit of His obedience and sufferings offered to us in the Gospel, and places this between our sins and God's anger and judgment. And that God receives such a faith is certain because He has Himself given His Son into death for us and offers Him through the Spirit in the service of the Word to us as our salvation, so that every one that believes will not be lost, but have everlasting life. Hence it is clear from this why faith should be a sure confidence. For he who doubts that Christ's merits are sufficient for him unto salvation, despises the bitter death of Christ. But he who doubts that the Father will for that reason receive in mercy those who believe, denies the decree which was formed in the common council of the Triune God, that whosoever believes in Him shall not be lost but have everlasting life! Hence those who have been reconciled with God through faith are not to doubt that they are really loved by God, that He loved so deeply while we were yet enemies, Rom. 5, 10, that He gave us the dearest pledge of His love, His only-begotten Son." (Harm. Ev. p. 244).

## XI.

"The Father gives us everything necessary to eternal life, but by the hand of the Son. For because we are not worthy to receive these things, therefore the incarnate Son has been established as Mediator, who has merited it and is worthy . . . The Father has given over all things to Him that He preserve our portion unto that day, 2 Tim. 4, 8. For when man's nature was still perfect it was not able to retain those advantages which it possessed; how much less could it do so now? Therefore the Father has entrusted our portion to a safe and reliable guardian, by placing it into the hands of His Son; only we must keep our faith, as Paul says, 2 Tim. 4, 7." (Harm. Ev. p. 258).

## ELECTION IN FORESIGHT OF FAITH.

The election or predestination of God to eternal life is not absolute either in regard to a few or to all, as if God had chosen to eternal life either all or only some men without respect to Christ embraced by faith; but it is established in Christ, and so connected with His means and the order of the means that those who submit themselves to this order are in the number of those predestinated to eternal life, whence the rest are excluded, not by the absolute will of God, but by their own unbelief and persevering impenitence.

As God determined from eternity to predestinate men to eternal life, so too He instituted means, and for this purpose ratified in the decree of His eternal election that whole order of converting and saving men; namely, that He would send His Son who should suffer for the sins of the entire world, so that whosoever would believe in this the Redeemer of the world and by faith embrace His merit offered in the Gospel, should not perish but have everlasting life. This whole order must be included in the decree of election, nor should any part be separated or taken therefrom.

That you may rightly understand in what sense faith is said to be included in the mystery of election, I would have you know that faith enters into that mystery of the eternal predestination or election as a part of the order just mentioned. The testimonies and proofs for this we take from the Scriptures. In John 6. Christ thus describes to us the decree of election: "This is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and *believeth* on Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." After the same manner St. Paul writes: "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that *believe*." And Eph. 1: "Being predestinated according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will: that we should be to the praise of His glory, who first *trusted* in Christ, in whom ye also *trusted*." Here trusting is used for believing, according to the usual signification of Scripture. Thus, Titus 1, faith is said to belong to God's elect, because the election of those who shall be saved is by faith. Thus also we read, 2 Thess. 2, "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and *belief* of the truth." James 2, "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world *rich in faith*?" If He had chosen the poor also who were not in faith, this added phrase would be to no purpose.—ÆGIDIUS HUNNIUS, 1597.

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ELECTION WITH REFERENCE TO JUSTIFICATION  
AND ITS COMFORT.

In previous numbers of this periodical it was shown that the new doctrine of election promulgated by the Missouri Synod undermines the doctrine of justification by faith. Missouri has feebly answered that we did not, in our argument, take the facts into account, that faith is regarded as necessary to salvation and that therefore the persons whom God resolves to save are elected to faith as well as to salvation. It is hoped that such an abortive effort at refutation, put forth with some volume of voice to hide the confusion, will satisfy Missourians and at least so far throw Ohioans off their guard as to stop their pursuit of the retreating host that is shouting "victory." But truth cannot be crushed by boastful cries of superiority. Missouri has fallen into an error that endangers the very life of the Lutheran Church. Not only is it subversive of the universality of divine grace and of the objective gift in the divinely appointed means to all men alike, but it assails the very heart of the Church in its doctrine of justification by faith alone. Maintaining that any teaching which makes faith a prerequisite to election is necessarily synergistic, because it makes something in man indispensable to his salvation, the defenders of the new theory are driven by logical consistency to deny also that faith is necessary to justification, because this too would make something in man indispensable to salvation. In order, however, not openly to smite the Scriptures in the face by denying



faith to be necessary in any sense, they find a place for it both in election and justification without making it a prerequisite in either.

In election it is permitted to remain as an earthly station on the way to the heavenly destination of the elect. God has prepared salvation for all men in Christ to be apprehended by faith. There is nothing now in the way of His saving all men, since Christ has offered Himself as a ransom for all. Why then are not all saved? The Scriptures answer: "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." John 5, 40. Our Confession answers: Some "foreclose to the Spirit of God His ordinary way, so that He cannot accomplish His work in them." Form. Conc. Epit. XI. §12. But Missouri pronounces it synergistic to solve the problem by taking man's conduct into the account. How could the dependent subject's will have anything to do with the Sovereign's purpose or its execution? No, says Missouri, God can give to whom He pleases the salvation which the Only Begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, has wrought out for all, and He selects those persons to whom He is pleased to give it. An unsophisticated reader of the Scriptures, and especially one whom God has blessed with a knowledge of the Lutheran Confessions, will ask in his simplicity whether God is not pleased to select just those who believe in the name of the Only Begotten Son, rejecting the unbelievers, according to the invariable rule: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16, 16. Oh, no! Missouri replies; that only exposes your ignorance and Rationalism and Pelagianism. Do you not see that such passages say nothing about election? Is it not as plain as a pike-staff that the question is not whether only believers shall be saved and all unbelievers shall be damned? That is of course settled. But another question remains. The salvation exists for all, and all believers possess it; but to whom is God pleased to give faith? Why, that too, a simple Lutheran Christian will say, is plain. The Scriptures answer: God our Savior "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. 2, 4. Our Confession answers: "We must firmly and stoutly maintain that as the preaching of repentance so also is the

promise of the Gospel universal, that is, extends over all men." Sol. Dec. XI. § 28. "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall, He not with Him freely give us all things." But all arguments fail against the preconceived theory of Missouri, and it only reiterates its accusations against the presumptuous opponents of its speculation and declares again that God selects the persons whom He resolves to save. And these persons are not those who stand before His omniscient eye from eternity as believers. If that were admitted, the controversy would be at an end. But He selects the persons whom He intends to save by faith, making a distinction where there is no difference and limiting saving grace and the efficacy of the universal redemption to a favored few. Election is unto faith. That is, the persons whom God selects to eternal glory are elected to reach that destination only through faith.

Missourians have repeatedly charged us with misrepresenting their doctrine when we report it to be an election without regard to faith. But the question is whether God in view of their faith in Christ elected those who shall be saved, or whether He selected the persons whom He designed to save and ordained that those persons shall believe, be justified, sanctified and glorified. If Missouri is willing to admit that God chose to sonship and eternal life those whom He knew as believers, it will do the Church a great service by saying so. That would lead to peace. But if it still believes, as Dr. Walther expressed the doctrine, that "first is the selection, then the ordination," etc., let it cease to impose upon its innocent readers by telling them that we misrepresent their doctrine. If God first selected the persons whom He desired to save, then ordained that these persons should become and remain believers unto salvation, the election would not be in view of faith. That according to Missourian doctrine regard was had to faith in this sense, that the selected persons were to be made believers before they were ushered into glory, no opponent of Missouri denies. No one has charged them with teaching that God brings some men to heaven without first giving them faith. What we have charged, and what we charge again with renewed emphasis, is that the Missourian doctrine not only conflicts

with the universality of divine grace unto salvation, but also with the cardinal doctrine of justification by faith alone. For proof of this we refer to previous numbers of the MAGAZINE.

But Missourians find a place for faith in justification also. Where Dr. Walther denies the analogy between election and justification so far as faith is related to each, he represents the sinner's justification as taking place objectively in the resurrection of our Lord from the dead and subjectively when the sinner is regenerated. We may at some future time subject this theory to a closer examination. For the present it will suffice to point out what place Missourians assign to faith in justification. The forensic act pronouncing the sinner free from condemnation is conceived as universal, corresponding to the universality of divine grace and of the redemption through Jesus' blood. All men are justified. But not all men appropriate the objective fact. Only those who believe appropriate it. These have the conscious possession of a treasure of which the others are unconscious and which therefore they cannot enjoy. Faith is therefore necessary for subjective justification, although the objective justification exists without faith. So far as God is concerned He justifies all alike, since Christ has rendered satisfaction for all alike. Hence faith is not in the sight of God necessary to the sinner's justification. God justifies all, whether they believe or not, and faith has nothing whatever to do with the divine act, which takes place independently of faith and prior to its existence, although it has something to do with the sinner's appropriation and subjective enjoyment of the antecedent justification.

A thoughtful reader will not fail to observe the bearing of these things. If it is synergistic to teach that a man must have faith before God can elect him as a child of God and an heir of heaven, it must of course be synergistic also to teach that a man must have faith before God can free him from condemnation and accept him as a child of God and an heir of heaven. But Missouri says that the former is synergistic. It argues that just as soon as anything in man is held to be indispensable to the performance of a divine act, the divine will is conditioned by human power and the

divine sovereignty is impugned. That the condition is one which He has Himself prescribed and for the fulfilment of which He has Himself mercifully and amply provided, does not effect Missouri's dogmatism. But the leaven works. If it is true that holding anything in man to be necessary for the performance of a divine act renders the Creator dependent upon His creatures and implies merit in the latter which moves the former to such act, it is true also that faith cannot be indispensable to justification, which is also a divine act. Hence justification cannot be conditioned by faith. That faith is exclusively a work of the Holy Spirit, that it is a condition which God has Himself required, that it has no merit in it as an activity of the human soul, but is necessary simply because it is the only way of appropriating the Redeemer's merit, on the ground of which alone God can justify the condemned sinner,—to all this Missouri is constrained by consistency to turn a deaf ear; for if it is once admitted that it is not Pelagianism to teach that a sinner must have faith before God can in time separate him from other sinners, justify him, and accept him as His child, it must of course follow that it is not Pelagian to teach that a sinner must in God's foreknowledge have faith before He can in eternity separate him from other sinners and elect him to justification and sonship. That Missouri could not admit without giving up the contest, and the indications are very strong that, at present at least, it would rather abandon the whole doctrine of justification by faith than revoke its Calvinistic dream.

Missourians have a place for faith in election and in justification; but it is not the place which Christ and the Church have given it. They teach not that God has resolved to save those that believe, but that those whom He has resolved to save must believe, as they are elected to faith as well as to salvation. They teach that faith is needful for the subjective enjoyment of justification, but not as a prerequisite to the forensic act of God which objectively sets the sinner free from condemnation. In the last analysis faith, according to their astonishing theory, is not necessary to salvation at all, except in the same sense in which that might be said also of good works. Since Christ has died for all men, there is nothing at all in the way of God's saving whom He pleases.

If that is so, one who humbly and eagerly reads his Bible would think that surely all men will be saved; for God has no pleasure in the death of the sinner, He has pleasure in the sinner's salvation. Nay, that is the mystery, Missouri tells us. He could save all, if He would; that is, He would save all, if He could; that is, He could save all and would save all, if—God help Missouri out of the net of speculation in which it has become entangled! God has decided from eternity, it tells us, and that without previously in foresight regarding the difference made by faith and unbelief, which persons among the lost millions shall be saved. He could save any whom He pleased to save, and He elected to faith and salvation whom He pleased. Faith is necessary, not to decide which persons shall be saved, but because for good reasons it pleases God that those who are saved shall have faith, just as it has pleased God for good reasons to decree that "without holiness no man shall see the Lord." Heb. 12, 14. That it pleased God to save only those that believe, and that when the power of God comes to man in the Gospel some obstinately resist, so that He cannot accomplish His work in them, does not disturb Missourians. Can He not do what He will with His own, and who can resist His decrees? Yes, Missouri has a place left for faith in election and justification, but it has no room for the doctrine that faith, the bestowal of which may be wantonly and effectually resisted by man, is an indispensable prerequisite to a sinner's election to salvation in eternity and his justification in time. The sinner's salvation, in this new school of theology, depends on his election, in no sense on faith.

The disparagement of faith which Dr. Walther's system involves and which necessarily appears in the presentation and defence of his theory of election, is manifest also in the practical deductions from the theory. A writer who is recognized by Missouri authorities as one that "hits the nail on the head," thus expresses himself on the subject: "It is said that God in His decree of salvation has looked upon faith, hence upon something in us. It is declared, indeed, that He has had regard to faith only as it embraces Christ. But of what avail is this for the poor heart in its conflicts? It knows how weak is its faith, how deceitful is the heart, how

wily is Satan. How speedily is the fall effected, if God's almighty grace does not avert it! Yet it is to put its trust in faith, which, however, only God's grace can work and preserve. Men may make all the limitations and explanations they please, the poor human heart, considering its natural inclinations, is, after all, again referred to itself, led into work-righteousness, and driven into an endless doubting of its salvation."\*

Such language would be wholly inexplicable in a professedly Lutheran journal, were it not for the new theory of predestination which furnishes the key. If it has any meaning at all, that meaning is this, that faith is not in God's sight necessary to salvation, and the consciousness of its possession is therefore not essential to the soul's comfort; nay more, that it is a "damnable heresy" to teach that God requires faith as indispensable to salvation, as such teaching makes something *in us* necessary, and thus fosters self-righteousness and renders true peace of heart impossible. The argument runs thus: If faith, which is something in the soul, is necessary for the soul's salvation, the inquiry when conflicts come must be, whether it has the necessary faith; then, because the natural inclination of the heart is to self-exaltation, it will ascribe the honor to itself, so far as it finds the requisite faith within; but, because faith is weak and sin is strong, it will not be sure that it has the requisite faith, and will therefore be troubled with perpetual doubt: whence the conclusion is plain that faith cannot be necessary to salvation. The evangelical reply, that God has regard to faith only as embracing Christ, and that therefore there can be no thought of personal merit and of self-righteous boasting, since salvation is only through the obedience of the Savior which is imputed to the believer and since the faith which clings to Jesus is wholly God's work, is set aside with the remark, that no matter what limitations are made and what explanations are given, as long as faith is regarded as necessary to salvation the heart will, because faith is something in us, be referred to something in itself, and will therefore be led to self-righteousness and endless doubt. Hence the

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\*Zeuge der Wahrheit, No. 88.

proposition must stand, that faith is not in the sight of God necessary to salvation.

It is a neat piece of theological speculation that is thus set before Christian readers. But it has a fault that is fatal. God did not take it into account when He formed His plan of salvation, and therefore it fits neither the Scripture revelation nor the believer's experience.

It does not fit the Scripture revelation, because that tells us that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, *that whosoever believeth in Him* should not perish, but have everlasting life," John 3, 16; that "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, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness, that He might be just and the *justifier of him which believeth in Jesus*," Rom. 3, 23-26; that "through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins, and by Him *all that believe are justified* from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses," Acts 13, 38. 39. Hence the apostolic argument, as regards the effect of the doctrine, is exactly the reverse of the Missourian speculation. Missourian philosophy decides that if salvation be by faith, it cannot be by grace, because a doctrine that makes anything in us necessary to salvation must lead to self-righteousness. The apostolic argument is: "The promise that he should be heir of the world was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void and the promise of none effect: because the law worketh wrath; for where no law is there is no transgression. *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace*, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham." Rom. 4, 13-16. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? *Nay, but by the law of faith*." Rom. 3, 27. The opposition between the Missourian declarations from reason and the apostle's argument from the divinely revealed plan of salvation is striking. Missouri

says that it cannot be by faith, else it could not be by grace; the Holy Spirit says that it is of faith that it might be by grace. Missouri says that if it were by faith the result would be endless doubt; the Holy Spirit says that it is by faith "to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." Missouri says that if it were by faith men would exalt themselves in self-righteousness, because faith is something in us; the Holy Spirit says that all boasting is excluded "by the law of faith." Which has the superior wisdom in the matter let Christians judge.

The Missouri speculation therefore cannot fit the experience of true believers, which always accords with the teaching of the Holy Ghost. Prone as the human heart is to self-righteousness, the belief that faith is necessary to salvation cannot foster, but counteracts that tendency. The believing soul feels that it is helpless and hopeless in its sin, and flees for refuge to the help and the hope set before it. Who that has actually embraced Christ as his only deliverance from the body of this death has ever, by the contemplation of the fact that only "he that believeth shall be saved," been led to ascribe any glory to himself on account of his believing, especially as he knows that faith is wholly the gift of God? The more thoroughly his soul is pervaded by the truth that he cannot be saved by the works of the law, but that Christ, in His infinite mercy, has fulfilled all righteousness for him, and now offers that righteousness in the promise of the Gospel to be embraced by faith, so that salvation is by faith alone, without the deeds of the law, the more fully is he cured of all fond conceit of himself, whose righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and the more heartily is he led to adore that grace which, without any merit or worthiness on our part, imputes to faith the perfect righteousness of our infinitely loving Savior. It is not our province to judge any man, but let those who find their experience conflicting with God's Word examine themselves whether they be in the faith.

The words have a strange sound to a Lutheran ear, that if God in His decree of salvation had regard to faith, though it be only as faith embraces Christ, the poor heart would find no comfort. How will a sentiment so shocking to those who have found unfailing consolation in the doctrine of justifica-



tion by faith be rendered plausible? No proof is offered but that faith is weak and must fail unless God's grace support it. That is certainly true. If we have nothing to which to cling but our own faith, we would be like drowning men trying to save themselves from the flood by desperately seizing their own hands. But who among those against whom Missouri directs its darts ever taught such folly? The plea of ignorance will not avail as an excuse for the defamation, since Missourians themselves are constrained not to do us the gross injustice of ignoring the fact that, according to our doctrine, faith was regarded in the decree of salvation "only as it embraces Christ." But how, with this in view, can they justify before the forum of their own conscience the attempt to make their readers believe that we teach people to trust in their own hearts instead of trusting in their Savior? When the Scriptures teach and our Church confesses that a man is justified and saved by saith, do Missourians really understand this to mean that we are to put our trust, for our justification and salvation, in the faith which embraces the righteousness of Christ, not in the Savior whose righteousness is embraced and in the Gospel which conveys it and certifies it? If not, what excuse can they have for representing those who, with the Scriptures and the Church, teach salvation by faith, as leading men to work-righteousness and doubt by accusing them of teaching that faith must merit salvation, and therefore men must be in perpetual doubt whether their faith is strong enough or operative enough in works to furnish the requisite merit? Such dealing with us may bring us into disrepute among innocent people whom Missouri may mislead; but an account must be rendered for it on the judgment day, and truth and righteousness will triumph at last.

But there is another aspect in which the matter demands consideration. If Missouri means to charge us with teaching that faith in Christ is necessary to salvation, so that without faith no one can be saved, and from this deduces the conclusion that our doctrine leads to self-righteousness and doubt, we of course plead guilty to the charge, but we enter our solemn protest against a deduction that is not only made in violation of the laws of thought, but that is in diametrical opposition to the express declarations of the Lord our God.

The Bible teaches that salvation is alone by faith in Christ, and that faith excludes all boasting because it excludes all merit; the Missourians teach that if faith be taken into account in the divine decree of salvation there can be no assurance, and that faith as a factor in salvation includes boasting because it includes merit. But how is such a strange contradiction of the apostolic argument reached? It is by assuming that when we teach the salvation of the individual to be conditioned upon his appropriation of it by faith, the soul of such individual will be turned away from the object of faith and fixed on faith itself, so that the question which absorbs it is not whether the gospel is true and the redemption real, but taking this truth and reality as granted, which is implied in the very existence of faith, whether the faith by which it is apprehended is sufficiently strong to hold fast the gracious gift unto salvation, resulting in efforts to bring about the proper quality of faith in the soul and in doubts as to whether this has been brought about. Their notion may be illustrated thus. A starving beggar has provisions placed before him in abundance and is requested to eat. His eating is the condition of his preservation from death. If he eats, he lives; if he refuses, he dies of starvation. Missouri argues that if his eating is taken into the account as a condition of his preservation, he will look away from the food and turn his attention to his fingers and his teeth, troubling himself the while to get those into the proper condition to take and eat, and trembling with doubts whether they can fulfill the condition of eating upon which the preservation of his life depends, notwithstanding that he who supplies the food supplies also the needful ability to appropriate it. The doctrine surprises us as emanating from men professing to be Lutherans, not only because of the dark background of predestination, of which we shall speak presently, but also on account of its curious views of faith and of its marvelous dialectics. Faith is represented as if it were a product of man's wisdom or will, and as if its saving efficacy lay in its own obedience to the will of God, so that justification by faith means justification by our works. With such a view of faith men have no difficulty in showing that any consideration of faith in the divine decree of salvation must lead to work-

righteousness and doubt. But if, as some followers of Missouri may allege, such a view of faith in connection with salvation is not entertained by them, and if they do not understand that by it when in the Scriptures, in our Confessions, and in the works of our Lutheran writers, it is spoken of as necessary to salvation, what are we then to think of the logical trick by which they make that view of it the basis of the argument in support of their innovation?

The matter is of the gravest moment. It is not a harmless piece of logical legerdemain that is here presented. If the Missourians confined their statement, that the doctrine which represents God as having respect to faith in His decree of salvation leads to self-righteousness and doubt and gives no comfort, to the cases in which faith is viewed as a mere quality in man by which he conforms to the law, we would find in it merely a sophistical maneuver to cast the odium of synergism upon those who adhere to the old doctrine of our Church. But the writer quoted expressly disclaims any intention to confine it to such cases. His objection is explicitly raised against the doctrine that "God had regard to faith in His decree of salvation," even though it be said that He "had regard to faith only as it embraces Christ." "Men may make all the limitations and explanations they please," he says, "after all, the poor human heart, considering its natural inclinations, is again referred to itself, led into work-righteousness, and driven into an endless doubting of its salvation." That has the merit of frankness and clearness. We can understand that. But would to God it had never been thought and never been written! We will hope it was not designed, but it is a cruel stab at the cardinal doctrine of justification by faith. Does the writer of those words really understand the Scriptures and the Church, when they say that the sinner is justified by faith in Christ, to mean that he is declared just for Christ's sake without any reference to his faith or unbelief? Does he believe that the general justification of the world, proclaimed in the resurrection of our Lord, is the sinner's personal justification without faith in the Redeemer? If this be his opinion, he has forfeited all claims to be regarded as a Lutheran. But if this be not his doctrine, how are we to construe his words? He may imagine that the sad case is remedied by calling atten-

tion to the fact that he has not denied the necessity of faith to the sinner's justification, but only rejected the doctrine that God had any regard to faith in decreeing salvation. But to this "God's Word and Luther's doctrine pure" suggests a two-fold reply; namely, first, that what is necessary to justification is necessary also to salvation; and, secondly, that in any case the argument which is urged against the divine consideration of faith in the decree of salvation holds equally well against the doctrine that faith is necessary to justification. God has decreed that only the believer shall be saved.

The great question before us is whether faith is necessary to salvation at all or not. If it is not, all sinners will eventually be saved through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and all that is needed for every man's comfort is that he be made acquainted with the fact. If it is necessary, not only in the sense in which good works are necessary, but in the sense of an indispensable prerequisite in the sight of God, without which salvation is absolutely unattainable, all comfort that has no foundation in the appropriation of Christ's merits by faith must be illusory. A sinner may believe in the Lord Jesus and thus be justified by faith without enjoying the blessedness which the assurance of this fact is adapted to secure. The distinction which our old writers make in this regard merits careful attention and consideration. Quenstedt, for example, writes: "We distinguish between the faith by which we believe the effected justification—i. e. by which we have the certain assurance that we are truly justified and absolved from our sins before the tribunal of God, the Supreme Judge, which, in the order of time, is subsequent to justifying faith, and does not appropriate as its object Christ with all His benefits, or the justification and remission of sins itself—and the faith by which, as apprehending the merits of Christ, we are justified. The latter precedes in the order of time. For if we assuredly believe that we are justified, it is necessary that we should previously have apprehended and appropriated to ourselves the merits of Christ." Theol. III. 548. When a person believes in Christ and is thus declared justified by the Supreme Judge, he may yet lack that degree of knowledge and trust which will enable him to realize the blessedness of his condition as a child of God and an heir of

heaven. He is saved through faith, whatever his feelings may be; for not his subjective enjoyment on earth of God's judicial declaration in his regard, but that declaration itself, decides his eternal destiny. But has any sinner a right to the comfort and peace and joy which the belief of personal justification is calculated to bring, without having the testimony of his conscience that he believes in the mighty Savior, however feeble that faith may be? Must he not be sure of having Christ, comfort or no comfort in his feelings, before he can have true comfort? Can a man really, according to the Scriptures, rejoice in the forgiveness of his sins and the hope of eternal glory as long as in his soul no faith in Christ presents itself to his view? We are not disregarding the momentous fact that our comfort as well as our salvation is found wholly in Christ. Not the faith which one exercises, but the Savior whom he embraces, is the immovable ground of his hope. Nor does it escape our notice that, in consequence of this, we must not, when consolation is to be ministered to distressed consciences, point to faith as the soul's refuge, but to the Lord Jesus and the means by which he comes to us with all His righteousness. It is needful to keep this distinctly in view. But it is just as needful to keep this also distinctly in view: first, that when reckless impenitents appeal to the universal redemption through Jesus' blood and frivolously talk about having equal chances in the future world with other men, they must be made to understand that he that believeth not shall be damned; and, secondly, that when troubled souls, having been referred to the blood of Jesus that cleanseth from all sin, still refuse to be comforted, alleging that though Christ died for all, yet not all, but only believers are saved, to whom they are not sure of belonging, the way to bring them solid comfort is not to tell them that they can be saved without believing, which they know to be false, and in which therefore they can find no consolation, but to make clear to them the nature of faith, that they might find comfort in knowing that they possess it and are therefore among those who shall be saved. Such a person might be saved without knowing that he has faith, because he really believes; but he could not enjoy the consolation of the gospel without such consciousness. Both for the sake of the careless, therefore, who imagine that

they have salvation without repentance, and of the distressed consciences, who imagine that their sin excludes them, it is requisite to emphasize the truth, that he that believeth shall be saved, and to urge the inquiry whether they possess it or do not possess it. Hence the importance of self-examination, and that first of all with reference to this very point, as the apostle says: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" 2 Cor. 13, 5. While we cannot look into the hearts of others and decide whether they are true disciples of Christ, we can and should know whether we are children of God by faith in Christ Jesus; "for what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him?" 1 Cor. 2, 11. Not only can we know whether we are believers and thus heirs of heaven, but we must know it in order to enjoy the sweet consolation which the gospel affords. Therefore "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God; and if children, then heirs." Rom. 8, 16. Never must the Christian permit himself to be led into the belief that his subjective faith can supply the place of the objective righteousness which the faith appropriates, and therefore never must he put his trust in his faith, as if that were the ground of his salvation instead of the means of adhering to that ground. But equally certain is it that his individual salvation is dependent upon his appropriation of Christ's righteousness by faith, and his personal assurance of salvation is accordingly dependent upon his assurance that he is a believer in Christ. If only he that believeth shall be saved, a man cannot know that he shall be saved without knowing that he believes. To say that the doctrine according to which God in His decree of salvation had regard to faith so far as it embraces Christ, leads to work-righteousness and doubt, is to say that any doctrine which makes faith necessary to salvation is unscriptural and mischievous. A theory which needs such assumptions to support it, merits the abhorrence of all Christians.

If, seeing the disastrous consequences to which his doctrine leads, the Missourian writer referred to should seek to escape by alleging that he was not speaking of the sinner's justification, and not even of his actual salvation, but only of

God's decree respecting it, it would be a sufficient reply to urge, first, that a denial of the necessity of faith to salvation manifestly implies the denial of its necessity to justification; and, secondly, that what is not necessary in God's decree of salvation is not necessary either in its execution. But there is no need for urging this. The writer has plainly stated what he means and himself closes all such avenues of escape. He reasons thus: Our faith is weak and our foe is wily; if we are directed to faith as necessary to our salvation, though it be only as embracing Christ, we shall be led to self-righteous efforts to work up our faith to a degree acceptable to God, and shall be in endless doubt whether we have succeeded; therefore to have comfort in our trouble we must have no regard to faith in the matter of salvation, as God had no regard to it in decreeing our salvation. The sinner is accordingly not to be told that he is justified, *if* he believes in the Lamb of God. That would excite doubts in his mind and set him to tinkering at his faith in order to get that into a satisfactory condition. The apostles preached: "Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of 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." Gal. 2, 16. Missourians preach that when we say that we are in possession of Christ only by faith and are just only when we believe, we lead people to seek justification by the law, seeing that faith, though a gift of God, is something in man. What can such teachers mean when they yet talk about justification by faith? Whatever they may understand by it, it is beyond question that they do *not* mean that faith is necessary to justification in any such sense that the possession of faith could be the test of personal justification; for they argue, if it were necessary in such sense, a man would be driven to trust in the merit of his faith and, doubting its sufficiency, could find no comfort. They regard the doctrine, that faith is necessary in order to the personal possession of the gift of salvation, and therefore that the consciousness of its possession is a necessary condition of the assurance of salvation, as equivalent to teaching that faith is meritorious and justifies as a work of legal obedience. Their theory is that

faith is not necessary as embracing Christ, since, if it were, men would doubt whether they have it in such potency as to justify. There is therefore no room for it in the doctrine of justification, and justification by faith becomes justification by the redemption without faith. Our Church teaches, according to the Scriptures, and by the grace of God we shall abide by that teaching, "that men cannot be justified before God by their own powers, merits, or works; but are justified freely for Christ's sake, through faith, *when* they believe that they are received into favor and their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who by His death has satisfied for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness before Him. Rom. 3 & 4." Augsb. Conf. Art. 4. But what do these men mean who regard it as self-righteous and destructive of comfort to teach that faith is necessary to salvation, and therefore that it is necessarily regarded, as the means of embracing Christ, in the decree of salvation? Their new theory of predestination explains the secret. They would have us believe that the proclamation of God's grace in Christ unto the remission of our sins, set forth in the gospel, confirmed by an oath, and sealed in the sacraments, does not give the soul assurance, unless it be taught, at the same time, that our personal possession of the blessing is *not* dependent on our faith; for, if faith be held to be necessary, men will look at their imperfect faith and be in doubt of their salvation, instead of looking to Christ and being certain and finding unfailing comfort. What they mean, let it be well noted, is not that the words of the gospel are true, whether we believe them or not, but that the question, whether one believes them or not is not taken into account at all in the decree of salvation, and could not be, if salvation is to be purely by grace, since any reference in it to faith, even as embracing Christ, would make something in us a condition, and, because all things in us partake of our frailty, give rise to doubts. The personal appropriation of Christ's righteousness, in other words, is not essential for the sinner's salvation. Why? The theory in question makes it plain. God has decreed the salvation of certain persons irrespective of the question whether they believe or not. Not those who believe He has determined to save, but those whom He selected for the purpose from the



mass of sinners equally under condemnation. These He selected and predestinated to salvation, not because He saw in them that righteousness which alone avails before Him and which is obtainable only by faith, but because it was His good pleasure to rescue these particular persons from the terrible doom that impends over all. The writer quoted exposes what some advocates of the Missouri theory would fain conceal. It is that God resolved to save *some* men, without any previous regard to faith. That He carried out His resolution in the way declared in the Gospel as the way of salvation, is not denied. It is conceded that God, when He selected certain persons from the condemned mass in order to save *them*, resolved to save them through Christ by faith. But He resolved to save them—*only* them—first of all. That which moved Him to select just these few we do not know. The Missourians have much to say about the only causes of election as presented in the Formula of Concord. This rightly condemns as an error the doctrine “that not alone the mercy of God and the most holy merit of Christ, but that also in us there is a cause of election, on account of which God has chosen us to eternal life.” This they would so interpret that this mercy of God and these merits of Christ save us without appropriation by faith, arguing that as soon as we teach it to be necessary that this mercy and merit be appropriated by faith, we are adding faith as a third cause of election. How the Lutheran Church, with her cardinal doctrine of justification by faith, has always believed and confessed in the matter, is manifest from such words as these in the Apology: “Whenever mercy is spoken of, it is to be understood that faith is required, and this faith makes the difference between those who are saved and those who are damned, between the worthy and the unworthy. For eternal life is promised to none but those who are reconciled in Christ. But faith reconciles us and renders us just before God, when and at what time we apprehend the promise by faith.” Muell. 144. The mercy of God and the merit of Christ extend over all men, and in such view effects no selection of persons from the lost multitude. Therefore the will of God is that all should belong to the elect, and is so represented in our Confession. The reason why the election becomes particular does not at

all lie in the mercy of God and the merit of Christ. These are universal, and so far as they are regarded as the cause of election, independently of man's conduct in obstinately hindering the Holy Spirit's work, they would result in the election of all men. That which makes the difference between the saved and the lost is faith. That which narrows down the election to a comparative few is the fact that the majority stubbornly reject the proffered grace unto salvation. God in His infinite mercy, for Christ's sake, elects those that believe, not those that by unbelief despise His mercy and reject the Savior's righteousness. The latter He cannot elect, because they make of none effect the cause which would lead to their election. The former are elected, not because there is any merit in faith, but because faith alone appropriates the mercy and merit which effect our salvation. Not in a secret decree of God, therefore, making an unaccountable distinction between persons who are not different, but "in Christ we are to seek the eternal election of the Father, who in His counsel has decreed that besides those who know His Son Christ and truly believe on Him He will save no one." F. C. Epit. XI. § 13. The Missourian theory reverses this. It alleges that God in His mercy for Christ's sake selects certain persons whom He determines to save, without any regard at all to faith in making the selection. But why, since the mercy and merit are, at least as yet, admitted to be universal, is there a selection of some in preference to others? Why an election at all, in the sense of a selection and segregation, of a singling out of some from a multitude, so that some are chosen to salvation while others are left? Can the mercy of God and the merit of Christ, which pertain to all men alike, be the cause of making a distinction between those equally embraced in the divine mercy and equally included in the redemption through Christ? According to the doctrine of the Formula of Concord the mercy of God and the merits of Christ are the only cause of election, notwithstanding that this is particular, because the election, which in the design of God is universal like its cause, becomes particular through man's wilful resistance of the Holy Spirit's work in executing the divine decree. "That 'many are called, but few are chosen,' is not to be understood as if God did not desire to

save all men, but the reason is that they either do not hear the Word of God, but wantonly despise it, harden their ears and hearts, and thus block up the ordinary way of the Holy Ghost, so that He cannot perform His work in them; or, if they have heard it, again cast it from them and disregard it; for which neither God nor His election, but their own wickedness is to blame." F. C. Epit. XI. § 12. But Missouri, regarding election as a divine decree arbitrarily separating some condemned sinners from other condemned sinners, faith having nothing to do with it, makes the cause of a *selection*—the singling out of some from others—a mystery, while it lets the causes stand which move God to save all men, and represents them as the causes moving Him to elect *only a few*. The conditional election of the Formula of Concord does pertain to all men, and has no other cause but the mercy of God and the merits of Christ, which are applicable to all men; but when the Holy Spirit applies it, the greater part of men refuse the conditions, and therefore the election of persons is by man's fault particular, pertaining only to the children of God who are elected and ordained to eternal life, as those in whom the conditions have been fulfilled. The causes affect only them, because the others obstruct their operation. The election of the Missourians pertains only to a few, who are elected to salvation without any regard to faith, though the mercy of God and the merits of Christ pertain to all men. That which makes the difference between those saved and those not saved, according to their theory, is not faith, but the good pleasure of God who elects. The matter thus becomes clear, why the Missourians deny that God in His decree of salvation had any regard to faith. Their doctrine of election by the mere will of God, without reference to faith, necessarily implies the salvation of those whom—for reasons unknown, or from mere good pleasure, without a reason for making the distinction between men, choosing some and not others—He was pleased to elect unto salvation, without the appropriation of Christ's righteousness as a necessary condition.

That the Missourians still speak of faith as belonging to the order of salvation, must not be permitted to divert our attention from the grave error here brought to view. The exi-

gencies of the theory show how it is meant. Faith is not necessary in any such sense that we could not just as well be saved without it. Any doctrine which makes it so indispensable that God must regard it in His decree of salvation, is represented as necessarily Pelagian, since that would imply that faith is a cause moving God to save us. That faith embraces Christ and thus puts us in possession of that merit which does move God to save us, and that this faith which embraces the merit and thus renders us acceptable to God is a gift of the Holy Ghost, is regarded as not relieving the doctrine from the imputation of Pelagianism. "If we say that God has elected in view of faith," says the Northern District of Missouri in 1868, "faith is not a means, but a condition\*. No matter how subtly distinctions may be drawn, a certain causality is still ascribed to faith." And the writer quoted, a faithful echo of Missouri's notes, now repeats the same thing. "Men may make all the explanations and limitations they please," he asserts, "the doctrine that God regarded faith in His decree of salvation leads to self-righteousness and doubt." When such people still speak of the importance or even necessity of faith, whatever they may mean, it is certain they cannot mean that faith is an indispensable factor in the plan of salvation. That none but believers are saved, they readily admit. Whoever would not admit that might as well throw away the Bible at once. But they deny that God had any regard to faith in selecting the persons that are saved. That means that the mercy of God and the merits of Christ move God to select unto salvation whomsoever He pleases, and that the appropriation of Christ's merits has nothing to do with the salvation. Those whom God wants to save He elects for the purpose, and because He pleases that the elect shall be led to heaven in the way of faith and holiness, He gives them faith and makes them holy. That they shall and must be saved, and no others, is a resolution antecedent. He has shown the way in which He pleases to lead saints to glory, and of course He pleases to lead them by the way which it pleased Him to appoint and

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\* It is one of the curiosities of Missouri predestinarianism that now, in order to evade the charge that they teach an unconditional election, the Missourians represent faith to be the condition; but also stoutly deny that it is a condition, as that would be synergistic.

to reveal. Any other way, however, would answer just as well, if it had pleased Him to adopt any other. His grace and the redemption, independently of any appropriation by the individual, prepares the way, and election determines all. If He so pleased He could just as well save without faith as with it, just as easily as He could save without good works. The one is just as necessary as the other. Faith is not necessary as a quality or act in man. Neither is it necessary as a means of appropriating Christ's merits, as the election has already taken place without any reference to the individual's appropriation of those merits. He is brought to faith because he is elected to be saved, and is therefore elected also to faith. The decree that he should be saved went before and was formed without any reference to faith, except as regards the execution of that decree. What was necessary to his salvation was all prior to his possession of faith and the appropriation of Christ's merits, else his salvation could not have been decreed without reference to the question whether he is a believer or not.

We have here a singular compound of Universalism and Calvinism. It is admitted that the mercy of God extends over all men, and that Christ really redeemed them all. This mercy and merit so avail for men's salvation that an appropriation is not necessary. The doctrine that God had any respect to faith as embracing Christ in decreeing salvation is rejected as synergistic. He had respect to Christ, but not to Christ as appropriated. But as Christ, independently of His appropriation by faith, is the Redeemer of all alike and avails as much for one as for another, the decree of salvation, in which no account is taken of faith as embracing Him, must be universal. Will all men then be saved? An affirmative answer is what would under the circumstances be expected. But the Missourians do not give it. On the contrary, they set forth for our acceptance a doctrine of which they themselves say, in the same sense in which Calvin admitted his decree of reprobation to be horrible, that "reason is shocked at it and cannot otherwise than decide God to be a dreadful tyrant."\* Their answer is that God chose out some from the perishing multitude in order to give them this salvation which avails

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\* Noerdl. Ber. 1868.

for all alike, although for anything we can see or know He might have given it to them all; nay more, He has chosen but a few notwithstanding that He has revealed to us His earnest will and desire that all should have and enjoy it. That some have it and others not is not to be explained by referring to such lucid passages of the Scriptures as "he that believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned," or such clear words of our confessions as "faith makes the difference between those who are saved and those who are lost;" for, say the defenders of the new theory, faith was not regarded in the decree of election and salvation, and could not be, not even so far as it embraces Christ, without detracting from divine grace, maintaining creature merit, and leading souls to incessant doubt about their salvation. God gives it to whom He pleases, but He pleases to give it to only a small portion of our lost race. To those He gives faith, because He has resolved to save them, though their appropriation of Christ had nothing to do with the resolution to save them. The resolution to save just them, not the others, was not based on an appropriation of Christ's merits by the former, but merely on His good pleasure to save just these. He elected these unto salvation, but not in view of faith. We thus have a theory of ostensibly universal grace and salvation which is not in any way conditioned, but which God Himself, for some unaccountable cause, has again frustrated by a decree of election which limits the grace and salvation to only a few of the lost, whom alone He purposes to save. No wonder that the Missourians were constrained to say that in view of their doctrine reason is shocked and cannot help judging God to be a dreadful tyrant!

And yet they maintain that this doctrine alone can give comfort in the soul's conflict! How? Why, the believer is to be sure that he is one of the favored few whom God is pleased to save. But how can he know that? God has elected only a few. A man can be quite certain that he is one of the multitude of sinners, but that he is one of the favored few whom God has thus purposed to save, it is impossible for him to know. Even supposing, however, that a person does succeed in working himself up to the point of believing that he is one of the elect in the eminent sense, so that "he shall and

must be saved," notwithstanding that he has no word of God upon which to rest such faith, how does he derive comfort from his election? Certainly, if one can get to the point at which he believes himself absolutely saved, he feels secure enough; but what furnishes him the evidence when troublous questions arise? Why is he elected rather than other people who are also embraced in God's mercy and for whom also Christ died? Must he not at last fall back upon the consciousness that he believes in the Lord Jesus and thus appropriate to himself the promise that "he that believeth shall be saved?" And does that not, according to the argument used against our doctrine of election in foresight of faith, subject the new theory to the charge, with redoubled force, of inculcating self-righteousness and doubt? It teaches a person, in the first place, to comfort himself with the belief that God has preferred him above millions of other men who are also embraced in God's mercy and in Christ's redemption, so that, considering the weakness of human nature, he will be led to magnify himself on that account, as having something which rendered him preferable to others in God's sight, especially when it is distinctly taught and emphasized that what led to his salvation was *not* the possession of Christ's merits by faith. That is precisely the way to insinuate into the human heart the thought that it is not by grace, but by some superiority in the preferred person. The apostle argues: "Therefore it is of faith that it might be by grace," and excludes boasting by the law of faith. The new theory understands it all better, and with the results that are usual in such undertakings. But, in the second place, the Missouri theory does not stop at this disastrous result. In its effort to expunge faith as a factor from the decree of salvation, it not only opens the way for self-righteous thoughts in regard to the reason why one should be elected rather than another, but it empties faith of all that gives it value in the sight of God, and then falls back upon it at last as a source of comfort. We teach that faith embraces Christ, whose merit is accounted to the believer for righteousness, and therefore God elects such believer, who thus has something that renders him acceptable, something which the unbeliever has not, and something which redounds to the glory of Christ alone;

and the believer knows himself to be in a state of salvation because he is conscious of embracing Christ and is assured that His infinite merit avails for his justification. The Missourians teach that God elects to salvation without reference to faith, but that without faith no one can know himself to be elected; that faith is not regarded in the decree of salvation, but that we can know ourselves to be embraced in that decree only when we have faith; that to look upon faith as necessary to salvation must lead to self-righteousness, because it is something in us, but that after all no one without faith is saved; that if we regard faith as necessary, we shall be in perpetual doubt of our salvation, but that we can have no assurance of salvation at all unless we have faith at least in our election. The theory is such as, if it did not emanate from men whom we have learned to esteem, would be too preposterous for serious notice. To what does it all amount? Simply to this, that we must not teach sinners that faith is necessary to their salvation, since that would render them Pelagians, who put their trust in something in themselves, and would lead to perpetual doubts about their salvation; but we must teach them to trust in their personal election, which they are to infer from their possession of faith, although the inference is illogical, since some have faith who are not elect, and although that would be making all depend on faith again, which is the way to self-righteousness and discomfort.

What, in such a theory, can justification by faith mean? One must be dull indeed if he does not see that it means nothing, or, at least, is merely a sort of appendage to the decree of election.

The theory of predestination promulgated by Missouri works, as all errors work. It affects one doctrine after another, as all thinking works itself into consistency. "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." As Calvinism changed the whole system of doctrine, Missouriism cannot maintain itself without seeking to harmonize one point after the other with its predestinarian theory. It is not Calvinism outright. But it is not on that account less dangerous. As well in the presentation of Dr. Walther as in that of his followers we find a compound of sectarian Universalism and Calvinism.



The Missourians want the redemption in Christ Jesus to be effective without its appropriation by the individual, lest the appropriation, which would be an act of man, though altogether the work of grace, should constitute a merit in him, but they want a limitation of the salvation to a few, so that there may be a particular election without reference to faith. Thus they construe, we cannot refrain from saying it, out of their own brains an election without reference to faith, which, because it is said in Scripture that only believers are saved, is adopted to the exigencies of the case by hanging the label of faith on the select and favored few, to whom God has so strangely been pleased to restrict the operation of Christ's redemption. Happy are they who permit the Holy Spirit to lead them out of this unwholesome atmosphere to the pure air of the Bible and our Confessions! L.

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## THE LUTHERAN DOCTRINE OF ELECTION: ITS SCRIPTURAL EVIDENCE AND PROOF.

BY REV. P. EIRICH, HOBOKEN, N. J.

### ARTICLE IV.

IX. *Christians should strive to obtain certainty of their election; but this certainty is that of the promises of God, as apprehended and held fast by faith.*

X. *Election is a doctrine of great comfort when rightly used.*

Objectively and on the part of God personal election is absolutely certain and subject to no contingency: it can in no wise fail. No power on earth or even in hell can frustrate it. God Himself, who is supreme, has taken it in hand to carry it forward to a glorious consummation. As it was not formed conditionally, no adverse circumstances can intervene to hinder or frustrate it. But it is different with our subjective knowledge or certainty. It is analogous in this respect to justification, or the certainty of the forgiveness of sin through faith. How many children of God whose sins are pardoned are troubled with doubt concerning the *fact*, and yet it is a *fact*. It does not follow, that because we are not sub-

jectively persuaded of our election, we are not of the number of the elect? An elect child of God may never have heard, that there is such a thing as divine election, or may have a very inadequate and even erroneous notion of it, and may still belong to that blessed heavenly family. Nevertheless, it is a want and weakness. The doctrine of predestination was not put into the Bible without a purpose. It is true, that we should study and try to know it, as far as it has been revealed. And we should use it as every other inspired and revealed truth for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. (2 Tim. 3, 16.)

But this does not prove, that every Christian must at once and *constantly* be certain of his election, or even can be, although he should surely strive for it. And it is not the character of a true and living faith willingly to waver and doubt, but to be confident and perfectly sure of the fulfilment of God's promises, which in Christ are yea and Amen. But there are no promises concerning election *itself specifically*, but only concerning God's immutable faithfulness even unto the end. Paul in the 8. chapter of his epistle to the Romans speaks of the certainty of his own election and consequent salvation, and includes the Christians at Rome in it. *I am persuaded*, says he . . . *that nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God*, etc., Rom. 8, 38. 39. But this was a prerogative of the apostle, although Past. Stoekhardt regards such an idea as almost silly.\* He thinks it is a "desperate interpretation . . . which needs no earnest refutation" (L. u. W., 1880, p. 304). And he continues: "That which the apostle predicates of himself, of his own person, *I am persuaded* v. 38 does not differ from that which he predicates of us, of

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\* Whilst the interpretation of Rom. 8, 37. 38 given in the text is not without advocates among Lutheran writers, it is deemed important to call attention to the fact, that every Christian may apply St. Paul's words to himself and his fellow believers, as expressive of the objective certainty of God's grace in Christ, so that no power shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. That the Christian may depart from this firm rock of his faith and fall away, notwithstanding that God's promises remain immovable—that, while nothing can pluck him out of the Savior's hands, he may himself go away from his Lord—is not thus denied.

all the children of God, in verses 31-37." But it is very different, as we will presently see.

Now the apostle knew many things in this respect, which his fellow Christians did not know. Thus Paul writes to the Thessalonians, who then looked for the immediate coming of Christ unto judgment, that He would not come *except there come a falling away first and that man of sin be revealed* (2 Thess. 2, 3); he tells them (1 Thess. 4, 15) that those who were still alive at the return of Christ *would not prevent those who had fallen asleep*, as they had erroneously supposed. Peter knew that Ananias and Sapphira were practicing a lie in presenting a part of the proceeds of their sold possessions to the apostles, as though it were the whole, of which the church then had no knowledge. Acts 5, 1-3. Paul knew that Simon's heart was not right in the sight of God (Acts 8, 20-22), etc.

And besides, Paul is not only certain concerning his own election, *but equally of the election of others, of the Christians at Rome*. He is persuaded that nothing can separate us. And this he did not believe in charity, as we believe confessing Christians to be believers, if their works do not prove the contrary; but he is persuaded, he is certain. Past. Stoeckhardt really observes, "In charity he (Paul) regarded all Christians whom he addressed as true children of God, as elect. Hence he has no doubt whatever, that God will perfect their faith" (L. u. W. 1880, p. 305). Surely, any certainty that rests upon what we believe in charity is no certainty at all. The building cannot be firmer than the foundation upon which it rests. Yea, this argument destroys all certainty of election. If what we believe in charity is the only certainty of election, which Past. Stoeckhardt means, he has none whatever. Would it not be the height of presumption to affirm concerning all the members of a church, whom in charity we consider to be Christians, that we were certain that they are all of the elect and would all infallibly get to heaven? The Bible nowhere declares this, but tells us the opposite, that many are called, but few are chosen. The fact then, that the apostle expresses equal certainty of the election of others with his own, proves undeniably, that he speaks in the capacity of an apostle, and not of a common

Christian. Can we be certain, certain beyond any peradventure, of the election of any fellow Christian, even if we were certain of our own, when too it is declared as a prerogative of God to know those who are his? (2 Tim. 2, 18.) The Formula of Concord, therefore, counts this among the mysteries which God has reserved for His wisdom, and which He has not revealed, to wit "as to who, when they are called, would believe, or not believe. Again, who of the converted would persevere and who would not persevere, who after falling from grace would repent and who would be hardened," etc., §§ 54, 55. Past. Stoeckhardt, in direct opposition to all this, would make us be certain that all the called were of the elect and would surely get to heaven. That is the way in which St. Louis sticks to the Formula of Concord and interprets it. Like the old lady who differed with Paul the apostle,—these are the points where Past. Stoeckhardt and the Formula differ. It is then beyond dispute, that Paul speaks here as an apostle, and not as a common Christian.

It is true, in verses 31–37 he uses the plural and writes, *what shall we then say to these things?* etc. But in all these things there is no such personal certainty expressed. They only contain an argument. When Paul proceeds to subjective certainty he speaks in the singular number, only of himself, as certain, and includes his readers as those concerning whom he was certain. After he has treated of predestination, and has stated, that whom God had foreknown as such as the Romans were in their then condition, He had predestinated, called, justified and glorified, he puts the question, *What shall we say to these things?* He goes on to explain by asking an additional question, *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 shall He not also with Him freely give us all things? etc. This is his answer as to what we shall say to these things. We know that God will freely give us all things, not because of our personal election according to the Missouri theory of a particularity of grace, but because God has delivered up His Son for us all. What has that to do with election? Not because God has elected me, but because Christ died for me, I am to be certain that with Him, with His very deliverance for me, God will give me all

things needed for my salvation. And the apostle goes on to specify. God justifies—hence no one can lay anything to our charge. Christ has died and risen and makes intercession for us at God's right hand—hence no one can condemn us. And from that love of Christ exhibited in His death, resurrection and intercession, nothing can separate us, but we will come off even more than conquerors. Let the reader notice, that after the apostle has treated of election he drops it so far as the choice of persons is concerned, and refers us for comfort to the death of Christ, from which everything comes to us, to the Christians at Rome—for our salvation, justification and perseverance unto the end. And this he tells and teaches them. But where is there anything said that this came to them of their personal election, and still more that they were certain of all this already? If they had been so positive and certain, as Past. Stoeckhardt declares, what need on earth would there have been for the apostle's long and exhaustive argument to convince them of their final salvation?! As so often, Past. Stoeckhardt here again argues in a circle. He affirms it to be the apostle's purpose in this whole chapter to console the brethren at Rome in their tribulation and distress with the hope of their final salvation, and yet he says the apostle here only expresses *their* subjective and positive certainty of their salvation. Is this another mystery? No, the apostles never argue in a circle. These fallacies are an invention of New Missouri and are put into the Bible by them. There is not one within the lids of the Scriptures, although the Missouri doctrine of election consists almost exclusively of them.

Prof. Stub (L. u. W., 1881, p. 565) perverts the apostle's meaning with regard to the same passages. He says: "After the apostle has developed (?) the doctrine of election, v. 28-30, he puts the question: *What shall we say to these things?* What signification has this doctrine of election which I have now *developed* (?) for us? . . . What conclusion shall we draw from it? The apostle himself replies with a new question: If God be for us who shall be against us? As though he would say, Lo! this is the comfort which both of us, I and you believing Christians, can draw from it, that God is for us, etc. But here already Prof. Stub is getting off of the track. The

things which Paul refers to are not simply election, but the call, justification and *glorification*, the latter of which was yet in the future. The apostle desires to know, what we should say to all these things. Hence he replies: If God be for us, who can be against us? God is for those whom he has called and justified. But he is equally for those whom he has redeemed, namely so as to call, justify and glorify them, if they will only accept it. This appears from the very next verse, where Paul continues in the same strain and as a part of the same answer, *Who also spared* not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? This is Paul's evidence also that God is for us, that namely He delivered up His own Son for us all. Is that election or the divine resolution to save a few selected favorites, as Missouri holds? How am I to know that I am one of them? From my redemption through Christ which is for all equally? But that pertains to all and certainly also pertains to the elect. This is the consolation which Paul addresses to them. And this is certainly a valid argument and a proof which every child of God needs daily, that, namely, as God has already given him the greater, His own Son, He will not withhold the less, and that, as He has given Him for all, he must be included in the all. Hence Paul continues, *Who shall lay anything 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. And nothing, he concludes, shall separate us from this love of Christ. Is there in all this any particularity of elective grace mentioned or intimated? Just the opposite. These are all matters which apply to all equally and to which all have access, if they will only come and accept. God delivered up His Son for all, Christ died and rose for all and makes intercession for all, and God justifies all who believe, and Christ's love is for all equally. And from this Paul infers not our election, but our perseverance, as far as divine grace is concerned.

So with the other passage, Phil. 1, 6. The apostle there says that he is persuaded, convinced, that God, who hath begun the good work in the Philippians, will also perform it

until the day of Jesus Christ. Past. Stoeckhardt holds that "Paul in charity regarded all Christians, to whom he writes, as true children of God, as of the elect. Hence he has no doubt whatever, that God would carry their faith to consummation. And for this very purpose he openly tells his readers, what he feels and thinks, that they may obtain the same certainty concerning their own salvation. This is the language and conviction of the true children of God: *We are entirely certain, that we have been elected unto salvation, that nothing can separate us from the love of Christ, that we shall obtain the end of our faith, even the salvation of our souls,*" (L. u. W. 1880, p. 305.) All this Past. Stoeckhardt finds in the passage referred to!!

In the first place, can we base absolute certainty upon what we believe in charity? Is our faith or certitude to rest upon such a foundation? Must we be convinced, be entirely certain, that all our people are of the elect and will get to heaven without fail, because in charity we believe them to be Christians? Where is the promise to which our faith is to cling in this matter? Certainty of faith on the ground of charity!! and certainty of faith which in the end will be disappointed! We say decidedly, no. Does it follow from the apostle's expression concerning the Philippians, that they all went to heaven? Not at all! God would do His work in them—of that the apostle was sure; *but that did not preclude the possibility of their WILFULLY turning away from Christ.* The apostle was no Calvinist and did not teach the *gratia irresistibilis*, which Past. Stoeckhardt evidently holds. And the advocacy of this Calvinistic error on the part of St. Louis makes their Calvinism unmistakable.

The Formula of Concord incontestably takes the passage in our sense. It is there said first, generally, "that many receive the Word with joy, but afterward fall away, Luke 8, 13. But the cause of this apostacy is not that God was not willing to give to those in whom He had begun the good work the grace of perseverance; for that is contrary to Phil. 1, 6; but the reason is that they again *wilfully* turn away from the holy precept of God, grieve and offend the Holy Ghost," etc., § 42. "Besides, the Scriptures testify that God is so faithful, that as He has begun the good work in us He will also preserve and

continue it unto the end, *if only we ourselves do not turn away from Him*, but retain the beginning of our confidence unto the end firmly, to which constancy He has promised us His grace." § 32.

Now what *is contrary to Phil. 1, 6*? Our Formula answers, this is contrary to it, *that God is not willing to give to those in whom He has begun the good work the grace of perseverance*. What then does the passage mean? That God will give to those in whom He has begun the good work the grace of perseverance. This is what it means and only this, according to our Formula. But that does not prevent the possibility and the actuality of some *wilfully* turning away from the holy precept of God and perishing. Can there be anything clearer than this, that the Formula does not understand the passage in question to mean, that apostacy on the part of the converted is impossible, or that it refers to the elect alone, guaranteeing their perseverance absolutely, so that they cannot and will not turn away from the holy precept of God? Nothing can be clearer, than that it only means that God's faithfulness cannot fail, and that if the good work begun in any converted person does fail, it is not the fault of God, but of man's wilfully turning away from the holy precept of God. It may be that Past. Stoeckhardt's thoughts "will here fail him again and that he will cease to think," as he is wont to say and do, when Bible truths are confronted with his human and illogical speculations. But the trouble with him seems not so much to be that he ceases to think, as that he has never actually commenced. This is his "*Jacob's Oil*" for all his ills, that when he is about to be conducted out of his Calvinistic treadmill, he stops thinking in order to remain; and that he was too lethargic to think and to think Biblically, otherwise he would not now be ensnared in it.

Neither does the Formula of Concord teach such subjective certainty. The passages which Past. Stoeckhardt quotes do not prove it. They only show that election puts our salvation beyond a doubt on the part of God, which no one denies; but that we can ever reach perfect and *unchangeable* certainty before the close of our earthly career, is altogether a different thing. It is there said § 47-49 (cited by Stoeckhardt in proof of subjective certainty of election), that God in His eternal



counsel advised with Himself the conversion of every *Christian* and his perseverance, and that in His eternal purpose He ordained to put it into the hands of Christ; whence Paul says, because we have been called according to the divine purpose, nothing can separate us from the love of God in Christ. § 47. In § 48 it is said that God decreed in His eternal counsel to assist us in every need and has foreordained all our crosses, by which He would make us conformed to His Son, and that they must redound to our good, because we are called according to His purpose; from which Paul concluded with certitude that nothing could separate us from the love of God in Christ.

But how this is all meant we learn from § 51. In the above paragraph it was said that God in His eternal *counsel* advised with Himself concerning our conversion and perseverance, and that in His *counsel* He ordained our crosses; and in the latter it is declared, as an exhortation and warning, that they, the Pharisees and lawyers, rejected the *counsel* of God against themselves, Luke 7, 30. And whilst God in His counsel deliberated concerning our call and conversion, the admonition and warning is, that those who will not hear, that none of those men that were bidden, shall taste of my supper, Luke 14, 24; and many be called, but few chosen, Matt. 20, 16; he that hath ears to hear, let him hear; take heed, therefore, how ye hear, Luke 8, 18, (§ 51). Now are we to hold that our confessors intended to present their argument in the form of logical mysteries? If not, we must understand them to mean, that what they say in § 47-49 concerning the certainty of our conversion, perseverance, and salvation and the crosses, by which we should be made like unto the image of Christ, is conditional; that that *counsel* may be rejected, as the Pharisees *actually* did; that the call may be declined, and the Word not heard aright. But can this be said of *personal* election and of predestination? Can personal predestination be rejected as the Pharisees actually rejected the counsel of God concerning themselves? To ask the question is to refute it. Hence, our confessors can in all these paragraphs only refer to predestination in general, or in its wider sense, or the general plan of salvation. Consequently they speak of the conversion and constancy devised in God's eternal *counsel* as applying to every *Christian*. And this purpose and counsel cannot fail;

for it is conditional—the condition being that it is not rejected, as the Pharisees actually did reject it, and that we accept the invitation to the marriage feast. Whilst no foreign power on earth or in hell can hinder the accomplishment of this counsel, the sinner himself, to whom it pertains, can frustrate it by *wilful* resistance and by *wilful* apostasy. It seems to us that only a pettifogger or special pleader can deny, that this is and must be the meaning of our Confession.

Having thus disposed of Past. Stoeckhardt's subjective certitude of personal election, let us now see whence, according to his theory, this certitude is obtained. We might pass this by, as we have seen that there is no such subjective *constant certainty*; yet it may be well to hear our respected opponent, concerning whom it is our grief that we cannot walk in the unity of faith with him. But his arguments here are the most visionary of all, and that is saying a good deal. He raises the question: "By what means can just I know, that I am elected?" . . . "And thus we are to learn our election from the Gospel." He means our personal election. 2 Tim. 1, 9–10; 2 Thess. 2, 13. 14; Eph. 1, 9. 10, and Rom. 8, 30, are appealed to.

In the first passage Paul says that the grace which was given us before the eternal ages in Christ is now made manifest by the appearance of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. How this is meant, we learn from Tit. 2, 11, and 3, 4. In the first passage we read: For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men. It existed eternally, but appeared to all men through Christ, who gave Himself for us, v. 14. And in the latter passage it is said that the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared toward man, so that now He saves us according to His mercy. The grace, then, that was given to us eternally, but was manifest through the appearance of Christ, is God's universal grace, that pertains to all men and is revealed in the Gospel. Nothing is here said of personal election; yea, the idea is excluded by the statement that it appeared in Christ, or was revealed through the appearance of Christ. That grace is universal and has appeared unto all men. The second passage is different. The Thessalonians, who had been chosen unto salvation through faith in the truth, are told that they had been

called *unto or into it, into faith* through the Gospel. Paul states this as a fact, but says nothing about this being the evidence of the Thessalonian's eternal election. In the same way he states that God had elected them, but does that prove that that is their subjective evidence of their election? Let it be noted then that this is an inference of Past. Stoeckhardt's, a speculation of his, but no declaration of God's Word; that, namely, we should learn our personal election from the Gospel, or the call of the Gospel. Concerning Eph. 1, 9. 10 Past. Stoeckhardt observes, that Paul ascribes the revelation of the mystery of the reconciliation of the whole world, the preaching of the Gospel, v. 13, to the present blessings, which flow from the eternal election and predestination of God. The revelation of the redemption of the whole world through the Gospel, a result of personal election!! Then there would be neither redemption nor Gospel for the non-elect. That is certainly unblushing Calvinism. And there is not a word said in all these passages, that the preaching of the Gospel was in consequence of personal election. It is simply stated in v. 13 that the Ephesians trusted in Christ *after that they heard the word of truth, the Gospel of their salvation*. But nothing is said that the Gospel was preached to them in consequence of their election. Past. Stoeckhardt reads that from his own mind, but not from the inspired page. See Rom. 8. Those whom God predestinated He also called, and that unquestionably through the Gospel. But where is it said that the Gospel is a revelation of personal election and of nothing else, so that from the mere hearing of the Gospel we could with unerring certainty infer our election unto eternal life? If it were so said in express language, we would have to believe it, although it might seem to come in conflict with other passages. For our business is not to reconcile by reason, but to believe. But do the proof passages of Past. Stoeckhardt say that we should infer our election from the Gospel call? We have looked at them all. There is not a syllable to that effect. It is a presumptuous human speculation. It is true that whom God predestinated, He calls through the Gospel; but he calls others also. From the call I can and should infer, that God desires to save me, otherwise He would not have called me; but that I am one of the elect, I am not to infer and cannot infer; for

that depends upon other things, namely upon heeding the call and persevering unto the end, as we shall presently see. First, then, there is no explicit word that tells us that we should infer our election from the call of the Gospel. Let this be borne in mind! Secondly, the reasoning is fallacious. For if the circumstance that we are called unto God's eternal grace proves, that we are of those who by it will surely get to heaven and are of the elect, the fact that the Romans had been called among all nations, or with all nations, unto the obedience of faith (Rom. 1, 5. 6) would also prove that they, together with all nations, actually had this faith. For the call was to that. The Galatians had been called into the grace of Christ; they must, therefore, infer that they are in it, yet the apostle tells them that they are so soon removed to another Gospel, Gal. 1, 6. We are called unto the peace of God, Col. 3, 15, unto liberty, Gal. 5, 13, unto holiness, 1 Thess. 4, 7, unto God's eternal kingdom, 1 Thess. 2, 2, unto the marvelous light of the Gospel, 1 Pet. 2, 9, to inherit a blessing, 3, 9, etc.; from all of which, according to Stoeckhardt's speculation, we are to infer that we have the *peace of God*, that we have *liberty*, that we have *holiness*, that we have *God's eternal kingdom*, that we are all in the *marvelous light of the Gospel*, that we have obtained the *eternal blessing*—just because we have been called unto it. The statement in form is alike as regards the passages quoted by Past. Stoeckhardt and these, and if his conclusions follow from his passages, the other must follow from the latter. Our easy-going exegete makes himself light work here as usual. He says: "Thus we are to learn to know our election from the Gospel. Of course also the non-elect, those that believe only for a while, hear the same Gospel. But we reject the inference as a speculation of reason, that because unbelievers, pertinacious resisters, and those that believe for a while, also hear this Gospel, we cannot with certainty infer our election from the Gospel. Reason must keep its mouth shut, when God reveals His mysteries." L. u. W. 1880, p. 307. To the latter sentence we say yea and amen. But as regards the former we have seen that Past. Stoeckhardt's argument is a speculation of his blind reason and has no *Thus saith the Lord*. It is a putting together of Bible passages according to his pet theory and is exactly on a level with the modern theory of the devel-

opment of doctrine. Indeed, we fear his whole theology is tinged with Hofmannism, and that he is in part a Hoffmannite without being aware of it. A late article in L. u. W., headed: "*The natural man receiveth not,*" etc., in which he tries to prove his election doctrine from Christian experience, without any express warrant in God's Word, looks altogether like Hofmann's vain attempt to construct the doctrines of Christianity from Christian consciousness. Such evidence is utterly worthless. Any Christian experience that has no Word of God to rest upon, is mere feeling and fanaticism. For Christian experience, if it is true, is a result of God's Word, and must be regulated and determined by it.

We find Prof. Pieper on the same track in his article on Luthardt's *Kirchenzeitung*. He tries to reconcile contradictory doctrines from Christian experience. And this has been the last appeal of Missouri all along in this controversy—Christian experience. It had to supply the place of God's Word. We say again, this is a most unscriptural and dangerous principle, which opens wide the floodgates for every wild theory and all manner of fanatical notions, and is a denial of one fundamental principle of the Reformation, that the Bible is the only rule and judge of heavenly doctrine. Half of Luther's writings, we may say, are a loud testimony against it. Men (and brethren, we would like to say) beware! You are sowing dragons' teeth, that will spring up in armed men to overwhelm you!

And besides, if all who hear the Gospel, all who are simply called, are to regard themselves as elected, then Pharaoh and Judas Iscariot and all the Jews to whom Christ preached, ought to have considered themselves as chosen, without any further ceremony. Or does faith in our election constitute us chosen ones, as faith in the Gospel makes us children of God! That would surrender the whole St. Louis theory; for that is, not that election depends upon faith, but that faith depends upon election. But we have the express words of Christ, putting the quietus upon Past. Stoeckhardt's speculations, that all the called are elect. Christ namely tells us, that they are not all of the elect, but that *many are called, but few are chosen*. Are these words of the Savior a human speculation? When the Savior tells us that not all the called are chosen, but many are called and few only

chosen, are we to discard these words and adopt Past. Stoeckhardt's speculation derived from his imagination? Where does the Bible say that all who are called are chosen? If it said so, and also said that not all the called are chosen, we would pray God to give us faith to believe both. But does the Bible contain such flat contradictions? Let them be pointed out! Every article of faith must be somewhere given in express words. The construction of a mere context constitutes no article of faith, and to try to make it such, is unbiblical and un-Lutheran, papistical presumption, and a crime against God's Word. Hence it is not speculation, but the express words of Christ, that keep us from adopting Past. Stoeckhardt's deduction and compel us to discard and condemn it.

And the very fact that our Formula points us to the Gospel as a revelation of our election — to the Gospel whose promises are universal—is to our mind proof incontrovertible, that the Missouri doctrine of election is as foreign to it as earth is to heaven, and that its doctrine is that which the Lutheran Church has ever held since its adoption. If election took place in view of the result of the means of grace, or of faith, we can well see how the general promises of the Gospel should reveal it; but if election starts out with a particularity and discrimination of grace, how can the universality of the Gospel show this particularity and discrimination? That is simply impossible. Hence the Formula of Concord says § 67: "God has declared our election from heaven in the words: Repent and believe in the Gospel (Mark 1, 15); This is the will of Him that sent me, that he that seeth the Son and believeth in Him hath eternal life (John 6, 4); God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son etc., (John 3, 16)." This is the election our Formula means, but not the Missouri election—election in its broad sense—predestination which includes the whole scheme of salvation.

And of similar import is the following passage. "This doctrine affords the good and excellent comfort, that God was so highly concerned about the conversion, justification, and salvation of every *Christian* (why not of every elect?) and that he willed it so faithfully, that before the world began He advised with Himself and ordained in His purpose as to how He would bring me to it and keep me therein." Does this apply

only to the elect in the strict sense? Does not the commission to preach the Gospel to every creature, and God's gracious will toward all men, include this? Was God only concerned about the conversion of those who are actually saved? Is not all a result of God's merciful counsel of redemption and salvation? What is there particular here, which Christ did not do to Jerusalem when He would have gathered their children, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but they would not? And has not God reposed the salvation of those who believe only for a while into the hands of Christ also, out of which no man can snatch them? Were they expected to save themselves without it? But does that exclude the possibility of their wilfully throwing away their confidence? And has not God resolved in His purpose to assist all believers in every trial, even if they wilfully turn away from Him again? Does man's infidelity make void and of no effect the faith of God? (Rom. 3, 3.) We submit, whether our Formula does not here mean the *whole counsel of God* unto salvation, or predestination in its general sense.

But our Formula raises the question, how it may be known, who are the elect, and who should and can apply this doctrine to themselves for their comfort? § 26. Hence personal certainty is here meant. The answer is given in § 27-32. One mark is, that God calls them—the guests whom he would have at the wedding of His Son He has invited § 27. But this is to be done to all § 28. The second mark is that they hear the Word and follow Christ. The third is that they PERSEVERE in hope and consolation under the cross § 29. Thus the Holy Ghost gives testimony to God's children that they are His, are of the elect § 30.

It will be seen that three marks are given — the call, the acceptance of the call, and perseverance in hope, patience and consolation under the cross. One essential mark of the elect then is *perseverance* unto the end. This mark in the nature of the case is not and cannot be full, till the end is reached. We can certainly draw no inference from a mark, before the mark is made manifest. It is a material fault of Past. Stoeckhardt's arguments that he makes them hop, step and jump, that his pieces go off half-cocked and then fizz and hang fire and miss their mark. He would draw conclusions

from the marks of election, before these marks are established—from perseverance, before perseverance is proved. If final perseverance is a mark of election, it can only be positively known after the mark is fully made out. Past. Stoeckhardt reverses this argument and proves perseverance from election; he proves the mark by the thing which the mark is to point out, i. e. he puts the cart before the horse, and then starts out on his gala day parade and display.

And then the Formula gives three marks of election—the call, acceptance of the call, and perseverance. Past. Stoeckhardt is satisfied with one, namely, with the mere call, as we have shown. For he discards it as a human speculation, when it is objected to his idolized pet, that those who hear the Word only for a while, or who obstinately resist the call, also hear the same Gospel and yet cannot be of the elect. He would have Pharaoh, Judas Iscariot, the Jews to whom John the Baptist, Christ and His apostles preached, to have regarded themselves as chosen. What an abominable doctrine this is! Where the Formula gives three marks of election, Past. Stoeckhardt gets along with one and bases his diagnosis upon it alone. His argument is from the greater to the less—that if a man can walk on two legs, he can also walk on one, or from the rule that is said to hold in hunting rattlesnakes, that, namely, where you find two, you are sure to find one. He seems to be a stickler for simplicity and for the reduction of everything ultimately to one principle. If you are only called you should at once be certain that you are one of the elect! The call is certainly *one* evidence, one mark of election, as our Formula says, but taken separate and alone, like many other arguments, proves nothing. Acceptance of the call is another mark, but even these two alone do not establish it. Only when the third is added, perseverance, as the Formula gives them, do they become conclusive. But absolute conclusiveness is only reached at the end. Hence, we say, Christians should *strive* for it and the apostle admonishes us to make our election sure, that is, to persevere in making it sure. If we had already attained this perfection in certainty, the application of the admonition would cease to apply to us. But the apostle means that it should be in force unto the end, pretty much as are the admonitions



unto holiness or unto strength and increase in faith. Whilst a Christian is certain of his perseverance to-day, he may be troubled about it to-morrow. His certainty comes and goes, which shows that it is only partial, not permanent, not absolute. For the fact that the Christian is in doubt to-morrow, destroys his certainty to-day as pertaining to the future, by being interrupted. We are to strive for subjective certainty of our salvation, but we will mostly be constrained to say with the apostle in another connection: Not that I have already attained or am already perfect, but I strive after it that I may apprehend it. And when God in His great mercy has vouchsafed it to us for a moment, it may the next hour be shaken again, as faith itself is perfected in inward conflict. It is no evidence of deep Christian experience, if, as Dr. Walther requires "*the Christian is entirely at ease, because he believes in election.*" S. B. 1877, p. 35. Such being entirely at ease is carnal security, for we are bidden to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, and we are to make our calling and election sure, which is a work that is to go on continually, and in which perfection is not reached till our deliverance from all temptations comes. Our certainty of election and final salvation is something not on a line with the certainty of justification by faith or certainty of our present adoption. This requires faith simply, whether strong or weak, but the other requires certain degrees of faith, as it is not present at all in some Christians and in all it comes and goes. Past. Stoeckhardt writes: "This is the language and conviction of the true children of God, We are *entirely certain*, that we have been elected unto salvation, that nothing can separate us from the love of God, and that we shall obtain the end of faith, even the salvation of our souls," L. u. W. 1880, p. 305. And again: "He (the apostle) gives expression to his personal conviction that no inimical power, not even death and hell, will or can separate him from the love of God. *But this is a certainty which ALL THE elect children of God possess.*" L. u. W. 1880, p. 305. Those are sweeping, horrid assertions, which exclude from the number of God's elect children all baptized infants, and all who are not possessed of this certainty; and, we venture the assertion, by far the larger number of God's people. Let such a fanatic, whom the Calvinistic

mania has made blind and reckless, take heed lest he consign to hell in his fury those whom Christ calls blessed and whose names are written in heaven.

We subjoin what Gerhard says on this point, expressing better than we are able our own convictions: "The question is, whether any one in this life can be certain of his election? We answer: That the regenerate or believers in Christ can and should be certain of the grace of God and the remission of their sins, we will show at another place. Here we have only to prove that they can and should also be firmly convinced in their hearts of their perseverance, which rests upon the omnipotence, fidelity and good will of God . . . We should proceed thus: Those who by true faith adhere to Christ, a gracious Father will not permit to be taken out of His hands; and I have been born again and adhere to Christ by a firm faith. Therefore the good Shepherd will not suffer me to be taken out of His hands. If I am assailed by the temptations that many truly renewed persons have again fallen from grace, I will respond in faith, *they turned away from Christ of their own accord and malice*, but were not rejected by any absolute decree. Therefore *I will constantly adhere to my God—He will never leave me; for I trust in the promises of God.* Rom. 11, 29; 1 Cor. 1, 9; 10, 13; Phil. 2, 13; 2 Tim, 1, 12." (De Elect. § 2, 7).

And again § 210: "Such an absolute certainty of election and salvation is not to be supposed, that it could be said that even if the regenerate should again involve themselves in atrocious sins against their conscience, they would yet not lose faith, the Holy Spirit, and *salvation*. God makes us certain of our salvation, but not carnally secure. The infallible promises of God liberate us from doubt; the menaces and admonitions of God keep us from carnal security, and hence between the Scylla of perpetual doubt and the Charybdis of absolute necessity the little bark of our faith will hold its course following the cynosure of the Word."

And § 211 Gerhard writes: "It is furthermore enquired, whence we can know whether we are of the number of the elect? We reply, He that believeth in the Son of God hath this testimony in Himself. 1 John 5, 10. Whom God predestinated in eternity, these He calls in time through the

Word and justifies by faith. Rom. 8, 29. This faith exercises itself in invocation, patience under the cross and the pursuit of holiness. But if faith in temptations has been rendered weak and the sense of faith is nearly extinguished, *we should look to the general promises, in which God offers His grace to all, and the merits of Christ which pertain to all, to the ministration of the Word and the Sacraments, in which God offers the benefits of His Son to all, to baptism, which is the covenant of a good conscience. We should recur to the use of the Lord's Supper, in which Christ offers us His body, which was given for us into death, and His blood, which He shed for us upon the altar of the cross, to eat and to drink, from all of which we should infer that it is God's earnest will, that, acknowledging our sins, we should believe in Christ, and through faith be made participants of eternal salvation."*

We thus see that certainty of election is not a means of strengthening a weak faith—for that he directs us to the general promises of God pertaining to all—but rather a result of a strong faith. Furthermore, it is not permanent. Temptations shake it. The certainty of getting to heaven rests not upon the certainty of our election, but upon the "divine omnipotence, fidelity and good will," and when assailed by the temptation that many who once believed, fall away, we should respond, *they fall away from Christ of their own accord*, which I will not do, but will constantly adhere to my God.

To sum up, certainty of election is reached only on the heights of faith, is not permanent, but comes and goes, may cease in temptation altogether, and is an object for which we should strive, as we are admonished to make it sure.

To conclude, the Missouri doctrine of election involves fundamental errors:

1. The Missouri doctrine of election, as their own writings clearly show and as we have conclusively proved, has no clear and explicit Word of God to rest upon, which every doctrine must have to constitute it an article of Christian faith. It is nowhere expressly said in the Bible "that faith flows from election," that God in conversion removes wilful resistance in some and not in others, that He alone makes the difference between men (which is the very essence of Calvinism) that some are elected and converted and others not,

although the causes that prevented the election and conversion of the latter applied in every way to the former, etc. These things are nowhere said in the Bible, and hence they cannot be articles of faith. This is absolutely fatal to the new tenets.

2. The Missouri doctrine of election requires us to believe things concerning which God has told us the opposite. It requires us to believe that all the called are elected, whereas Christ expressly tells us the contrary—that namely not all the called are elected, but that many are called but few chosen, (Matt. 20, 16), that many receive the Word with joy but afterwards fall away again and bring forth no fruit, and expressly mentions some who were called and at last perished, as for example Judas Iscariot, Hymeneus, Alexander, etc.

3. The Missouri doctrine of election sets up a secret will of God running counter to His revealed will, willing, according to the latter, that all should be saved, and according to the former that only a part should be saved, by electing them unto salvation, as election is claimed to depend only on the divine will.

4. The Missouri doctrine of election throws doubt upon God's earnest will to save all men, by holding that He carries it out with some, by electing them, and does not carry it out with others, in not electing them.

5. The Missouri doctrine of election makes God a respecter of persons and to act partially by not electing some men on account of unbelief, and electing others who were in the same unbelief, by which the whole truth of the Bible is called in question, inasmuch as God might then save some, although they believed not, whilst he rejects others on account of unbelief. It destroys the justice and truth of God by assigning unbelief as a reason for non-election with regard to some, whilst it was no cause for preventing the election of others, which proceeding the Bible condemns even in man.

6. The Missouri doctrine of election divides Christ by assigning the merits of Christ and the good pleasure of God as the only considerations, why only *some* men were elected or singled out from the rest, implying that the grace of election through which it is held salvation alone comes, was not purchased for all. For if it had been, not mercy, but justice

would have required, that it should also have been applied to them through election. (See note.)

7. The Missouri doctrine of election has one general and ineffectual way of salvation for all, upon which no one was ever saved, and this way perfected through election, upon which all are saved who are put into it by election.

8. The Missouri doctrine of election includes, as an important part, the unscriptural Calvinistic tenet of irresistible grace.

9. The Missouri doctrine of election contradicts itself by making faith a *result* of election and holding that election consisted in giving men faith in foresight.

10. The Missouri doctrine of election pushes the doctrine of justification by faith alone from its centre and depresses it to the level of sanctification, making it only an appendage to its system of election, maintaining that election makes the difference between the saved and lost.

11. The Missouri doctrine of conversion in connection with election, makes God act differently with sinners, removing wilful resistance in some and not in others, and makes God responsible for men's perdition, by not converting them.

12. The Missouri doctrine of election coincides in nearly every point, and certainly in every essential point, with that moderate form of Calvinism as expressed in the 39. Articles, the *Confessio Helvetica* and the *Confessio Marchica*.

In the first, 17, it is said: "Predestination unto life is the eternal purpose of God, by which in His counsel, unknown to us, and before the world began, he irrevocably decreed that those whom from the human race He elected in Christ He would deliver from the curse and destruction and lead unto eternal salvation. Hence those who are endowed with these great benefits are called according to His purpose, the Holy Spirit working in them at the opportune hour, obey the call through grace, are justified by grace, adopted as God's children, are conformed to the image of the only begotten Son Jesus Christ, walk abundantly in good works, and at last through the compassion of God reach eternal happiness." Nothing is said of any decree of reprobation.

In the second it is declared: "God from eternity predes-

minated or elected freely and of His mere grace, without any respect of men, the saints whom He wished to save in Christ. Therefore not without means, although not on account of any merit of our own, but in Christ and on account of Christ, God elected us, so that those who are now inserted into Christ by faith are the elect, but the reprobates are those outside of Christ."

The third states: "Concerning eternal election His Electoral Grace acknowledges and confesses that it is one of the most comforting articles of faith upon which not only all the rest, but also our salvation principally rests, that namely Almighty God out of pure grace and mercy, without regard to men's merits and works and before the world began, has ordained and elected unto eternal life all who constantly believe in Christ and also well knows and recognizes His own; and as He has loved them eternally He also bestows upon them from His mere grace the true faith and perseverance unto the end, so that no one can pluck them out of the hands of Christ and no one separate them from His love, and that all things, whether they be good or evil, must work together for their good, because they have been called according to His purpose . . . . His Electoral Grace rejects the doctrine that God elected some *propter fidem praevisam*, which is Pelagianism; that He is not willing that the larger number should be saved . . . as the righteous God has decreed the damnation of no one, except on account of sin, whence the decree of reprobation is not an absolute decree, merely a free and naked decree; (and He also rejects the notion) that the Word and the sacraments and piety will avail those nothing who are not elect." Art. 14.

Now, will Past. Stoeckhardt have the kindness to point out the difference between his doctrine of election and that of this moderate species of Calvinism, as set forth in the above Confession, against which our fathers especially had to contend, and which confronted them under the odious name of Crypto-Calvinism? Do they not resemble one another as much as two eggs of the same size and species? And is it possible that the sons of our fathers have become confederates with their bitter foe! And need we wonder, if these confederates now sail under false colors and talk of reforming the doc-

trine of the Lutheran Church on this point, as Dr. Walther is said to have declared himself, when they are only treading in the footsteps of their worthy spiritual progenitors! Lord have mercy upon Thy poor down-trodden, bleeding Church!

13. The Missouri doctrine of election changes almost the whole system of Lutheran doctrine, is itself a grievous error, and involves apostasy from the Lutheran faith.

The history of the rise of this doctrine in the Missouri Synod shows God's displeasure upon the folly and sin of trusting in human authority and ascribing that honor to man, however gifted, which He claims for Himself and His Word, by letting that Synod fall into this grievous error. It ought to be a warning to us all. It also teaches how little the former boast of the *reine Lehre* meant in that body. For they now denounce what, to say the least, by far the larger majority, if not all, beside Dr. Walther, held and taught. We know whereof we affirm. And now the boast has taken a new start upon a new basis. Whilst the doctrines change, the *reine Lehre* remains the same in that Synod!

Let us now give a translation of the Bible passages treating specifically of election in their connection, and in accordance with the meaning which our investigation has shown.

But we know that all things work together for good to those that love God, to the called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew (the Christians at Rome in their condition, as believers, are meant, and all others who are in a like state) He also predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first born among many brethren; but whom He predestinated, these He also called, but whom He called, these He also justified, and whom He justified, these He also glorified. Rom. 8, 28-30.

To the elect according to the foreknowledge (of them as believers, as we must infer from the above passage) of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit (through faith) unto obedience (personal holiness) and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. 1 Pet. 1, 2.

God from the beginning has elected you unto salvation through the sanctification of the Spirit and faith in the truth (through faith which the Holy Ghost works and through

faith in the Gospel) faith being presupposed as an instrument through which election was made.) II Thess. 2, 13.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly matters in Christ (these blessings were in Christ) as (in like manner as) He has elected us in Him (as being in Him by faith) before the founding of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love; having predestinated us unto sonship *through* Jesus Christ unto Himself according to the good pleasure of His will, unto the praise of His glorious grace, in which He has made us acceptable in the Beloved (as such who were in Him), in whom we have redemption through His blood. Eph. 1, 2-7.

For many are called, but few are chosen Matt. 20, 16, where Christ shows the reason why many are called, but few only chosen, that it is of grace, and not of merit, and that *in the foresight of God* calling comes before election, and election results from it.

We thus have the following as the expressed Biblical doctrine of election.

1: The only cause of election, properly speaking, are the good pleasure of God and the merits of Christ, through whom and on account of whom we are elected. ♣

2. Election was made *through faith* wrought by the Holy Ghost and having the Gospel or Christ for its contents, or of those who were in Christ. Election took place through faith as justification and salvation take place through faith, presupposing faith.

3. Those whom God foreknew and predestinated unto salvation were believers, as were the Christians at Rome to whom the apostle applies it.

4. Nothing is said of final faith, but as election is through faith *unto* salvation we must infer that it was final faith, just as the passages, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved," etc., mean final faith, although it is not expressly mentioned.

This much the Bible clearly and explicitly teaches. And this is all that we are contending for. But for this we must contend, come what may, and suffer too, if need be, as many



of us have already done. And the writer can truthfully say, it has cost him the greatest sacrifice of his life of which he had any control to take the step which for conscience's sake he was, at last, compelled to take. He made every effort to stand aloof from the controversy, but he could not. We would be recreant to our God, to His precious truth, to the Church whose poor sons we are and desire to be, did we not fight for this part of the faith once delivered to the saints. Indeed, we would let go the Formula of Concord and discard it entirely did it teach any other doctrine. Our conscience is bound by God's explicit Word. But it teaches no other doctrine, and our Church has never understood it in any other way. And if Walther and his associates claim, as he is said to have expressed himself, to be the "bag of maggots" to reform the Lutheran Church with regard to this doctrine, we on the contrary are convinced she needs no reformation here. It would be a sad thing if for three hundred years she had not known the truth concerning this fundamental doctrine. How could we then still believe her to be the true visible Church of God on earth? We have no faith in these would-be reformers. God's Word is sure to us. If we should fail and go down, that Word must fail and go down with us. With it we are willing by the grace of God to stand or fall, to succumb or conquer. We have neither name nor fame nor multitudes to recommend our doctrine to the Church, but only God's clear and eternal truth and a Savior and Gospel for all men. We have great odds against us. But we know that majorities decide nothing and their suffrage goes for nothing in matters of this kind. If God has counted us worthy to proclaim, confess and defend His pure doctrine against errorists and their dangerous tenets, He will see to it, that it shall prosper in His hands and will give it the victory, however immoderate and immeasurable the boasting may be on the other side, the boasting of their numbers and the unanimity with which these destructive errors are held. It is truly too sad to contemplate, that those with whom we once stood shoulder to shoulder in the defense of God's pure doctrine against all perversions of it in the Church and outside of it, have fallen so deeply, have drifted loose from its anchorage, and have turned their steel against us. But what can *we* do, but to commit it

and them to God, and to go forward in our testimony for the pure doctrine of our Church? And we have a cloud of witnesses, of whom the world was not worthy, to go before us, who have made a good confession and who have entered into their rest in triumph. At every step of our warfare we meet the monuments of their contests and their success. The whole ground that we have to fight over was also their battlefield and their field of victory. From Thee, O Lord, must come all the wisdom and strength, and to Thee be ascribed all the praise! To Thy name be glory forever!

NOTE.—A piper (Pieper) on a most diminutive instrument pipes his lonely melody on a dead limb of the rotten tree of Calvinism by condemning the following expressions of Prof. Schmidt: “The predestinating purpose of God—that all who believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life, as far as its *procuration* is concerned, pertains to all men, as the rule and order of election revealed in the Gospel. . . . For he who through faith hath the Son, hath life, hath salvation, and will presumably have the only valid foreordination unto eternal life, which Christ, as far as its *possibility* (potency) is concerned, has procured for all men.” L. u. W. 1881, p. 581. These sentences our little piper condemns as grossly heretical and as Huberianism. The cloven foot protrudes more and more. For thus it is evidently denied, yea declared as a heresy, when it is held that Christ *procured* the *grace of foreordination for all men* unto life eternal. Manifestly Christ is thus regarded to have procured more for some than for others—to have procured the grace of foreordination only for the elect. This horrid Missouri doctrine is thus also sapping the redemption of all men through Jesus Christ. It divides Christ, or has two Redeemers—one who died for those that perish, procuring all for them up to the point of predestination—and another who procured all that is included in the former, but in addition also the *grace of predestination for the elect*. It must be acknowledged that this is consistent. For it certainly would have been an act of simple justice that God should have predestinated all men, if Christ had procured the grace of predestination for all, and if, as Missouri holds, faith was no condition of election. This is the monstrous and damnable heresy to which Missouri finds

itself driven by its unholy warfare upon the Lutheran doctrine of election—it overturns the redemption of all men and divides Christ into an ineffectual Redeemer for the non-elect, and into an effectual Redeemer for the elect. This error destroys the foundation and is fundamental. The *Zeuge* (of Error) also begins to show its true colors. He quotes Luther approvingly of personal election, what he means of general election, when he says: “Chapters 9, 10 and 11 he (Paul) teaches concerning the eternal predestination of God, whence it originally comes, as to who should believe *or not believe* and who could be delivered from his sins *and who could not be delivered.*” (Vol. 5, No. 5.) We think it will be conceded that these are the very horns, fangs and tusks of Calvinism to understand Luther in this way, and these the *Zeuge* has now adopted and hoisted on its rickety flagstaff. Surely error eateth as doth a canker. To their people they talk of *sola gratia* instead of *gratia particularis* and of *gratia universalis* instead of *gratia salvifica* only for the elect. This article of the *reine Lehre* seems to save people best by their being ignorant of it.

And this same would-be critic declares against striving for rational consistency. No wonder. Such a doctrine can only flourish where people close their eyes against the Bible and refuse to think. And hence consistency has become a crime at St. Louis, when applied against their fables, of which the Bible knows nothing. They have become advocates of Hans Sach’s fool’s paradise, where

“Wer seinen Verstand gebrauchen wollt,  
Dem ist kein Mensch im Lande hold.”

If we refuse to believe that every one who has been baptized and called by the Gospel is therefore one of the elect, because we have no warrant for it in the Bible and it nowhere says so, but expressly says the opposite, that namely *many are called, but few chosen*, they charge us with *Consequenzmacherei*. But this is a consistency which the Bible contains. It explicitly forbids us to believe that all the called are chosen. Or does the Bible teach these two contradictory propositions, that all the called are elected and that of the many called few only are elected? It certainly teaches the latter, but where does it teach the former? Echo says, where?

Missouri is only trying to put its counterfeits in circulation as genuine coin.

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SOME TESTIMONIES OF AUTHORS OF THE FORMULA OF  
CONCORD IN REGARD TO ELECTION.

Translated from "Altes und Neues" by G. H. S.

XII.

Did Chemnitz then teach an election in view of divine foreknowledge? That would discredit him in the eyes of our opponents. And still we cannot judge otherwise when we considerably weigh his words concerning the election of Judas Iscariot to the apostleship (Harm. Ev. p. 403). He there asks the question whether God had indeed erred in His judgment, when this traitor was chosen as an apostle. That it was no error is clear already from John 6, 64, where we read that Christ knew even from the beginning who did not believe and who would believe in Him. God certainly had His reasons why Judas, who according to divine foreknowledge would betray the Savior, nevertheless was received into the number of the apostles. It is of special importance here to distinguish between election and election, between the choice to the apostleship and the election to salvation. "The Word of God," says Chemnitz, "maintains both that Judas was elected by the Lord and that he was not. John 6, 70 we read: 'Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil.' But John 13, 18: 'I speak not of you all; I know whom I have chosen'. Christ knew then that Judas would be a traitor. But the election of apostles He did not arrange according to that divine foreknowledge, but according to the signs and indications of which men can judge. For Judas was without doubt, according to outward appearance, diligent, zealous, well-instructed and of good behavior." Chemnitz then distinguishes between the election to the apostleship and the election to salvation by saying the former did not take place "according to that divine foreknowledge," and that for that reason Judas could indeed be elected to the apostleship, although Christ knew that he would become the traitor. Chemnitz indeed does not futher explain that on the other hand the election to salva-

tion had taken place "according to that divine foreknowledge," and for that reason the Savior could also say that Judas was not one of the number of the elect, namely of those elected to obtain salvation. But this distinction made by Chemnitz in election, giving the distinctive feature of the one that it has not taken place "according to that divine foreknowledge," would be entirely without meaning or object, if he had not at the same time conceived that the other election, namely to salvation, had in reality taken place "according to that divine foreknowledge," and that therefore Judas could not be elected in this sense. Had Chemnitz entertained the notion that neither the election to the apostleship nor the election to salvation had taken place "according to that divine foreknowledge," he could not possibly have stated that this one election took place according to divine foreknowledge and that this was the distinctive feature separating it from the other, and could not have adduced it as a reason why Judas could in one sense have been elected but in another not. Chemnitz evidently wants to say: "A man like Judas could indeed be elected to the apostleship, because this election is not regulated by the divine foreknowledge as to what Judas' end would be; but to salvation he was not elected and could not be, because this election is regulated by "that divine foreknowledge." What Chemnitz does not enlarge upon but plainly implies as his meaning, this John Gerhard in his continuation of the Harmony (II, p. 1067) plainly says, when he writes: "When Christ says: 'I know whom I have chosen' His meaning is: 'I do not know only now what your mind is toward me, but this was also known to me and seen by me from eternity; from which it flows that when in connection with the Father and the Holy Spirit I formed the eternal decree of election, I did not elect you all, but only those of whom I foresaw that they would perseveringly believe in me, Rom. 8. 29. Although I have then chosen you all, also the traitor, to the apostleship, yet I have not elected you all to eternal salvation; but I know whom I have elected, namely you others who have listened to my voice, John 10, 17, those of you who believe on me, 1 Tim. 1, 16, you who do not willingly and wilfully cast yourselves into destruction, as a certain one among you has done, but receive my admonitions with a trusting and obedient heart."

## XIII.

A further testimony to the effect that Chemnitz did not think the secret fore-ordination of God dependent upon His mere unconditional will, but conceived it in close connection with the divine foresight of all things, we find in his explanation of the words: "Your heavenly Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask Him," (Matt. 6, 8). For not only what we are in need of, but also what He Himself wills to do and will do, God knows before we ask, and yet His fore-ordinations are not independent of our petitions. But rather these secret divine fore-ordinations are regulated through the intervening foreknowledge of all things, by the question whether the petition, which He has commanded us as an ordination of His will, is uttered in time or is neglected. The omniscient fore-ordination follows the revealed order, and hence takes into consideration how far the words: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you," have been complied with. In the secret fore-ordination of God also the petition that is uttered in time is regarded as a prerequisite or as a condition on which the obtaining of a blessing, such as the hearing of a prayer, is dependent. Thus, on the other hand, the words: "Ye know not what ye ask," is taken into consideration in this secret fore-ordination of the omniscient God. He who then reasons thus: "God has fore-ordained all things, what He will do or give; of what use is prayer? if He is not willing, according to His secret fore-ordination, that I should be released from sin or die in saving faith, then all my prayer and petition is in vain"—he who reasons thus, would, as Luther says, entertain "foolish, devilish thoughts." For what God has pre-determined or not pre-determined in His secret council, by virtue of His omniscience and divine foreknowledge, is in close connection with His fixed and revealed order, to which we should submit and according to which God deals with us. We can therefore truthfully say: If God had found more persons who would submit to His order, He would have fore-ordained more unto salvation, for upon man's submission to His order was dependent in eternity whether he was fore-ordained unto salvation or not. As Luther says: "Few are chosen, that is, who thus deport themselves with reference to

the Gospel that God has pleasure in him." And again: "Let every one look to himself, and then all will be saved," (that certainly means that then we will all have been fore-ordained to eternity from the foundation of the world); then it will not require much study as to what God has determined in His counsel, who are to be saved and who not." For this secret counsel is regulated according to the omniscient foreknowledge of God as to how those called will deport themselves over against the Gospel, and if they, according to God's will, will 'look to themselves,' i. e. will be penitent and believe, will diligently hear God's Word, pray, etc., all this through the grace offered them.—Let us hear how Chemnitz speaks concerning the secret fore-ordination and its relation to the revealed order. He writes: "There are some who maintain, or at least trouble themselves with this thought: Since God, without being asked and before we ask, already knows, and has even fore-ordained and fixed what He will do or give, then the petition will either be a useless asking for something that will take place at any rate, or else this act of praying is godless, as though we hoped by our petition to turn God from His decision and purpose and thus make Him unstable and unchangeable. To this objection some answer as follows: If that for which I pray is predestinated to take place, then we can pray for it in good and sure confidence; if not, then no attempt is thereby made to hinder or interrupt the course of divine fore-ordinations, because we pray: Thy will be done. But Luther's explanation is simpler and more reliable; namely, that we are not commanded to trouble ourselves concerning that hidden foreknowledge of God, to attempt to unravel His secret counsels, but we are commanded to regulate ourselves according to His will revealed in the Word, where He teaches that by penitence and prayer the anger of God is appeased, many dangers and evils turned aside, and many blessings obtained, Jer. 18, 8; Ezek. 33, 11; 1 Kings 8, 56. And therefore He has earnestly commanded that we should pray, indeed, is even displeased when He finds no one to make up the hedge and stand in the gap before Him for the land, that He destroy it not, Ezek. 22, 30. Christ thus calls us to remember (in the words 'Your Father knows,' etc.), first, that God is fully willing to help and that He knows what we are in need of and

what He will do; secondly, that it is nevertheless God's will and command that we should pray. Hence men should draw no deductions from that hidden foreknowledge or admit anything contrary to what is revealed and commanded in the Word. But if you cannot make such things harmonize, leave to God the secret consideration of His hidden foreknowledge, but do what has been commanded and enjoined upon you in the Word, that is that you should pray, and that without ceasing."—Here it is important to observe well how Chemnitz places the foreknowledge into the foreground, and not the mere fore-ordination of an unconditional, absolute purpose.

#### XIV.

Nothing has created more confusion and error in judging the older Lutheran presentation of the doctrine of election than the fact that it is denied, that the older dogmaticians call the whole counsel and decree for the salvation of sinners also the counsel of predestination or election. He who overlooks or intentionally disregards this must, of course, totally misunderstand the old writers. He who, in addition to the revealed and universal counsel to save, of which the election of those who infallibly will be saved is only an essential member and part, sets up a special and independent counsel of the "saving" election pertaining from the beginning only to those sinners who are thereby saved, and then attributes to this counsel what the older writers say of the decree of election in their sense, such a person must indeed produce curious statements. In this error lies a fundamental mistake that has caused terrible havoc. And yet our old writers have treated this subject so repeatedly and so thoroughly, that he who is acquainted with the statements in reference thereto, cannot possibly remain in such error, unless he do so intentionally, i. e., unless, in spite of clear truth, he clings to preconceived prejudices. Of those who, like a choir of parrots, to use the words of Pres. Schwan, "only repeat what has been drilled into them," and in this manner produce such a "wonderful" unity of spirit, we of course will not speak here. Consider, e. g., how often Chemnitz analyzes into its component parts the counsel of "predestination or election." But what is always the result? On each occasion exactly what we



call the universal plan of salvation. With express words he demands emphatically that we regard all the single elements of the order of salvation, as we generally call them, as constituent parts of the counsel of election or of the decree of predestination, and this not—as Missouri forever is claiming, especially with regard to the eight points—only *in so far* as this order refers *also* to the elect, but rather in itself, in so far as this counsel of election is in the same manner for all men the only plan of salvation which God has formed from eternity and revealed in His Word. Concerning the general plan of salvation as being the only valid order of salvation in all its parts for all men in the design of God, Chemnitz says: “This is the simple meaning and purport of what belongs to the foresight of God, what it embraces and wherein it consists.” “Predestination embraces the whole plan of salvation, vocation, justification and glorification.” Hence then the general plan of salvation is also the counsel of predestination. God did not form a double and dissimilar counsel of salvation, namely a conditional one for the salvation of all men, if they repent and believe, and an unconditional one for the salvation of the elect alone, in consequence of which only these must and will come to repentance and to persevering faith; the former as the revealed counsel of God, with a so-called “general” and a “certain sufficient” grace (but in reality unfortunately very insufficient), but the latter as one “guaranteeing” all the operations of grace and infallibly attaining its end, or, to state it plainly, an irresistible grace, which in God’s hidden counsel exists only for the elect, and unconditionally and infallibly brings these unto salvation. For, says a New Missourian, how could an elect person with his persistent resistance prevent God from converting and saving him? He cannot do it. The grace which as a result of his election exists for him, and must work as a “cause,” must produce its result, must convert and save him, as the snow melts before the warm rays of the sun. A double counsel with a double grace is the whole “mystery” of the new doctrine of election. But of this Chemnitz knows absolutely nothing. For him the election, considered as an act, is the segregation in reference to salvation and damnation made in eternity and clearly revealed in the Gospel, the separation which God made between

sinner and sinner, decreeing unto the inheritance of salvation all those who would believe in Christ, but excluding from this inheritance all those who would not believe. For without ransom God grants heaven to no sinner. What was necessary as a ransom is Christ's merits and righteousness. And that through which alone this ransom can be regarded as personally paid on the part of the sinner is faith. But that God should have formed another special counsel as to what sinners alone He in reality would assist by a "guaranteeing and persistent" (i. e. irresistible) grace in such a payment through the believing acceptance of Christ's merits, of this we read not an iota in the Gospel of Christ as it has been announced as good news to all creatures. It knows but of one counsel which is at the same time the universal counsel of grace and the counsel of election, by saying: "For God so loved the world — that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Thus the "election in Christ" is announced to all men and offered in the Gospel, so that it can there be searched for and found.—But let us hear how Chemnitz explains his doctrine of the real essence of the counsel of predestination. "The doctrine of predestination," he says in his *Examen*, p. 152, "shows us the decrees formed in God and afterwards revealed in His Word concerning the causes and way of salvation and reprobation, namely: 1.) The decree of God concerning the election of the human race through the obedience and sufferings of the Mediator Christ; 2.) The decree of calling through the office of the Word, both in reference to the Jews as also the Gentiles, to the communion of the merits of Christ unto salvation; 3.) The decree of God that He, through His Spirit through the medium of the hearing of the Word, will work in the hearts of men that they repent and believe the Gospel; 4.) The decree of God that He will justify and save those who, when they feel their sins and God's wrath, will by faith flee to the throne of grace and receive the Mediator Christ presented in the promises of the Gospel, but will condemn those who reject the Word, despise and do not receive the promises. This is the sum and explanation of the doctrine of predestination as it has been revealed in the Word."

These four decrees contain then, according to Chemnitz,

a short and comprehensive sum or an epitome of the doctrine of election "as it is revealed in the Word." The general plan of salvation is at the same time the counsel of predestination, as the segregation of those who alone are to be saved is merely the realization of the decree that is contained in the general counsel of salvation, as the Epitome, § 13, also says that God desired to save none except those who know Christ in faith. Election then, in so far as it is understood as the eternal fixed decree for the salvation of some sinners in contradistinction from others, presupposes through foresight in these elect the knowledge of Christ to which eternal life is joined, John 17, 3. At least thus God's will and decree of salvation has been revealed to us; not in the opposite order, that first God's will was fixed as to what sinners out of the whole class of sinners He would surely save and that faith then, as a medium determined upon at the same time for carrying this out, is to be placed after the segregation proper as its result and effect. But what a strange idea is it not to think that Chemnitz here purposes to give us an analysis of the revealed doctrine of predestination and does not with a single word touch the main feature, the kernel and essence of election, according to Missouri's idea! In these four decrees he speaks extensively "concerning an altogether different thing," and utters no word about the real "election," as our Calvinizing Lutherans understand it. Of such an "election" as that whose definition the New Missourians have learned from the Dort fathers (See *Altes und Neues* 1, p. 92) not the least trace is found in these four decrees. And still it is claimed by Missouri that Chemnitz understood election to be such, in contradistinction from, or even in contradiction to the universal counsel of salvation. He is to have meant that it was the especial decree of grace with reference to sinners as sinners, to foreordain "certain ones" among men, without reference to future faith as a condition and prerequisite of a "saving election," unto salvation and thereby also unto faith, or, as this is preferable, unto "salvation by faith." Poor Chemnitz, you have indeed expressed yourself unintelligibly and evidently mistaken the universal plan of salvation for the counsel of election! You should have known that this "was an altogether different thing." Why did you not live in these cultured times!

## XV.

In his sermon on Matt. 22 Chemnitz further explains how it comes that only so few are chosen while so many are called. He writes: "In this parable the Lord shows item by item what all belongs to this article and how one always flows from the other; namely, that predestination or election consists in and embraces the following: Since God foresaw that the human race would fall away from Him through sin and thereby come under God's wrath and Satan's power, would sink into eternal destruction and damnation, He, before the foundation of the world, counseled and determined in His hidden divine counsel how the human race could be brought from its destruction unto salvation; namely that, in the first place, His own Son should take upon Himself our human nature, that is, as the parable says, that the King prepared a wedding-feast for His Son and desired Him to assume our human nature."

"Secondly, that He should be put under the law and be slain as a sacrifice for our sins, and that through Him everything that belonged to this wedding joy of eternal salvation should be prepared."

"Thirdly, that He did not desire for this salvation only the flesh and blood which His Son would assume in oneness of person, but also other guests, not of the fallen angels, but of the fallen human race which now, through the assumed human nature of the Son, is related and allied to Him as His bride, flesh of His flesh and bone of His bone."

"Fourthly, that He would call His guests through His servants to the feast, that is, through the Word His heavenly counsel shall be revealed to the world, and men be called to His kingdom through the preaching of the Word."

"Fifthly, that He would be powerful through such a call and would work in the hearts of men, enlighten, convert and justify them."

"Sixthly, that He would protect, guard, preserve, eternally save and glorify those whom He had thus justified. Just as this matter is developed by Paul in the beautiful passage Rom. 8, linked together as a golden chain, since he says that whom God did foreknow or foreordain, him He has

also called, and whom He called He also justified, and whom He justified, He also glorified.”

“Seventhly, because God foresaw that the wickedness of human nature would not follow such a call and operation of God, but would resist and would not receive the grace of God, when this was about to work in man, He has decided in His purpose that all those who despise, blaspheme and persecute this His call, or do not obey it when He graciously offers it to them and continue in their resistance, shall be punished in time and rejected and condemned in eternity, as the parable clearly shows this.”

“This is the simple meaning and purport of what belongs to the foresight of God, what it embraces and wherein it consists, that we take all these parts together when we speak or think of the predestination or election of God, as Paul throughout the first chapter of his letter to the Ephesians treats and explains this doctrine part by part; and if I confine myself to the account and to its simplicity I have everything necessary in regard to this doctrine and know that I cannot err or be mistaken herein.”

Manifestly Chemnitz has here again, according to Missouri's ideas, forgotten the essential point and has spoken of an “entirely different thing,” for he does not by a single word teach that election consists in this, that God according to His mere will selects out of those equally lost those whom He will bring to faith and preserve therein. Further the sermon says: “It is indeed true that no one will be saved unless he receives the Word, and it is right that no one can receive the grace of God through his own abilities. For whosoever teaches that the natural, free will of the unregenerated man has the power and ability to receive the grace of God, teaches contrary to the entire Word of God. 1 Cor. 2; 2 Cor. 3; Rom. 3. But according to the Scripture we cannot and dare not judge otherwise than that when God brings us His Word, He through it will be operative in us and bring it about that we, through His gift, power and work, are enabled to receive the offered grace. But the natural wickedness of the flesh can most assuredly resist such a work of God, and all those who will do this God knows and sees beforehand. But it has not been enjoined upon me to search this out, but I reason and judge according to God's Word, that, if He calls men through the Word, He thereby desires to work in us the power to receive it.” Here again our poor Chemnitz forgets the kernel and essential feature—i. e. if Missouri is right. For then he should have explained the fact that some come to faith, but others not, by stating that in this question the “mustering” as to who is to be saved or not preceded in respect to the order, wherefore the preceding selection of per-

sons unto salvation is the "cause" of conversion and of faith, and, on the other hand, faith "flows" from this selection of persons as something higher and antecedent. But Chemnitz is satisfied with stating that, on the one hand, God desired to produce in all the acceptance of grace and faith, but that, on the other hand, the ability of resisting had been left to all those called, and that in some the natural resistance passes into wilful resistance. Of these he says: "All these God knows and sees beforehand," not, as Missouri does, that here the words: "He hardens whom He will," are applicable.

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### ELECTION IN VIEW OF FAITH.

That God elected men in foresight of faith is thus proved by the celebrated Aegidius Hunnius in a work on Predestination published in 1597:

1. The apostle writes, Eph. 1: God "hath chosen us in Him (Christ) before the foundation of the world." If our election was made in Christ, it follows that those only are embraced in the divine election who by faith are in Christ Jesus our Lord. The antecedent is true, as we learn from the testimony of the apostle. Therefore the consequent is true. The argument is clear from the fact that Christ is unavailing unto salvation for us without faith. Therefore also we are not chosen unto salvation in Christ without faith in Him. This accordingly is true, as Theophylactus thus comments on this passage: "He hath blessed us in Christ; in like manner also He chose us in Him, that is, through faith in Him. But He chose us before the foundation of the world. For from eternity already those things were predestinated which are imputed unto us; for they are not of recent origin, but were determined and ordained from the beginning."

2. Our predestination is unto the adoption of children of God, Eph. 1. But the adoption of sons pertains to believers only, according to John 1, 12: "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that *believe* on His name." Therefore also predestination pertains to believers only.

3. Those who are chosen to eternal life must embrace God with an intimate, yea, a filial love. But no one without faith can embrace God with such an intimate love which be-

longs to children. Heb. 11. Therefore also we must conclude that no one is chosen to eternal life without any regard whatever to faith in Christ.

4. Predestination as described by the apostle is joined by undivided connection and an unbroken chain with justification. Whom He did predestinate, them He also justified. But no one is justified except by faith in Jesus Christ, Gal. 2. Therefore no one is predestinated to eternal life without Christ known and apprehended by faith.

5. Election as an act of divine mercy, because it pertains to fallen man or to sinners, can not take place unless full satisfaction is made to the eternal justice of God, who is offended by the sins of men. Hence we draw up this argument. The election of sinners to salvation cannot take place unless either the sinners themselves render a satisfaction of their own to the eternal justice of God, or the satisfaction of another, that of Christ, is imputed to them. They are not able to render a satisfaction of their own. Therefore their predestination to eternal life must have taken place with respect to the imputed satisfaction of Christ. But since this imputation takes place through faith, it is clearer than day that the consideration of faith (in so far as it embraces Christ) can in no wise be removed from the election of sinful men.

6. Election or predestination points to life, to salvation. But life belongs only to believers: The just shall live *by faith*, Habak. 2. Salvation pertains to none but believers: He that *believeth* shall be saved. Therefore also election pertains to none but believers.

7. The seventh proof is closely allied to a former one taken from St. Paul's chain, Whom He did predestinate, them He also glorified. But believers only are glorified. Therefore also believers only are predestinated.

8. The eighth proof is drawn from a comparison of the decree of predestination confirmed from eternity and the execution of the same in time, namely thus: God in His decree of predestination from eternity determined to save none other than those whom He saves in time. But He saves only believers in Christ. Therefore also in that decree of predestination He did not decree or determine to save, or, what is the same thing, to predestinate to salvation, any others but believers in Christ Jesus.

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## THE ORIGINAL STATE OF MAN.

Those who have made man their study have never failed to discover in him the one discordant element in the world's harmony. Not only where the mind is enlightened by Christian truth, but also where it is limited to the natural sources of knowledge, is this the result of its investigations. In the mineral, the vegetable, the animal kingdom, the adaptation of the parts to the ends of the whole is manifest, and every creature subserves its purpose in the vast organism. The one exception is found where we should least expect it. In man there are the highest endowments and the noblest adjustments, but the results are disappointing. He is not good, he is not happy. With all his wonderful gifts, he fails of his end. All creatures else, except so far as the sin of man has brought a blight upon them, fulfill the design of their creation; man alone misses his mark. Even to human reason it is antecedently probable that some catastrophe has occurred in the moral world, just as the face of our globe renders it probable to the student of science that some catastrophe has occurred in the material. Hence the general acceptance among heathens of the traditions concerning the fall of man as well as of those concerning the flood.

What history and observation render probable the Holy Scriptures expressly teach, thus explaining what would otherwise be inexplicable. Man is not now in the condition in which he was created. If some choose, with a certain ghastly humor, to regard him as an unfinished monkey mim-



micking Deity—an animal that is in process of evolution and that has not yet reached its possibilities—even this may be taken as a concession of unbelief, though quite unintentional, to the truth of the Bible narrative concerning the fall, since it points to man as a mystery that baffles all human power of explanation. But that is a field upon which we do not here propose to enter. We have the Word of God to guide us, and the entrance of this giveth light. According to its testimony man was not developed out of an inferior creature, rising in the scale of being as centuries passed away, but was made with loftier gifts than those which he now possesses. He was created good, but was corrupted and ruined by the introduction of evil. If we would rightly understand man's present condition and the requisites for his restoration, it is needful that we should first examine into his original state.

The question does not pertain to his substance. That would be an unprofitable inquiry. God made him of the dust of the earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and he became a living soul. It would be vain for us to seek further light on the material of which he was formed. That was dust—ordinary dust of the ground. To that, when his earthly pilgrimage is ended, man returns. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it was thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. 3, 19. Neither can we know anything further of that which was breathed into him and which is called spirit. That it has none of the attributes of matter we know, just as we know of matter that it has none of the attributes of spirit. But that only betrays the meagerness of our knowledge. What we know mainly pertains to attributes, the difference in which we take for signs of difference in the substances to which they belong. We make distinctions on the ground of differences in qualities, and need not concern ourselves with the question whether there are fundamental distinctions that lie deeper than the phenomena through which we know objects. Man was formed of the dust, which has extension and cannot know, or feel or will, and into the material being thus formed God breathed the spirit, which has no extension and can know and feel and will.

The possession of the spirit which God breathed into the dust did not make man divine. It made him simply a living soul. He was not an effluence or emanation of Deity. That which was breathed into him was spirit, indeed. Spirit is distinct from matter. As he was connected with all the natural world by his corporeal nature, so he was undoubtedly connected with the spiritual world by the spirit which he possessed. And as God is a spirit, he was thus related to God. But as his possession of a material body did not make him a stone or a fish, though these too are matter, so his possession of a spirit did not make him God, though God too is a spirit. There are differences in regard to spirit as there are differences in regard to matter. As some matter is mineral, others vegetable, still others animal, so some spirits are angelic, others human, others satanic, while the Lord God almighty, infinite in goodness and glory, is the one perfect, Divine Spirit. That which constitutes the substance of man he still retains, and in this regard his original state was not different from the present.

Neither does our inquiry pertain immediately to his essence. There is nothing to indicate that in this respect he has undergone any change. He was possessed of body and soul from the beginning, as he is now. The animal life endowed with rationality which characterizes him now, is the same as that which characterized him on the day of his creation. Whatever changes man may have undergone in the lapse of time, his essence remains the same. This is merely maintaining that the being created man has remained man until this day, and has not been changed into an essentially different being. The question to be examined is not whether man was originally man or not. That does not need examination. Our aim is to ascertain, by the light of Holy Scripture, what was the original state of the rational creature so gifted, but now so degraded.

That this state was not that of corruption and misery, in which we find man now, is evident at the first glance into the inspired record. The brief account of his creation gives us all the information necessary for a correct apprehension of his condition. "God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish

of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." "And God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good." Gen. 1, 26-28. 31. In the subsequent chapter, where the history is recapitulated, it is said: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." Gen. 2, 7.

All the circumstances indicate that the inspired writer would set forth man as the glory of the creation described. The statement that counsel was held by the Trinity in regard to it, that man was made in the image of his Maker, that dominion was given him over other creatures, and that all the work was pronounced very good, clearly points out the importance that is attached to this crowning work of the six days of creation. But it would be a vain endeavor if we sought to find in this a special account of the essence and attributes of man. The brief narrative distinguishes between the chief classes of creatures, but gives us no definition of plant or animal. That man was made of the earth and became a living soul by the breath of the Creator, is asserted, but what were the qualities of his body and the faculties of his soul is not particularly stated, and must be learned from other sources.

This is plain, that man was created. He is therefore neither an outflow from the substance of God nor consubstantial with Him. "God said, Let us make man in our own image." In pursuance of this counsel "God created man in His own image." It was not simply the clay, into which God breathed the breath of life, but man, that was created. What was breathed into his nostrils was not an uncreated spiritual substance, rendering him divine and eternal as to his spirit, but the breath which makes him alive. His spirit too is created. The Lord "stretcheth forth the heavens, and

layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him." Zech. 12, 1. Accordingly, throughout the Scriptures the spirit of man is distinguished from the Spirit of God, not identified with it, as would be the case if the former were but an emanation from the latter and consubstantial with it. "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." 1 Cor. 2, 11. "As God without hands formed the body of man," writes Gerhard, "so without lungs, He breathed into him a created spirit. The breathing into the nostrils of man is the communication of a rational soul. Not from the inner mouth of His essence did God breathe the soul of man, as the Father with the Son from eternity within the divine essence breathed the Holy Spirit, who on that account is called 'the breath of His mouth,' Ps. 33, 6, 'the breath of the Almighty,' Job. 33, 4, but He breathed into man a soul created in time outside of His essence. This breath of life was made by God, not out of God." Loc. Theol. IX. § 12. Man is no more divine in his soul than he is in his body. He is a creature of God in both respects; he is of the same essence with God in neither respect. The soul ranks higher in the scale of being than the body, but it is not on that account of divine essence. Man is not God.

- But man is created in God's image, and this gives him a dignity which other creatures have not. Of none other of God's works is this predicated. In this regard he might seem to be placed on an equality with the only begotten Son. But this is by no means the case. Man is created in the image of God, the Son is not created, and is that image. He is this without any qualification or limitation, absolutely and eternally. St. Paul says that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of those which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, *who is the image of God*, should shine unto them." 2 Cor. 4, 4. In another place he says that in Him "we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins, who is the image of the invisible God." Col. 1, 15. Again it is said that by the Eternal Son God also made the worlds, who is "the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person." Heb. 1, 3. When

some theologians, ancient and modern, regard the Son as the image after which man is created, there is this element of truth in their doctrine, that the second person of the Trinity is God of God, eternally begotten of the Father and His express image, consubstantial with the Father, while man is made after that divine image which the Son was from eternity. Man was made in the image of God, who is Triune. This is indicated in the words, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Gen. 1, 26. But as the Son is God, we are of course made after His image. The Holy Spirit, both in the passage in Colossians and in Hebrews, referring to Christ as the image of God, make particular mention of the fact that by Him all things were created; and when man's restoration to the image in which he was made and which he has lost is spoken of, the same special mention is again made of Him who created us. "Ye have put off the old man with his deeds," says St. Paul, "and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created Him." Col. 3, 10. He who created man is God the Triune, and in His image man was created. He is thus created in the image of the Eternal Son, as the second person of the adorable Trinity, by whom all things are made and to whose image fallen man is to be restored. That man was created after the image of the humanity which the Son should assume in the fulness of time for man's redemption, is an opinion of Origen and Osiander that has no foundation in Scripture. We are created in the image of God, not in the image of humanity. And that image is not the same in us as in the Eternal Son, who is the express image of the Father's person. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1, 1. He is the image of God in the same sense in which the human child is the image of his father. Eternally begotten of the Father, He is God over all, blessed forever. The Nicene Creed expresses precisely the teaching of Scripture when it sets forth the Christian faith "in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made," and the Athanasian

Creed declares the same truth when it says: "The right faith is that we believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and man: God, of the substance of the Father before the worlds, and man of the substance of His mother, and born in the world: perfect God and perfect man." He is begotten of the Father, and is thus the express image of His person, consubstantial with Him. Accordingly He is the essential image of God, which man is not. Man is not God of God. He is a creature differing in essence from the Creator, but made after the Creator's image. This image in him is accidental, not substantial. He resembles God as a picture resembles the person represented, not as the child resembles the parent. In the latter the essence is the same, in the former only accidental attributes are the same.

What has been said renders it manifest that the image in which man was created cannot be referred to everything that is in God; that is, not every attribute of God finds its counterpart in the creature made in His image. If man were a perfect copy of his Maker, the attributes that are peculiar to divinity would be found in him, and he would be such a substantial image of God as can be predicated of none but the only begotten Son, who is the brightness of the Father's glory and the express image of His person. It is self-evident that the eternity which belongs to God cannot be imaged in a creature. The very fact that man is a creature and thus had a beginning, excludes the possibility of his eternity, i. e. of his existence without a beginning. Neither could such attributes as immutability, immensity, infinitude, be ascribed to a creature made in time and occupying space, and thus subjected to the limitations and mutations incident to time and space. Even those attributes of an Infinite Being which can be imparted to a being that is finite must, in the nature of the conditions presented, be different in degree. Man may have wisdom and holiness, but it never can be the infinite wisdom and the absolute perfection of purity which belongs to God, who is the only wise Being and who alone is good. In no case can the image of God in man elevate him above the creature and lift him to an equality with the Creator.

Some ancient writers made a distinction between the image and the likeness of God, in which and after which

man was created, and on the basis of that distinction the peculiar doctrine of the Roman Church was subsequently developed and settled. The difference assumed may in general terms be stated thus, that the word image designates the natural faculties of the human mind, while the word likeness indicates certain qualities of these faculties. According to this, when man is said to be made in the image of God the meaning is, that man was endowed with the power to know, to feel, and to will, which are necessary to constitute a rational spirit after the pattern of his Maker; on the other hand, when he is said to be created after the likeness of God the meaning is, that the intellect, sensibilities, and will, which man possesses in pursuance of his creation in the image of God, are endowed with wisdom, with purity, with righteousness, after the pattern of these attributes in the divine mind. But the Scriptures furnish no ground for such a distinction. The meaning of the two terms used in Gen. 1. 26 does not suggest it, and the general usage of the words disproves it. In the first place, it is of importance to note, that while in the account of the counsel concerning the creation of man, the words image and similitude are both used, in the account of the creation itself only the term image is employed, although that is repeated. In Gen. 1, 26 we read, "God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," and in v. 27 the narrative continues, "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him." If the word likeness was not merely a synonym of the word image, but embodied a different meaning, it could not have been replaced in the following verse by the latter term; and if it should be replied that v. 27 is not designed to express exactly what v. 26 represents as the divine counsel, the case is only made worse for those who contend for the distinction, because then the account of man's creation would furnish no proof that he was made after God's likeness at all. In the second place, the statement in Gen. 3, 5, where the same words occur, shows the distinction to be unfounded. It is there said that Adam "begat a son in his own likeness, after his image." It is remarkable that in this passage the prepositions, upon which some lay so much stress in 1, 26, are transposed. It is argued that because the text speaks of man's creation "in the

image," but "after the likeness" of God, the first must indicate the natural constitution, while the second refers to a pattern according to which there is a subsequent moulding of that constitution; man is made *in* the image, but *after* the likeness. In the text before us, however, Seth is said to be begotten *in* the likeness, *after* the image of Adam, the same words being used as in Gen. 1, 26. The exegesis employed to favor the distinction would result, when applied to the same words Gen. 3, 5 in the absurdity, that Seth was begotten with certain qualities of faculties, in imitation of those of Seth, and that subsequently after Seth's likeness he received also the faculties themselves, the attribute being first, then the substance in which it inheres. Manifestly the text, by its twofold statement, merely emphasizes the fact, that the child was like its parent. Neither of the terms tells us wherein the likeness consists. Finally, it may also be mentioned that St. Paul employs the word image in direct opposition to the distinction in question, as he refers it not to the nature, but to certain attributes, using it thus in the sense which is claimed to belong to the word likeness as distinguished from the image. He says, "As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly," 1 Cor. 15, 49; and again, "Put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after image of Him that created him," Col. 3, 10. In neither of these passages can the word image be understood as designating the essence. The "image" of the earthy and of the heavenly cannot be that which constitutes man, for he bears this image; and the renewal "in knowledge after the image" of the Creator cannot mean a transubstantiation of the soul to bring it into conformity with God: it is a renewal "in knowledge," not a change of essence, or the production of a living soul where before was mere matter. In both cases only certain attributes, not the essence which has the attributes, are indicated by the term image. In other words, image is used in the Scriptures to designate precisely what, if the Romish distinction were observed, would be expressed only by the word likeness. The inspired writers use the terms promiscuously, showing that they are synonymous, and that the distinction made by Romanists is a mere fancy.

But this does not imply that there is no element of truth



in the thought which led some church fathers to make the distinction of which we have spoken. What there is of truth in it Lutheran writers have not overlooked. While the two words image and likeness have the same meaning and are employed promiscuously, neither of them is uniformly used in precisely the same signification. The word image does not mean something different from the word likeness, but it is sometimes taken in a wider, sometimes in a narrower sense. This our dogmaticians point out when they distinguish between the general and the special signification of the term. Thus Baier says: "In the general sense the image of God includes, besides the righteousness and wisdom with which the first man was created, also the spiritual essence of the human soul and its powers of intellect and will, together with the immortality of the body and the dominion over other creatures; in the special sense it imports certain accidental perfections which were concreated in the intellect and will of the first human beings, and which were conformed to perfections in God." Comp. Theol. 1, cap. 4, § 7. 8. Hollaz writes: "The accidental image of God is taken in a twofold sense, 1. Generally and improperly for a certain general analogy and agreement with God, 2. Specially and properly for an excellent and most similar conformity to God the prototype. The substance itself of the human soul exhibits certain things that are *θεϊα* or divine, and refer to the Divinity as their exemplar. For God is a Spirit immaterial, intelligent, acting with a free will, invisible, indivisible, illocal, immortal. These predicates may in a certain manner be affirmed of the human soul." Ex. Theol. II, cap. 1, qu. 5. But whilst such a general acceptation of the word is admitted, care is taken to show that it is not the strict and proper meaning of the word, and is accordingly not what is meant when the image of God is spoken of as lost. Quenstedt remarks: "The image of God is taken figuratively for the substance or essence itself of the soul, furnished with the power and faculty of understanding and will, in which sense some of the fathers understood by the image of God the soul itself. . . . But this is incorrect, for the image of God is lost, but the human soul remains. The image of God is found only in the renewed, but the soul exists also in the impious."

It is on this account that some of our dogmaticians, such as Dannhauer and Calov, deny that "the rational soul itself is the divine image, or any part of that image," assigning the reasons which have just been quoted from Quenstedt. This does not prove any disagreement among our dogmaticians; for evidently those who deny that the soul itself is the divine image merely mean that it is not so in the proper and literal sense, which is precisely what is maintained by the others who, in a general and figurative sense, regard the term image of God as pertaining to the soul itself with its powers of thought and feeling and will. They have good reason for taking the term in a wider acceptation; for the Scriptures manifestly do not always understand by it simply those spiritual qualities of the soul which were lost by the fall. In Gen. 9, 6 we read: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made He man." The reason here assigned evidently implies that the image of God still remains in man after the fall. This appears also from James 3, 9, where, speaking of the tongue, he says: "Therewith bless we God, even the Father, and therewith curse we men which are made in the similitude of God." Here, as in the other passage, the reference to the image of God would be of comparatively little force, if it were assumed that man indeed originally had the divine image impressed upon him, but that at the time in which the inspired writers speak that image was entirely lost. Taken in the wider sense, as it obviously is in these passages, the image of God is still found in man after the fall, and Flacius errs doubly when he teaches that the image of God is literally the essence of the human soul, and that this image is lost. Only in a synecdochical sense is the soul itself called the image of God, and in that sense the image of God remains. In opposition to him and his followers our theologians teach: "We must distinguish between the substance of man; or the matter itself of which he is composed, and that which, as if something following, adheres most closely to the substance of man and accidentally, but still intrinsically, perfects it; or we must distinguish between the nature itself and its qualities, or the perfections in the qualities. The image of God denotes the latter, not the former. In

brief, the image of God is not man, but is in man, i. e. it is not substantial or essential to man, but accidental." Quen. II, cap. 1, qu. 4. The essence of man was not destroyed by the fall, else there would be no more human beings. What was lost were certain moral attributes of the soul, while the soul remained. When the latter is meant by the image of God, that image can not be said to be lost at all. Flacius' error consists in confounding the wider with the strict sense of the expression, then predicating of the former what is true indeed of the latter, but what is true only of the latter.

Our old theologians distinguished carefully and thus secured clearness. The somewhat complicate subject of the divine image will be better understood in the light of these distinctions. These are in the main as follows. The image of God is either essential or accidental. In the former sense it belongs exclusively to the Son of God, who is the express image of the Father's person; for He alone exhibits in Himself the essence of the Father, being distinguished from Him merely in the mode of His subsistence. In the latter sense it belongs to man, as the highest order of earthly creatures, who is created in God's own image. But this accidental image is again divisible into different kinds. The term may, in this respect, be applied figuratively or literally, in a wide or in a strict sense. In the *wide* sense Quenstedt distinguishes three applications of the term. In the first place, it designates the essence itself of the human soul as it is endowed with the power of knowing, feeling and willing. The soul is a substance capable of knowing and willing, and is thus like God. Secondly, it designates a certain analogy or resemblance to God in the qualities of the human soul. This is a spiritual substance, intelligent and immortal, and in this respect is like God. Thirdly, it imports that dominion over other animals which was given to man at his creation, and which, though it be but in a secondary sense, gives him a similarity to God in the relation in which he stands to others as their lord and ruler. In the *strict* sense it stands for the integrity and rectitude which were given to the first man by creation. That this is the proper sense to be attached to the phrase appears from its use by St. Paul in connection with the divine work of restoration. Gerhard observes: "These

two places of Scripture must be noticed: Eph. 4, 24, 'That ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness,' and Col. 3, 10, Ye 'have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him.' In these passages the phrases 'after God' and 'after the image of Him' are synonymous, and in them a description of the new man is given, who is called new, not on account of a change of essence, but on account of new qualities, the knowledge of God and righteousness and true holiness. The image of God consists in that, in respect of which man was made after God and is renewed after His image. But he is renewed in respect of the knowledge of God, righteousness and true holiness, and in respect of these he was made after God, according to His image. Therefore in these the primeval image of God in man consisted." Loc. IX. § 23.

It is in this strict sense that the subject has important bearings upon the fundamental doctrines of sin and grace. It is thus identified with the original righteousness which man has lost by the fall and which is to be restored in his regeneration. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession says: "What is original righteousness, or the first righteousness in Paradise? Not merely when the second table of the law is observed, good works are done and our neighbor is served, do the Scriptures speak of righteousness and holiness, but they call him pious, holy and just who keeps the first table, the first commandment, that is who from the heart fears God, loves Him, and depends upon Him. Therefore original righteousness implies not only an equable temperament of the bodily qualities, but also these gifts, to wit, a more certain knowledge of God, fear of God, confidence in God, or a certain rectitude and power of attaining them. And this is proved by the Scriptures, when they say (Gen. 1. 27) that man was made in the image and likeness of God. This is nothing else than this wisdom and righteousness embodied in man, which might apprehend God, and in which God might be reflected, i. e. these gifts were bestowed on man, viz. the knowledge of God, the fear of God, confidence in God, and the like blessings. Paul also (Col. 3. Eph. 4) shows that the image of God consists in the knowledge of God, righteousness and truth."

Apol. 1, § 16-18. When the phrase image of God is taken in its proper sense it therefore indicates the wisdom, righteousness and holiness with which man was endowed in his creation. "These so express the idea of the divine image," remarks Baier, "that it is they only from which man, speaking in the abstract, can be called the image of God."

It is thus taught, in the first place, that our first parents were originally gifted with a knowledge of God which men do not bring with them into the world now, and which they now cannot even obtain by any exercise of natural power. "In respect of intellect," says Baier "God conferred upon the first pair, in imitation of Himself as a model, a certain wisdom, i. e. a certain habitual enlightenment or perfection of intellect, so that they obtained a high degree of knowledge in things divine, human, and natural—a degree sufficient for their primeval state. Accordingly the intellect of man understood the essence and will of God so far as it was necessary to attain this end, viz. that the intellect might prescribe the worship that should be rendered to God, i. e. so far as was essential to right and holy living. So in Col. 3, 10 it is said that the divine image is restored in man by leading him back, in the act of renovation, to a salutary knowledge of God." Comp. I cap. 4, § 9. The proof for the possession of such pristine knowledge is found to some extent in the acts of Adam, which manifestly indicate it; namely, in his appropriate application of names to various animals, showing an intimate acquaintance with their nature, Gen. 2, 19; in his recognition of Eve as bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh, Gen. 2, 23; and in his prophetic declaration concerning the perpetuity of the conjugal relation. But the chief proof lies in the apostolic declaration, that Christians have "put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him." Col. 3, 10. If man was made in the image of God and that image is renewed in knowledge, such knowledge must be part of that image which is lost by sin and restored by grace. "This knowledge of Adam was excellent, full, perfect, and such as no man since the fall can acquire, either from the volume of nature or from the volume of Scripture. When, therefore, the inquiry is made, whether the intellect of the apostles, after the reception of the Holy

Ghost, was superior to that of Adam before the fall, the reply is that we must make a distinction between the knowledge of divine things and the mysteries of faith, on the one hand, and the perfect and complete knowledge of all things natural and useful to man, on the other. As regards the former, we can believe that the apostles possessed greater knowledge than Adam, because after the advent of Christ these things were known more fully and distinctly than before. As regards the latter, Adam excelled all men, and therefore also the apostles, as well in the extent and amplitude of knowledge as in the degree and mode of knowing—to wit, not from probable reason or consequences, but from proper causes of each thing—and in the firmness and immovableness of His knowledge. Nevertheless it is evident that the knowledge of Adam was finite and limited, because he knew not the sacred decrees of God, nor the thoughts of the heart, nor future contingencies, nor the number of the stars, &c. It is probable also that Adam was ignorant of the mystery of the incarnation and thus of the whole gospel or doctrine concerning Christ, because to know this would have been of no service to him. This knowledge also, which was concreate with Adam, would have been perfected more and more and admitted of augmentation, if we regard the perfection of the degree of knowledge, both by revelation or a more extended knowledge of God in supernatural things, and also by his own experience and observation in things natural.” Quen. II. cap. 1, th. 15, note II. The ignorance which is natural to man now, and especially the blindness in spiritual things, did not belong to him originally, but are a consequence of the fall.

In the second place, man was originally gifted with powers of will which now are wanting in men. “In regard to the will,” says Baier, “spiritual strength was bestowed by God upon man, or an habitual inclination and promptitude to love God above all things, and to do all things according to the direction of an intellect rightly enlightened, but to avoid whatever in its judgment should be avoided, and to govern his lower powers, lest they should break forth in inordinate and sinful acts.” Comp. p. 1. cap. 4, § 10. For this there is good ground in Scripture: “Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many

inventions," Eccl. 7, 29; that ye "be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." Eph. 4, 24. The uprightness which God had conferred in creation man has not now, and therefore he requires renewal after that image in which he had originally been made. If the new man which is created after the image of God, possesses "righteousness and true holiness," that is what our first parents must have possessed when they were made in the image of God. But this righteousness was not a mere adjustment of man's mental action in a mechanical way to the will of the Creator. A clock that keeps correct time is not therefore righteous; an animal that moves instinctively as God designed it has not therefore true holiness. Man freely willed the good and true. "The perfection of the will of the first man therefore consisted, first, in a natural inclination to that which is good, which altogether excluded every proximate form of erring, and secondly, in a free and unhindered volition of good and execution of that which is willed. Thus there was in him a holy freedom of the will and a free holiness which excluded all sin. But his will was so free that it inclined only to good, and was not prone to choose evil or neglect good. Whatever occurred afterwards, happened through an unfortunate abuse of free will." Quen. II. cap. 1, th. 16. It was not in a state of moral indifference that man was created, in which he was able and free to decide for good or for evil without being either. He was free, but he was so free that evil had no delight for him, and wakened no desires, and that righteousness was alone attractive. In short man was good, "very good," when he came forth from the hands of his Creator, and all that is evil in him or tends to evil came from his fatal departure from the goodness and liberty which was his from his origin. "God hath made man upright, but they have sought out many inventions."

In the third place, on the emotional part of man's nature also was impressed the image of God. As there was divine light and knowledge in the intellect and holy inclination and determination in the will; so there was also in the feelings of our first parents a perfect harmony with the other powers, in consequence of which the soul was peaceful and happy. All

is discordant now. The feelings move in conflict with the judgment, and the will moves in discord with some appetites, desires, and affections, when its resolve is formed in harmony with others. There is no such bundle of discordant elements to be found anywhere in creation as there is in man. Everything is jangled in his soul, and all his efforts to find peace in himself, or in nature around him, are perfectly futile. It is this that makes man such an enigma to man, and that makes the psychologist who is not willing to receive any light from revelation a mere benighted wanderer in the forest of his own mind. Sin has introduced discord not only between God and man and between creature and creature, but also between all the faculties and powers in man himself, so that he becomes not only his own enemy, but even his own deceiver. The whole instrument is out of tune and grates harsh discord, and there is no power in itself to remedy the unhappy jarring and jangling. Only through Christ can harmony be restored. He is our peace, who has effected a reconciliation. Therefore He calls men to Him with the promise that they shall find rest unto their souls. There is rest only in Jesus. Everything has fallen into disharmony, and only in Him can order and harmony and peace and rest and happiness be restored. But it was not always thus, that the noblest of earthly creatures was a grand instrument miserably out of tune. All was harmony when God made man. All was very good. "There were in the first man," says Hollaz, "the most exact harmony and wonderful agreement of all the higher and lower powers of his nature. For reason most promptly obeyed the divine law, the will obeyed reason, the sensuous appetite obeyed the will, the affections obeyed the appetite, and the members of the body obeyed the affections." Ex. 11. cap. 1, qu. 18. There was nothing in man that was in opposition to the will of the Maker. Everything accorded with that will, and therefore everything was in perfect harmony, all made and all moving according to the one plan and purpose of the Maker of all. As everything was thus in perfect harmony, there was nothing to mar the perfect happiness which man possessed while he remained as God had made him—"very good." It was the departure from this primeval condition that brought



death into the world and all our wo. Originally man was happy because he was good. Corresponding to his condition spiritually, was his freedom from death and suffering and his happy environments in the garden of Eden.

For an intelligent faith and a correct understanding of man's condition and prospects—of his inability and misery now and of that which is necessary to restore him to holiness and happiness—it is of the utmost importance to decide the question, whether the powers which we have seen to be given to our first parents were natural or supernatural. The question would seem a strange one, were there not a special reason for taking it into consideration and examining it. There are some who maintain that the original righteousness which has just been analyzed and explained was a peculiar gift of grace that formed no part at all of our human nature, and accordingly that when this was lost nothing occurred that was seriously damaging to our nature. The error was devised in the interest of Pelagian views of anthropology and has been adopted by the Roman Church to promote its fatal errors.

“This image of God,” says Baier, “was a natural gift, or it belonged to man as necessary to perform the acts which were connatural to him. In the absence of it his nature would not have been pure, but impure.” P. I. cap. 4, § 13. The original righteousness was accordingly something which, while it does not constitute human nature, so that this would still be such without it, is necessary to make nature such as it was designed to be and should be. Its absence, while it would not destroy human nature, would be a great fault. When we say that this original righteousness belonged to our nature, it is necessary to observe in what senses the word natural may be taken. Quenstedt remarks: “When we say that the image of God, or that which forms its principal part, original righteousness, was natural to man, it is to be observed that anything is said to be natural, 1. By constitution (*constitutive*), viz. that which constitutes a nature itself, and is either the nature itself, or an essential part of it, as soul and body; 2. By sequence (*consecutive*), viz. that which follows nature and flows essentially from the form, as the capacity to laugh, to be taught, etc.; 3. Subjectively (*subjec-*

*tive*), viz. that which adheres most closely to nature as a native property; 4. By way of perfecting (*perfective*) viz. that which intrinsically perfects it; finally, 5. By way of transmission (*transitive*), viz. that which is naturally propagated along with nature to others. When we say that primeval righteousness was natural to the first man we do not understand the word natural in the first or second sense, but in the third, fourth, and fifth, on account of a natural inhesion, perfection, and propagation." Theol. II. cap. 1. th. 23. The image of God was not natural to man in such sense that when it was lost a necessary constituent of humanity was lost and mankind therefore ceased to exist, or in such sense that by its loss something inseparable from his nature was destroyed, thus again involving the loss of his very essence as man. It could be lost without involving the loss of human nature. Man lost in it something that was natural to him, but that was not his very nature. It was natural to him as a property which, though not constituting any part of his essence, still belonged to him in his normal state and would therefore be transmitted to his offspring; as the senses, for instance, belong to man and are propagated, although the loss of any one of them would not effect the essence of man. A blind or a deaf man is still a man, but he is deprived of much that man was designed to possess. He is shut out from the world of sights or of sounds, and is confined to perpetual darkness or silence.

There is good reason for laying stress upon this point. It is one of great significance, notwithstanding that it appears to have merely philosophical interest. The Roman Church strenuously maintains that the original righteousness of which we have spoken was a supernatural endowment of grace—not a natural gift, but a good superadded to the nature which was complete and normal without it, though capable of higher gifts. The soul was naturally endowed with intellect and sensibilities and will; the will was naturally free; but the direction of the will to that which is good, the actual righteousness and holiness of the first man, was an endowment that was graciously superadded. Their conception of the natural condition of man is therefore that of perfect neutrality, in which he is neither just nor unjust, neither

good nor bad. Original righteousness was a gift that was then imparted, in virtue of which he ceased to be in a state of indifference. When this original righteousness was lost by the fall, there was then nothing lost that pertained to man's nature, and he merely fell back into the natural condition in which he was created, being deprived of a noble endowment, but not positively depraved. The Papists maintain, as Hollaz expresses it, that "the image of God was a supernatural gift superadded to man for the purpose of supplementing his connatural imperfection, as a wreath or garment adorns a man externally, and as the rein restrains the horse. But as the nature of man and of the horse remains incorrupt when the garment and the rein are removed, so they suppose that, though the image of God was lost, the nature of man was not corrupted by the fall, but remained upright." In opposition to such a theory, obviously devised to foster the Pelagianizing tendencies of Romanism, the Lutheran Church has always spoken of man's original righteousness as concreated and natural, so that its loss was a calamity of most dreadful consequences to our nature and our race.

That the Lutheran Church teaches in accord with Holy Scripture any unbiassed mind that will examine the evidence must be convinced. The narrative of the creation of man leaves no room for supposing that the image of God or any part of it was impressed upon man after the creating work was done. Even if the distinction made by Roman theologians between image and likeness were admitted, it would still be necessary, according to the Scriptures, to regard them both as natural endowments. "God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him." Man was created in the image and likeness of God. That which belongs to this image and likeness was concreated and must have been connatural, not an endowment superadded to those given in creation and thus belonging to his created nature. To this must be added the statement in which the judgment of the Creator is expressed concerning the creature. If the Romanists were right in contending that man's nature was, as it proceeded from the hand of God, in a state of moral in-

difference, and received its moral quality only by the bestowal of a gift which was not concreated and therefore was not con-natural, the account of creation would show it. A judgment of the creature's condition could, in that case, only declare it indifferent. But the record says, after the account of man's creation, "God saw everything that He had made, and behold it was very good," Gen. 1, 31. That could not have been said, if man had not in his creation been made good. The words of Moses agree precisely with the words of the preacher, "God made man upright." He was pure and holy as God made him, and did not become so only by a subsequent supernatural gift. Hence this righteousness and holiness would too, if the fall had not intervened, have been transmitted to all the posterity of Adam and Eve. As that fall has intervened, "all men begotten after the common course of nature, are born with sin, that is without the fear of God, without trust in Him, and with fleshly appetite." Augs. Conf. II.

When we look abroad upon the earth in its wickedness and wo, the thoughts and sentiments suggested are not assuring and not consolatory. If we had no light but that of nature, the question would press upon us, Did the Creator of all things delight in evil and desire the creature's misery, that He made all in such a corrupt condition? Or if the evidence leading the mind to the recognition of a Maker were rejected, the still more perplexing question would trouble us, Is there a fate, whose football we are, that delights in evil and the misery which it entails, and from whose merciless grasp there is no deliverance? But we have a light that illumines all. What poets dreamed about a golden age, when men were innocent and happy, was not all a dream. It was a tradition founded upon truth. That truth the Scriptures present to us in their account of man in his state of integrity. He knew God and loved Him in His goodness. Everything within man was willingly subject to God, and in his submission to the divine government he fulfilled his mission and lived in happiness. That it is otherwise now is owing to the catastrophe of which all nature bears abundant marks, but of the special nature of which we can receive full information only from the Scriptures. All creation sighs and groans, and man pursues his weary path through toil and trouble, without a

natural light to tell him of his ultimate goal and final destiny. That he must die he is well aware, and conscience crowds the thoughts upon him of an account to be rendered and a probable doom from which there is no deliverance. But a gracious revelation in the Word gives light in all this darkness. Man was not made to play his little part in life's drama and then pass away forever. He was made for God and glory, for immortality and blessedness. Sin came, and thus came death and wo. But the Deliverer has also come, and thus comes life and bliss. Man is greatness in ruins, and the restoration to his original state is possible. Life and immortality have been brought to light by the Gospel. By this we are taught the truth in Jesus, and led to put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. "As for me, I will behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with Thy likeness." Ps. 17, 15.

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IS THERE A WILFUL RESISTANCE THAT IS SPECIFICALLY  
DIFFERENT FROM NATURAL RESISTANCE?

In the present controversy concerning Predestination the assertion has been made on both sides that the real difference and disagreement is to be looked for in the doctrine concerning Conversion. Especially the "Missourians" have very often cried out that we, their "opponents", could not teach correctly in regard to conversion, else there could be no difference between them and ourselves respecting the doctrine of Election. Now we also are convinced that any one who is orthodox in the doctrine of Conversion, is and must be orthodox in his doctrine about Election, and vice versa. As far as we are able to see there is *no* difference between the "Missourians" and us in regard to the following points pertaining to Conversion: 1.) Man is so depraved by nature that he is not able actively to do anything towards his conversion; he can neither convert himself, nor prepare himself for his conversion, nor in any way actively take part in the same; he is

merely passive. 2.) It is the Holy Spirit alone who brings about our conversion, who begins and completes it in all its stages and particulars, and this by His operation through the means of grace, the Word and Sacraments. 3.) Man can not even by his own natural powers be purely passive in and during conversion, but the Holy Spirit must by the Word check his natural resistance and thus give him the ability and power of having this passivity. But now the question arises, How is this passivity conferred upon a man? Can he also reject it, or is it, at least for a part of mankind, viz. the elect, practically impossible to reject it, and this because of a *special* grace and decree of God? In other words, Can *every* man actually resist the converting grace and activity of the Holy Spirit in such a way as to make it impossible for Him to convert such a man? Or, in still other words, Is there a resistance that in itself, specifically, is distinct from that resistance which is common to all men; a *wilful* resistance that is of an entirely different nature from *natural* resistance, in so far as by its nature it makes impossible what natural resistance does not prevent, viz. conversion?

And here, according to our opinion, is the real point of difference between the "Missourians" and ourselves. *We*, in accordance with *our* doctrine concerning universal grace and concerning Predestination, answer those latter questions *affirmatively*, and must consistently do so. The "Missourians", on the contrary, also in accordance with *their* doctrine concerning universal grace and concerning Election, virtually answer, and consistently must answer, *negatively*. They can not admit, nor do they admit, that there is a wilful resistance that really is of another species and kind than natural resistance. According to their theory the Holy Spirit just as well takes away the former as the latter, and it is just as easy for Him to do so. The former does really as little prevent conversion as the latter. As far as conversion and the working of the Holy Spirit in the heart of man is concerned there is, according to this "Missourian" view, no difference at all between natural and wilful resistance. The latter is only a higher degree or a worse form of the former. The difference is not specific, but only gradual, entirely unessential as far as conversion and salvation are concerned. If I belong to the

elect, I surely shall and must at some time be converted, shall and must remain in faith or, at least, die in faith, whether I resist wilfully or not. The Holy Spirit will surely overcome and take away also my wilful resistance, yea, even the most wilful and contumacious. For to Him and in regard to conversion and salvation it is all the same whether only natural or also the most wilful and contumacious resistance be found in me. Such is the view of Missouri in its legitimate consequences, as they also have virtually and in part actually and expressly been drawn by Missouri itself. And against these views and doctrines we emphatically lodge our protest as being most pernicious and essentially Calvinistic. Those views and doctrines we declare to be against the *Scripture*, against our *Confession*, and against the teachings of our "Fathers", whilst we claim our answer to the above questions to be in conformity with all these. And this now we purpose to prove in this article.

The *Scriptures*, in the first place, evidently speak of *two different kinds* of resistance to the operation of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of men. One is represented as *common to all men*. Gen. 8, 21 we read: "And the Lord said in His heart, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; *for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.*" "Imagination" is here the translation of the Hebrew word *yetser*. And this word signifies *production, formation*, or anything that is formed or produced. Being predicated of the *heart* of man, it denotes everything that has its seat in this heart and proceeds from it, therefore also human will (compare 1. Sam. 14, 7; Isa. 10, 7). Accordingly in Gen. 8, 21, also the *will* of man *in general*, therefore of *every man*, is said to be evil from his youth. From this it necessarily follows that the will of man is in opposition to the will of God, that the will of man by nature resists the will of God, or, that there is a natural resistance common to all men. The same is taught, Rom. 8, 7: "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." "Mind" is here in Greek *ρόνημα*, and this is, "what one has in mind, what one thinks, feels, *wills*; hence mind, thought, *will.*" Now according to John 3, 6 every natural man ("that which is born of flesh") is "flesh." Therefore Rom. 8, 7 teaches us that the

*will of every man* is by nature "enmity against God," hostile to Him, or in other words, that in every man there is natural resistance against God and His will and operation. Nor is man able by his own natural powers to omit and discontinue this. He can not in the least change his own heart. He can not give another direction to his will, so as to will the good in any way, not even so as to be purely passive and quiet whilst the Holy Spirit is working in him towards his conversion. God must change his will, if it is at all to be changed. He alone can also check natural resistance and restrain it for some time, so that the Word of God can make its first impression upon the heart of man. Therefore the Apostle writes Phil. 2, 13: "It is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."

All this goes to show that there is by nature in *every man* a resistance to the will and operation of God, or that there is a *natural* resistance common to *all men*. But this natural resistance, common to all men, does not prevent and hinder the Holy Spirit from having His work in the heart of a man. For if this were the case, the Holy Spirit could not work in the heart of any man, and, consequently, no man could be converted and saved. This natural resistance is, indeed, not entirely taken away by the Holy Spirit. For we find that it remains in the heart of even the best Christian, until he breathes his last. Even St. Paul had to complain of it, as we see especially from Rom. 7, 14-25. But this natural resistance is checked and restrained by the Holy Ghost when He begins His work in the heart of a man. This natural resistance does not and can not dominate in the heart of a man who is being converted or who is already converted. The first checking of it is inevitable, but it is not irresistible. And this leads us to the other resistance spoken of in Holy Writ.

This second resistance is such as is *not* found in *all men*, and as prevents the Holy Ghost from working in the heart of a man and converting him. Of this our Savior speaks when He says, Matt. 23, 37: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets; and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often *would I* have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and



*ye would not.*" Here Christ speaks of a human will that renders the will of God ineffective, of a resistance to divine grace which, by its nature, prevents it from doing its saving work. This, evidently, can not be that resistance which is common to all men; nor does our Savior represent it as such: For if that were the case, again no man would and could be converted and saved. The gathering mentioned in this passage is nothing else than the calling to repentance and faith by preaching the Word of God, this "power of God" (Rom. 1, 16), and by and through it sincerely and earnestly offering all the grace and power necessary to conversion and salvation. Whomsoever the Son of God thus wants to gather, he by the Word of God receives the capacity to hold still and let Him work. But despite all this grace and power offered and given to him, he may obstinately and wilfully resist the working of his Redeemer and *thereby bring to nought* His intended gathering. But this is a resistance which he can omit by the grace and power already conferred upon him, and a resistance not found in all men. Hence it is of a totally different nature from the natural resistance, which is found in all men, and which does not prevent that gathering, or conversion. Another passage of the same import is Acts 7, 51. There St. Stephen, the proto-martyr, says to the Jews: "Ye stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One, of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers." It certainly requires no special acuteness to perceive that the resistance here mentioned is not the natural one common to all men. For, in the first place, the Apostle lays a *particular* blame upon those he addresses, a blame that does not attach to every man. Secondly, he explicitly mentions wherein the resistance of these Jews consisted. As their fathers had not given ear to the prophets of old, but had persecuted and killed them, so they themselves had now betrayed and murdered the Righteous One foretold by those prophets, instead of accepting His Word and believing in Him by the grace and power conferred by His preaching. Now, this resistance was not found in all those who

heard the prophets in the Old and Jesus in the New Testament. Therefore it is not that resistance which is found in all men, but it is that resistance that is found only in those who *will not* submit to the converting grace and work of the Holy Spirit, though they *could* do this by the grace and power already received through the Word. This is not natural, but wilful and obstinate resistance.

The very same resistance is spoken of Prov. 1, 24-33: "Because I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I will also laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: for that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord: they would none of my counsel: they despised all my reproof. Therefore shall they eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices. For the turning of the simple shall slay them, and the prosperity of fools shall destroy them. But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil." Here wisdom upbraids men for having disregarded and neglected all her invitations and calls, for having resisted all her endeavors to make them wise and happy. This resistance, again, can not be the natural one, common to all men, which no man can get rid of as long as he lives on this earth. For, if this were the case, no man could in any calamity take refuge to God; according to the above passage God would only laugh at his calamity, and mock him in his fear. No, it is and must be a resistance that can be omitted by the grace of God that is open and offered to all in and through the Word. It is a resistance specifically different from the natural; it is wilful and contumacious resistance that is practiced though it could be omitted. If it could not be omitted, wisdom could not say: "But whoso hearkeneth unto me shall dwell safely, and shall be quiet from fear of evil." For then no one could hearken unto her, and this whole precious promise would be totally in vain. And, mark well, no *special* grace is

here mentioned as being given to those who hearken, over against those that hate knowledge and despise all reproof. It is the very same grace offered and given to all by the calling and preaching of wisdom. The difference is only in men, not in wisdom and preaching. Some accept the call by the grace and power received by hearing it, whilst others reject and despise it, though the same grace and power was offered them and could have been used by them.

These passages, though they could be multiplied many times, may and will suffice to prove that the Word of God speaks of two distinct kinds of resistance. Of these one is born in and with every man, therefore common to all men and remaining, though not dominating, in all men as long as they live in the flesh, even in the best Christians. This resistance does not prevent the working of the Holy Ghost in the heart of a man, but is checked and restrained by Him in and after conversion. The other resistance is of a totally different nature. It is also an outgrowth of man's sinful heart, but not a necessary, unavoidable outgrowth. As far as it is directed against the *external* hearing and reading of the Word, it can be omitted by the *natural* powers of man. And as far as it is directed against the working of the Holy Spirit in the heart of man, it can be omitted by the grace and power conferred by Him through the Word upon all who hear or read it attentively, as even an unregenerate man can hear and read it. And he who does not and will not omit this wilful obstinate resistance, though he can do so, will not and can not be converted and saved.

And with this clear doctrine of Holy Writ the confessions of our Lutheran Church are thoroughly in accord. They make the same difference in the resistance found in man. In the first place, they speak of a resistance that is natural and common to all men. For example in the *Formula of Concord*, Art. II. *de libero arbitrio* (concerning *free will*) we read in the *Solida Declaratio*, Mueller's Edition, p. 592: "Secondly, the Word of God testifies that the reason, heart and will of an unregenerate man in divine matters are not only totally turned away from God, but are also in opposition to God, turned towards all evil and thoroughly depraved. Furthermore, that they are not only weak, powerless, unable and dead in regard to all good,

but also by original sin so miserably perverted, totally poisoned and corrupted, that they *by nature* are entirely evil, and *rebellious and hostile* against God, and only too strong, lively and active in regard to all that is displeasing and hateful to God. Gen. 8: 'The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.' Jer. 17, 9: 'The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?' This passage is explained by St. Paul Rom. 8, 7: 'The carnal mind is enmity against God.' Gal. 5, 17: 'The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye can not do the things that ye would.' Rom. 7, 14: 'We know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.' And soon afterwards (18. 22): 'I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing. I delight in the law of God after the inward man' (that has been regenerated by the Holy Spirit); 'but 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.' If, now, in St. Paul and in other regenerate men natural and carnal free will, even after regeneration, resists the law of God: how much more will it be rebellious and hostile towards the law and will of God before regeneration? And from this it is evident that free will can not only by its own natural powers do or co-operate nothing to its own conversion, justification and salvation, nor obey the Holy Spirit who through the Gospel offers him the grace of God and salvation, believe and consent; but that, on the contrary, *by its inborn evil and rebellious nature, it hostilely strives against* God and His will, unless it be illuminated and governed by the Spirit of God."

In this passage our confession speaks of *natural* resistance that is common to all men, and is even to be found in man after regeneration, as it was found in St. Paul. Of this will it is said, that it by its *inborn* (inherent) evil and rebellious *nature* does *hostilely resist* God and His will. Yet it is *natural* resistance common to *all* men, and not *wilful* and *obstinate* resistance.\* It is not that resistance which prevents the work-

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\*As distinguished from the former. *Every* resistance to God, His will and work is *hostile* and rebellious; but not every resistance is *wilful* and obstinate. *Lehre und Wehre* for April does not know this.

ing of the Holy Spirit in the heart of man. Such a resistance the same Article of our Confessions also mentions (Mueller's Edition p. 602, 57 seqq.), where we read the following: "But if a man *will not* hear the preaching nor read the Word of God, but despises the Word and the Church of God, and thus dies and perishes in his sins, he can neither draw any comfort from the eternal Election of God nor obtain His mercy. For Christ, in whom we have been elected, offers His grace to all men by His Word and Holy Sacraments, and wills earnestly, that man shall hear it, and has promised that where two or three are assembled in His name and meditate on His Word, He will be in the midst of them. . But if such a man despise the instrument of the Holy Spirit, and will not hear it, he is not wronged, if the Holy Ghost do not enlighten him, but let him remain and perish in the darkness of his unbelief. Concerning this it is written: 'How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not'."—This we might call *external* wilful resistance. And this can be omitted by the *natural* powers of man. For, as our confession says at the same place (p. 601, 52 sq.): "This preaching of the Word all those must hear who want to be saved. For the preaching of God's Word and hearing of the same are the means of the Holy Spirit by, in, and through which He will operate efficaciously, and convert men to God, and work in them both to will and to do. *And this Word even a man who has not yet been converted to God and regenerated can hear and read externally*; for in these external matters, as above said, man even after the fall has to some extent a free will, that he may, or may not, go to church and hear the preaching. *And through this means, namely the preaching and hearing of the Word, God operates and moves our hearts and draws man*, that he through the preaching of the Law learns to know his sin and the wrath of God, and feels true terror and contrition in his heart; and by the preaching and meditation of the Holy Gospel of the merciful remission of his sins in Christ a little spark of faith is kindled in him, he accepts the forgiveness of sin for Christ's sake and comforts himself with the promises of the Gospel. . And in this way the Holy, Ghost who works all this, is given into the heart."

Thus much depends upon the omission of this external wilful resistance. He who does not omit, but practices it, will not and can not be converted by the Holy Ghost. And omit it he can by his own *natural* powers.

But how is it with regard to *internal* wilful resistance? Of this our Confession speaks in several places. We will look at a few of them. The first is to be found in Art. XI. of the Formula of Concord, in the Epitome, Mueller's Ed. p. 555, 11. Here we read: "But that *many are called, but few chosen*, is not to be understood in this way, as if God were not willing to save everybody; but the cause is this that they either do not at all hear the Word of God, but *wilfully* despise it, harden their ears and *their heart*, and thus block up the ordinary way of the Holy Spirit, so that He *CAN not* have His work in them; or *if they have heard it, they again set it at nought and disregard it*, whereof not God and His Election, but their *malice* is the cause."—In this passage our Confession speaks of a resistance that prevents the working of the Holy Spirit in the heart of man, and therefore also conversion and salvation; consequently of a resistance that is not to be found in every man, because in that case no man could be converted and saved. This resistance may consist in one of two things: either in not at all hearing the Word of God, but contumaciously despising it; or in neglecting and disregarding this same Word of God, after it has been heard. And both kinds of a resistance can be omitted, the former, or *external* wilful resistance, as we have already seen, by the natural powers of man, and the latter, or *internal* wilful resistance, by the grace and power received through the Word as soon as it is heard attentively, as even an unregenerate man can hear it. But if this resistance be not omitted, "the ordinary way is blocked up for the Holy Spirit, so that He *CAN not* have His work" in the heart of such a man. That this resistance must be of quite another nature than that which is common to all men without any exception, and which clings to man as long as he is in his sinful flesh, there is no denying.—This same wilful and contumacious resistance is meant by our Confession in the Solida Declaratio of the same Article, Mueller's Ed. p. 713, 40, where it says: "God has likewise resolved in His counsel, that He will harden, reject and condemn all those

who, being called by the Word, *repudiate it and resist the Holy Ghost who is willing to be efficacious and to work in them; if they persist in this.*" Further on it is characterized as the "perverse human will that rejects and perverts the means and instrument of the Holy Spirit that God by His calling offers him, and *resists the Holy Spirit who intends to be efficacious through His Word, and who works through it.*" And this malicious resistance is mentioned as being the real cause why of the many called but few are chosen. Therefore it must be something that is not common to all men; something that makes a distinction between men; something that, as far as the converting and saving work of the Holy Spirit in the heart of men is concerned, is entirely of another nature than natural resistance, which is common to all men, but does not prevent the saving operation of the Holy Spirit.

And now let us hear our "Fathers." We shall clearly see that they are in full accord with Holy Writ and the Confessions of our Church. We will not here repeat the decisive passages of *Huelsemann* and *Gerhard* which we have given in the *Lutheran Standard* of April 8, but only, though earnestly, refer our readers to them. These would already suffice to prove the assertion just made. But we will now give a few more extracts of the same kind.

*H. Kromayer* (1610-1670) in his *Theologia positivo-polemica* p. 542 says: "If man does work anything in the beginning of conversion, he does it by resisting. But there are different grades of resistance, of which some are of such a nature that even more reasonable heathens could have abstained from them. Therefore the expression (no doubt taken from Rev. 3, 20) to debar the Holy Ghost. And this can be done in a twofold way: by *natural*, and by *malicious* resistance. *Natural* resistance the Holy Spirit is willing to take away; but He has not bound Himself (*non tenetur*) to take away *malicious* resistance. Δεῖ τὸ καλὸν εἶναι ἀβίαστον, i. e., we must not be drawn to good against our will."

*Friedemann Bechmann* (1628-1703) in his *Annotationes in Compendium L. Hutteri* p. 481: "An eighth argument of the Calvinists is this: 'If God were willing to gather all men to Christ, He would also give faith to all. The conclusion is incorrect; therefore also the premises.' I answer by denying

the validity of the conclusion. For although God is willing to gather all men to Christ, nevertheless, because it is His will to work faith according to an ordinary power by certain means, and many resist those means, do not use them, but reject them, this is the cause that God does not actually work faith in all; namely, because of their resistance. But you say, *all men resist by nature*. If, therefore, God does not work faith because of resistance, faith will not be wrought in any one. I reply, You must distinguish between a *natural* resistance which is from *original sin*, and a *malicious* resistance that has been *contracted wilfully*. Not the former, but *the latter prevents the production of faith*; and as this is not equally to be found in all, so neither is the production of faith prevented in all."

Hollaz (1648-1713) in his *Examen Theol. Acroam.* p. 872: "We must distinguish between *natural and malicious* resistance. The former is otherwise called *innate*, and is the next issue of man's corrupt nature (*proxime fluit ex natura hominis corrupta*), and is common to all men; and this resistance is, indeed, diminished and checked by preparing grace that is combined with the Word of God, but it is not radically taken away. For there is to be found a struggle of the flesh against the spirit also in the regenerate. See Rom. 7, 23; Gal. 5, 17. Therefore, as man in consequence of the corruption of his nature can not do otherwise than resist the divine law, because the flesh is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can it be, Rom. 8, 7: converting grace breaks this necessity of resistance, and causes that man, indeed, *can* admit the means (of grace), but not that he is *forced* to admit them and can not resist them (*non autem ut necessario et irresistibiliter admittat*), but that he retains the liberty of opposing those means. This (latter) resistance is otherwise called *voluntary, wilful and contumacious* (*voluntaria, affectata et morosa*), and it is contracted by a *peculiar* fault of man and *wilfully*, and therefore proceeds from *wilful malice* (*est peculiari hominis culpa et dedita opera accersita, atque adeo ex malitia, sponte contracta, profecta*), which in some is more, in others less pertinacious, with some temporary, with others lasting to their end. For the Savior teaches, that it is harder for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven than for the poor, Matt. 19, 23. He teaches likewise



that the publicans and harlots can more easily be converted and saved than the Pharisees, because these were inflated by their opinion of self-righteousness, Matt. 21, 31. Yea, we know also from our experience that those men who are pre-occupied by false opinions, inflamed by a preposterous zeal, involved in more dangerous vices, and who oftener relapse into intentional sins, resist converting grace more vehemently than those who keep aloof from such dangerous rocks. The most pertinacious resistance is found in those who remain impenitent until their end, among whom are to be especially mentioned those who sin against the Holy Ghost. . . . *Non-resistance is twofold: pedagogical and spiritual. Pedagogical non-resistance is to be found in a sinner in regard to external things that invite him into the church. For example, some unregenerated men refuse to walk by means of their feet into a church, some do not refuse to do this. This pedagogical non-resistance, being the same with external hearing (auditui externo respondens) is in the powers of free will. But spiritual non-resistance, being the same as internal hearing and assenting, is due to the assistant and preparing grace of the Holy Spirit, as this breaks and checks natural and actual simple resistance, that it may not become malicious, wilful, and contumacious, although this grace, because of the extreme malice of men, does not always attain this end.*

The same author replies to the objection of the Calvinists: "If man can resist converting grace, and can also omit this, repentance and faith is dependent upon the natural powers of free will," in the following way (p. 875): "Non-resistance is only the condition; without which repentance and faith are not wrought in the heart of a sinner, but it is not itself repentance and faith. *Pedagogical non-resistance in external church-matters is of the powers of free will, spiritual non-resistance is of the grace of God.*"

J. A. Quenstedt (1617-1688) in his *Theologia didactico-polemica*, Cap. VII, de Conversione, Sect. II, p. 513: "That divine grace which in itself is efficacious can be prevented, and in fact very often is prevented in its action by contumacious resistance of the will that in regard to evil is free, and that consequently man is converted not irresistibly, but resistibly, we have proved above from Prov. 1, 24. 25; Is. 5, 1.

2; 65, 2; Ezek. 12, 12; Matt. 23, 37; Luke 7, 30; John 5, 40. 43; Acts 7, 51; 13, 46; 26, 27. 29. Add Zechar. 7, 11: 'But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder, and stopped their ears, that they should not hear.' From this we argue in this way: Whosoever is able to decline the gracious divine invitation and repel it with a refractory shoulder, he can resist divine grace that in an efficacious way is working conversion in him, by wilful malice *that is not in him by nature or birth*, but voluntarily contracted and contumacious (*ex voluntaria malitia, quae non est connaturalis seu congenita, sed adscititia et προαιρετική*). But unregenerate men can decline the divine invitation. Therefore they can also practice such a resistance. Likewise, if those whom God is said to have been willing to endow with faith and to convert by the *most efficacious* administration of His grace and the *most liberal and loving* employment of all means (*efficacissima gratiae suae administratione et omnium mediourum liberalissima et affectuosissima exhibitione*), if they are said nevertheless to have resisted, opposed, and fought against God, who was seriously and efficaciously working in them, efficacious divine grace, indeed, does not necessarily and inevitably attain its object in all. . . . Although God converts man by the same infinite power by which He created everything, and by which He will raise all men from the dead, wherefore unregenerate man, because of his unfitness (*inidoneitatem*) is compared to clay or to a dead man: nevertheless the *way of working* is different. God created and will raise from death by His *absolute* power; He converts by His *ordinate* power, or in accordance with an order prescribed by Himself. And because of this, very often the resistance and repugnance of the subject of conversion (the man to be converted) hinders that action. — From this it does not follow that God is not omnipotent, or that man is more powerful than God, if namely in conversion man can resist God in His work and hinder the same, as *Piscator*" (a Calvinist) "in his notes to the Tract of *Vorstius*" (an Arminian) "infers from this. But only this follows, that God is not willing to exercise His *absolute* omnipotence in converting man. And the cause of this is not a diminution of His power, but His free will.—When God calls us, lets us hear His Word, offers us His grace, invites us, urges us, He deals

with us according to His ordinate power and by certain means prescribed in His Word. He who does not submit to these is said to resist God, not by opposing to God a stronger power, and by fighting and conquering Him, but by refusing that which God wanted to be done (*nolendo id, quod Deus fieri voluit*). But thus, properly speaking, God is neither conquered by man by means of an opposed greater strength or power, nor is by that refusal on the part of man a new power opposed to Him, nor does man obtain the mastery and dominating power; but he only freely exerts his natural faculty, and as much as lies in his power, hinders the operation of God. And, indeed, he does not as much hinder God in His work, as properly the means and the purpose or intention of God, so that He can not attain the end which He had proposed to Himself by those means.—We concede that man by the first impulse brought about by prevenient grace through the preaching of the Word is so affected that it is impossible for him to escape the presence of God, and not to be roused at all. From this, however, it does not follow, nor is it true, that, if the first impulse of prevenient grace is inevitable, the effect of it, or conversion itself, is also inevitable, and that in this way man is converted irresistibly. For though man can not hinder that the first impulse take place, he, nevertheless, in this very first impulse has the liberty of resisting, he has it also in the second and third . . . and by *wilful* resistance he can block up the way for prevenient grace, reject it, and by this resistance hinder his conversion itself. *Rivetus* (a Calvinist) “distinguishes between *struggling* and *conquering* resistance (*inter resistentiam luctantem et triumphantem*). The former he admits, the latter he denies. For he pleads that at first the intellect of man does struggle with prevenient grace, but that at last it nevertheless can not otherwise than succumb, and that therefore grace is resistible only to a certain extent (*secundum quid*), but that in itself (*absolute*) it is positively irresistible, and that such a grace as is efficiently resisted (*cui cum victoria repugnetur*) is inefficacious according to the intention of God. And he claims it to be irresistible in itself (*absolute*) because the intellect of the elect is so illumined that the will can not otherwise than accept that good which in the greatest light is shown to it.

But from this it would follow that man in the act of his conversion is carried away enthusiastically, and is not able to repel the proffered grace. And this would pave the way for the fatalistic decree of absolute reprobation. Certainly, an absolutely and simply irresistible grace can not exist; else this that the object is not attained (*irritatio eventus*) would be imputed not to the subject of conversion, or man resisting pertinaciously, but only to God who is not willing to bestow (upon all) a grace that is illuminative to such degree, that it could be just as irresistible in others as in the elect.... Divine grace is not repelled by *every* resistance in man; else nobody would be saved, Rom. 7. Not by *original* resistance, which is to be found in all men without any exception, and which grace conquers by its efficacy; not by *every actual* resistance, not even by evil lusts, which grace suppresses and suffers not to reign; not by *external* resistance *preceding* the work of grace, because often great sinners have been converted; *neither always* by *external* resistance *which the grace* coming to man (*gratia superveniens*) *finds in him*, because grace has taken hold of some men in the midst of their sinful career. But grace is repelled by *actual external, pertinacious* resistance, especially *when it opposes itself perseveringly to the means of grace.*"

Augustus Pfeiffer (1640–1698) in his *Anti-Calvinismus* p. 155: "As for the rest, it is true that the *inborn* depravity (*pravitas connata*) is the *same in us all*, and to overcome this God bestows His grace freely on each and every one; but the *superadded perversity* (*malitia superaddita et affectata*) is *not the same in all*. It is not in our power, either, positively to obey, for God must work in us 'both to will and to do,' Phil. 2, 13; but it *is* in our power, negatively, by superadded, wilful wickedness to resist the gracious work of the Holy Ghost or to *refrain from such wilful resistance* (*resistere et non resistere negative*). It is not in our power to convert ourselves; but it is in our power to hinder our conversion. Although, therefore, God offers His grace to *all* men, many, when He knocks, debar Him from their hearts through disobedience and obstinacy. To give a clear example, suppose two cripples, equally helpless and miserable, are in a house that is on fire. One can escape as little as the other. But

suppose some one should come and, out of compassion on them, endeavor to carry them out, and one of them should permit himself to be led or carried—he would preserve his soul. But suppose the other, either because he imagined there was no danger, or from hatred toward the person, or out of desperation, should be stubborn and refuse to be led—who could help him? So when two persons hear the Word of God and receive the same Sacrament, and one permits himself to be moved and led by the Spirit of God, while the other resists the Holy Ghost—what is the cause of the destruction of the latter? Certainly not God's will, but the *obstinacy of his own will.*" (Given in the translation of *E. Pfeiffer*, Columbus, Ohio.)

*J. A. Scherzer* (1628–1683) in his *Breviarium Theologicum Hulsemannianum enucleatum atque auctum*, p. 1028 seqq.: "*Augustine* and others are not heterodox who hold that the subject (*objectum*) of predestination is man who is *yet to be called*, but who is looked upon in the decree of God as *one that would not reject grace*, namely, if it once should be offered, to do which in regard to all men without any exception God on His part is willing and ready.—For this order has been constituted by God that He will not give to those who contumaciously repudiate His first grace higher degrees or an augmentation of the same. And taken in *this* sense the expression of Augustine is not wrong, when he says that that is a peculiar species of grace which God has prepared for the elect as the infallible and proximate medium of obtaining salvation.—He who is yet to be called, but who will finally obey (the call), is elected; those who do not obey the call and do either not come at all to the feast of grace, or are without the wedding-garment (faith), are cast out (and rejected); Matth. 22, 8. 12. 13.—'Whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but whosoever hath not' (who refuses to have and repudiates a new degree of grace) 'from him shall be taken away even that which he hath' (received before), Matt. 13, 12.—But that foreseen non-rejection of grace to be offered is not looked upon in the decree of predestination as something *positive* or *positively* concurring to the acceptance of proffered grace, nor as a privation that has been introduced by man's natural faculty, but as the *common* effect

of *universal* grace that by the Word of God is conferred upon *all* its hearers, so that they are able not to resist God *contumaciously*, who is working through His Word, and do not resist by a deliberate wilful act, although they do not as yet help themselves (*adjuvent seipsos*), which they do only in the progress of sanctification. In the first conversion, however, the Word does by *its natural efficacy, put into it by God*, gradually produce greater fruits in *all* who at least do not resist *wilfully* (*destinato animo saltem non reluctantibus*).—From this it follows that God in an elect person has not found anything more why He should elect him to life than in one who is reprobate, *except* what He Himself was going to introduce into him who was to be chosen. And from this it follows that an elect person does not separate himself from the multitude of the reprobate, and that there is not any cause *on the part of man* to make the decree of predestination. It follows furthermore, that the non-rejection of that grace which antecedes *all* who are called, and *by which, being present, they can here and now abstain from contumacious resistance against God*, who through His Word is working in them, is not the *inducing* cause to continue or augment grace, but is only the *negative absence* of a barrier, or the omission of wilfully hardening the ears, *the possibility of which negative absence is wrought by the first grace*. But that passive capacity (objectively such) is not a *meritorious cause*, or in any way the *efficient cause* of acquiring or working an accidental form (non-essential quality, i. e. a quality whose presence or absence does not change the essence of the subject) such as this, to be predestinated; *on the contrary, it takes place in consequence of the gracious promise of God that to him who does not resist maliciously, grace is continued and augmented*.—‘If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no excuse for their sins,’ John 15, 22. From this we argue: Those who merely because they have heard the Word, are guilty of *wilful* unbelief, *must necessarily by hearing the Word have received the ability of not being unbelievers*. Compare *Huelsemann*, Praelect. in Form. Con., who proves from the Formula of Concord itself that God in eternity decreed to give, and in time itself does give, *all* hearers of the Word by this very

hearing so great a measure of prevenient grace *that they can admit faith*; and that consequently that admission of faith is not an admission by the powers of nature, but by *the powers of prevenient grace* and of *grace common to all*. See the same author in *Vindic. Locor. Script.*, where he from the above and other passages of Holy Writ shows most conclusively that this and absolutely *every grace* that is offered and conferred by the preaching of the Word, is *by its nature and its inherent quality efficacious, although because of the MALICE of man the salutary effect do not follow*. And again he says: *'Every preaching or reading of the divine word is accompanied by that prevenient grace not only to enlighten, but also to give the faculty of not resisting God who is working conversion*. Else not all hearers would be inexcusable, as our intellect *by nature* is blind and our will rebellious against God.'—You will say: But although prevenient grace be there, some hearers nevertheless resist. Consequently that grace either is not common to all, or it is not efficacious in all, or it requires another grace, preceding it.—My answer is: None of these assumptions is correct. Not the first and second. For *grace, indeed, is common to all and exerts the same power in all; but there is a diversity in man who resists MALICIOUSLY*. It is enough that *every one* by this grace conferred upon him *can abstain from CONTUMACIOUS rejection and rebellion*. The seed was of one and the same vigor and vivifying power; the fault lay solely with the ground. For just 'so is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast (good) seed upon the earth,' Mark 4, 26; comp. vs. 3. 4. 5 seqq.—Nor is the third assumption correct. For, as the sainted Huelsemann shows well, "*in reality the*" (inborn) "*contempt*" (of the Word) "*could be overcome by that (prevenient) grace which the preached Word ALWAYS and EVERYWHERE bestows upon EVERY ONE who intelligently hears it*. For every first grace paves for itself the way in man, so that it actually can be admitted, and it does NOT require another grace preceding it; else there would be an infinite progress" (i. e. there could not be any grace that could work in man, because every conceivable grace would require another one preceding it that would confer upon man the ability of admitting it; and so it would go on infinitely.)

C. E. Brochmand (1585–1652, the most celebrated of the Scandinavian Lutheran Dogmaticians) in his Univ. Theol. Systema, p. 221: ‘The ordinary efficacy of divine grace consists in this, that God by a power that indeed exceeds all finite power enlightens the mind of man and bends his will to obey the Gospel, and thus works the salvation of man; *but in such a way*, that when the mind has tested the truth of divine doctrine, and the will has either *begun to be bent* to obey that which in the Gospel is laid before it, or has been *wholly overcome* by the efficacy of the divine Spirit that by far surpasses the power of nature, *man is still able to resist and to oppose himself to the operation of the divine Spirit, and thus entirely to forfeit his salvation . . . .* (p. 246:) God, who in plain words teaches that the conversion and salvation of man is brought about by an entirely infinite power, Eph. 1, 18. 19; Col. 2, 12. 13, in no less plain words teaches us that in man’s conversion this power is exerted in such a way that *man can obstruct the efficacy of God in His work and hinder his conversion*, Acts 7, 51 seq. and 13, 46. But the Spirit of God urges man, counseling him in various ways, that he may not do that . . . . (p. 247:) *The cause that those who are called by the same grace are not alike converted, is solely found in men who by their MALICE close the door against God when He calls.* This Christ teaches by His parable concerning the sower, Luke 8, 5. 12, as also in that reproof where He explains the cause of the perdition of the Jews, Matt. 23, 38. The same thing Paul teaches and shows Acts 13, 45 seqq.”

Leonhard Hutter (1563–1613) in his Libri Concordiae Explicatio, p. 238: “Although it is true that the will of an unregenerate man can not do *of itself* anything else than to *resist* the Holy Ghost; yea, though also this is true that some have been converted at that time when they raged most vehemently against God, an example of which our sainted Luther adduces from Augustine in the conversion of Paul, who was converted when he breathed threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord: nevertheless *it is never true*, nor was it ever true, *that those have been converted who in conversion itself or after conversion did resist the Holy Spirit.* For in those who do not cease to resist the Holy



Ghost, no conversion CAN take place. For BY SUCH A RESISTANCE the Holy Ghost is totally rejected."

J. L. Schlosser in his *Lutherus Lutheranus* (1739): "A block, a stone, clay, a man differ, indeed, in many respects, but they agree in this (if you look upon man as yet to be converted), that *they work nothing, but suffer the working of another*. To say that the Holy Ghost works in those *who resist*, is, indeed, an expression that may be misunderstood; but it is correct if you understand that *natural* resistance which is *common to all*. For notwithstanding *this* resistance the Holy Ghost works; but He works in such a way as to take away that resistance, or rather the *necessity of resisting* . . . In Paul, therefore, *Luther* did not find that *malicious* and *persevering* resistance *which would have hindered conversion*, but plainly the *natural*, which is *common to all* (for he says: 'Just as Paul has been converted, in the same way all the others are converted; for we all resist God'), to which in Paul was added a passion and rage to persecute, in the same way as in others there is an impetus to sin and to indulge one's own lusts, which, certainly, is adverse to God who is changing the mind for the better, but which He does neutralise (*antevertit*) through prevenient grace by conferring the power of not resisting and of admitting greater grace. But that resistance *which prevents conversion from being effected*, *wilful* or *malicious* resistance, is to be found *in a man to whom grace has already come*, and is a *new contumacy*, whilst he has acquired *spiritual powers*, and has the ability and is urged to exercise them (*ad earum exercitium dispositus et excitatus*), in order that he may admit the efficacy of grace, that moreover is ready to concur in producing the spiritual act; nevertheless he obeys the impulse and the guidance of the flesh that is still in him, and does not assent to what the Holy Ghost by His gracious operations intends, nor does he examine what is the good will of God, but refuses to obey, according to the definition of *Fred. Rappalt*." (1615-1676.)

Thus we have seen that the Word of God, as well as our Confessions and the "Fathers" of our Lutheran Church, teach a twofold resistance in man: a *natural* resistance to be found in *all* men without any exception, whether unregenerate or

regenerate, which does not prevent the Holy Spirit's work of conversion and salvation in the heart of man; and a *wilful* resistance in some men that *by its nature* makes it impossible for the Holy Ghost to convert and save man in the order instituted by God Himself. Whosoever does not agree with this doctrine and teaches that there is no difference between natural and wilful resistance in regard to conversion and salvation, and that the latter does in itself and in reality hinder the work of the Holy Ghost just as little as the former, and that the Holy Ghost takes away the one just as well and as readily as the other—his doctrine is *not* in accordance with the Word of God, the Confessions of our Church and our "Fathers;" he is in regard to this *fundamental* point of Christian doctrine not Lutheran, but a Calvinist. And such Calvinists the Missourians evidently have become, in perfect consistency with their Calvinizing doctrine concerning Predestination. The leaven is working. God have mercy on His poor Church and preserve to us His pure, unadulterated Word!

St.

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SOME TESTIMONIES OF AUTHORS OF THE FORMULA OF  
CONCORD IN REGARD TO ELECTION.

Translated from "Altes und Neues" by G. H. S.

XVI.

When the Formula of Concord teaches that the "eternal election of God"—this itself, and not only its execution or "means and ways" to the end—"has been revealed in God's Word," it thereby teaches at the same time that this election of those who alone will be saved, pertains only to the just. For of another election or segregation of sinners unto salvation we find nothing in the Gospel, nor has such a thing been "revealed." Therefore the Epitome thus describes the "revelation" of election: The eternal election must be learned alone from the Gospel of Christ, in which it is clearly testified how God has concluded all under sin in order that He might have compassion on all, and does not desire that any

one be lost, but that every one turn to penitence and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ . . . . How we are to seek the eternal election of the Father, who has decided in His eternal divine counsel that He will save none except those who know His Son Jesus Christ and truly believe in Him . . . . How He then does not only promise such gracious election with words, but has confirmed it with an oath and sealed it with the holy sacraments." The "Solid Declaration" also emphasizes the fact that the eternal election must be regarded "in Christ" and not outside of Him or without Him. For we are elected "in Christ," (and not outside of Christ). "That accordingly the Holy Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, direct all men to Christ as the book of life, in which they are to seek the eternal election of the Father. For it has been determined by the Father from eternity that whom He would save him He would also save through Christ, as He Himself says: No one comes to the Father but by me. And again: I am the door, whosoever enters by me will be saved. But Christ as the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father (John 1, 18), has announced the will of the Father and hence also our eternal election to eternal life, since He says: Repent and believe the Gospel, for the kingdom of God is at hand. He also says: This is the will of Him that sent me that whosoever seeth the Son and believeth on Him hath eternal life. And again: For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

If then the Formula of Concord has not been guilty of the lamentable error of speaking of "an altogether different thing" by using the word "election," it must be conceded that it sets up as the rule of election, "revealed and announced in the Gospel," "promised in plain words and confirmed with an oath and sealed with the sacrament," or as an eternal decree of election the following statement: "All who are penitent and believe in Christ shall not be lost, but have everlasting life." This point must be maintained as the kernel of the everlasting Gospel, else the doctrine of justification will be entirely overthrown. If God has in election irrevocably granted certain sinners eternal life—and that He has done—then He has granted this to them either as sinners without repentance

and faith, as they are by nature, or as sinners who through His grace, as this is offered to all, have come to repentance and faith, hence under the deciding consideration of the merits of Christ apprehended by faith as the only ransom for their sins. For "this very faith makes the difference between those who are saved and those who are damned, between the worthy and the unworthy. For eternal life has been promised to none save to those reconciled in Christ" (Book of Concord, ed. Mueller, p. 144). A doctrine of a will of God ultimately granting eternal life to this or that unbelieving person from among the whole unbelieving mass overthrows entirely the revealed teachings of the Gospel, because then manifestly not the "gracious good pleasure of God in Christ," which makes a difference between sinners according to their faith and unbelief, but rather an absolute, stark, mere will of power on God's part "had compassion upon whom He would and hardened whom He would." In truth, a "horrible abyss!—indeed a will of compassion, on the one hand, for the few, but a will of rejection and hardening, on the other hand, for equals from among equals. How entirely differently the Formula of Concord teaches! The segregating, dividing and selecting election consists, according to it, in this that "the Father will save none except those who know Christ and truly believe on Him." The election then is confined to those who, according to the foresight of God, will be found in Christ through faith, to those who know Christ and believe in Him. The essence of the decree of election is the will of God: only those sinners who will believe in Christ, will I save on account of His merits. In addition to the above cited passages let some from Selnecker confirm this all important matter. In the "Apology of the Book of Concord," which he together with Chemnitz and Kirchner published, we read (p. 210): "It is not unknown to us that all who truly repent are elected, and that such persons should justly conclude that they are elected and children of God in and through Christ in whom they believe. For he on whom God bestows eternal life by faith in His Son, John 3, must surely be elected and be God's dear child." (John 3, 36: He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life.)

## XVII.

How does Selnecker explain the words "Whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate" in his great commentary that appeared 1595?—"Whom He did foreknow: has foreseen according to His immeasurable wisdom and has viewed before from eternity and has approved.—These He has also foreordained: *pro-orise*, bounded before, fixed, ordained. He has determined or fixed them before the foundation of the world and has inscribed them, from among the mass of mortals destined to eternal death, in the album of His parental grace, and has separated and elected them as God's colony. Eph. 1: He has ordained us as those whom He would adopt as His children. If it is now asked: Where, whence, and how is this foreordination to be searched out and obtained, Paul will answer: In Christ! For God has foreordained them as such who are conformed to the image of His Son. Outside of Christ and without Christ, and without being implanted into Christ and unto faith in Him, there is no foreordination and selection unto salvation. The only Son of God, the only begotten Son of the Father, has become man, the first-born among many brethren, as well in regard to trouble and sorrow as also in regard to the resurrection and glorification . . . . From this it is clear that the answer to this question as to the nature of foreordination will be an easy matter to the pious. For it is nothing else than the fraternal communion with Christ, the Savior, or, as the Syriac translation has it: the sealing, by which God the Father sealed us in His incarnate Son and in harmony with an agreement with the Son and Holy Spirit has destined us to salvation, according to the passage: He that believeth in the Son has eternal life. Therefore Paul says in his climax: 'Whom He did predestinate, them He also called,' namely through the office of the Gospel, that they might be converted to Christ." (P. 177.) "Every one that is called to the doctrine of the Gospel, believes in Christ, and submits to His words, has from eternity been foreordained and elected by God to eternal salvation. Whosoever believes in the Son has eternal life, that is, he is predestinated."

## XVIII.

How does Selnecker explain the words: "Therefore hath He mercy on whom He will have mercy, and whom He will He hardeneth?" He says: "Here (Rom. 9, 14-18) a new objection is mentioned: If we are saved by grace alone, why are not all saved, why are many lost and entirely rejected? Is God a just judge who repays equals unequally? Paul answers: God forbid that a pious person should entertain this thought and inference, and may God be thanked for the grace of which we become partakers in Christ. It is enough for us to know that none of our works, our service, human desire, zeal, or anything of that character, assists us in the least to obtain salvation, but only God's grace and parental mercy, which are granted to us who believe in Him, through Christ and on account of this Son and Mediator, out of pure good pleasure and most free will, good pleasure and goodness of God, as it is written: I will be gracious to whom I will and have mercy on whom I will, namely with the innermost motion of paternal affection. But this will of God, this mercy and this love, has become openly known in the Son of God. Whosoever believeth in Him has eternal life, out of pure divine compassion. By correct inference and in contrast with this it is also certain, that all who do not believe will be judged and condemned, and that on them the wrath of God will remain, who yet does not wish the death of the sinner, but wishes that the impious may turn from his wickedness and live, and desires that all men should be saved and come to a knowledge of the truth, and has patience with us, since He does not desire that any be lost, but that all should repent. As many then as are lost and condemned are not lost through God's fault, but through their own fault, according to God's just judgment, as is written: "Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and upright are Thy judgments." "O Lord, righteousness belongeth to Thee; but unto us confusion of face." "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself." Men are lost, not because they are conceived and born in sin (—for in this respect, since all men are alike, they are also all without distinction by nature children of wrath and deservedly are under the judgment of God and eternal damnation—); but they are

lost because they reject and refuse to hear God, who desires to have mercy upon them, to lead them back to the right path, advise and assist them, and offers them His paternal hand. For with regard to original sin God could indeed condemn all men on its account; but He Himself publicly proclaims through His mercy and the mediatorial services of His Son what an appeased disposition He bears toward the human race in His paternal heart, by announcing that He will not remember our sins and will not go into judgment with us, if we only will look up to the seed of the woman who will bruise the serpent's head and brings us blessings, will only seize Him in faith and submit to His words. That is the help for our calamity; that is the deliverance from the wrath of God, from the judgment and from condemnation; this assurance is sealed by an eternal, invincible and immovable purpose of God; this is the book of life in which the names of the elect are inscribed, namely Christ Himself, whom the Father has sealed and sealed us in Him, that is, has elected us, receives us to sonship and saves us, as is written: "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name." But as many as despise this decree of God, this divine grace and this book of life, i. e. Christ, the benefits and merits of Christ and God's paternal hand and His most merciful will, these have been rejected from the presence of God and condemned with pure justice:—not only are they guilty on account of original sin, in which they were conceived and born, and were by nature children of wrath and eternal torment, and not only on account of their real or venial sin (all of which would have been forgiven them from God's pure grace and goodness for Christ's sake, if they had not refused to hear God, the physician and Savior who has offered Himself for the salvation of men, and permit Him to enter their hearts); but for this reason, because they have despised the Lord to the end, have cast from them and thrown aside the grace of God and the influence of the Holy Spirit." (P. 190.)

#### XIX.

"Concerning the foreordination we can, from the revealed will of God, in the teachings of the Gospel concerning Christ,

conclude as follows: All who believe in the Son are elected, i. e. they have eternal life. This is the voice of the Gospel, which must be regarded as the source, with which we must feel contented, and to which we must cling unto death or to our transformation. And when we are changed from this life into the glories of heavenly existence, as is written: "I will that those Thou hast given me be with me," then we will converse with each other intelligently, completely, thoroughly, and without further investigation concerning the hidden counsels and concerning the order of causes, will examine them and be certain concerning them. For the present it is sufficient that we are grounded in the revealed will of God, in the Word and in the use of the Sacraments, that we know that this is the same will as the eternal, secret will that is hidden from the wise of this world." Question: "Is then the doctrine of everlasting life through fore-ordination and everlasting life through justification the same?" Answer: "Entirely so. For there is no other cause of fore-ordination than that of justification. For that reason Paul proves the doctrine of justification by grace from the doctrine of fore-ordination. There is no difference, except that fore-ordination refers to the eternal will and good pleasure which was unknown to all mankind, whilst the doctrine of justification refers to the revelation of that eternal and hidden will, which has taken place through the Son." (P. 205.)

## XX.

"Is it possible in this life in any way to think or treat of the eternal order of causes which God has determined upon in the election and reprobation of man?" Answer: "If Christ and the words of Christ are constantly in our minds and hearts and before us, then it is possible to treat with safety of the order of causes in accordance with the Scriptures in this manner that, namely, God according to His eternal and unspeakable purpose from eternal grace will reveal His glory and for that reason has, in accordance with the decree determined upon in the counsel of the Holy Trinity, created the human race in His image, but thus, that it should be and remain such in eternity and live without misfortunes.



Then, when God (before whom nothing can be unknown or not present, even though it be future and not yet seen,) foresaw the wickedness of Satan, who would rebel against God and corrupt the human race, so that this with its descendants would fall under the judgment of God, then God did not in His eternal, especial, hidden, divine and inscrutable counsel, wish immediately to turn aside the wickedness of the enemy and thereby man's fall and guilt, but He suffered Satan to retain his wickedness and be guided entirely by it, since He, the Almighty Lord who observes what the godless and impotent enemy contemplated, did not immediately oppose the enemy, but knew how and when, to His name's honor, He would overcome and destroy the cursed enemy.

Then, after counsel had been taken with the Son and Holy Spirit, He destined the enemy to eternal destruction. But moved by contemplating His Son (through whom and on account of whom all things are made) as the only Mediator, He did not wish that the whole human race should be lost, but desired that the Son become flesh and according to the flesh be fore-ordained to absolute innocence, invulnerableness, holiness and righteousness and to eternal life and to eternal salvation, joy and glory, and at the same time to be a ransom and a reconciliation of mankind with God, so that all who believed in Him should take from His fullness and in Him be fore-ordained to eternal life, whomsoever God saw in Him, but that all should be rejected and condemned who were outside of Christ, i. e. without faith in Christ.

This His secret will God has revealed through His Son who is in the bosom of the Father, and has established means through which faith in Christ, the Holy Ghost being the source and agent, is enkindled and confirmed. He therefore determined to gather and maintain a visible church, set up before the eyes of all men, in which He would have His Word heard, which is: This is my beloved Son, hear ye Him.

Those who hear Him and the means, that is, do not despise the word of the Gospel and the use of the Sacraments, do not disregard them or neglect them, do not esteem them below transient and earthly things, but humbly learn, hear and retain, will be the recipients of true faith in Christ,

of the Holy Spirit, and of eternal salvation; and He deserts no one who concerns himself about those means established by God, but opens for him the Word and the heart, and desires that he be enrolled among those that are elected to eternal life, that is, among those justified through faith in Christ. But the rest, those who despise or disregard these means and do not strive after godliness, He declares to be unbelievers, impenitent, hardened of heart, godless, rejected, vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, not by God's fault, but through their own fault.

So much we can and should say concerning the order of causes in the doctrine of election on the basis of the Scriptures. But whatever is above and beyond this, belongs not to the things that can be searched out in this life, but to the divine sphere. It is sufficient for us to know in what way we are justified before God, absolved from sin, received unto sonship, i. e. fore-ordained and elected to eternal life." (P. 206.)

## XXI.

"The sum of this doctrine (i. e. of predestination) is this: All those who live and die in faith in Christ as the Savior, Redeemer, Mediator and Justifier, are the foreseen, elect, designated, called, justified and ordained to eternal glory and salvation, through the Son and on account of the Son, out of pure good pleasure, mercy, kindness and love of God, as it is properly said: God gives it, Christ earns it, the Holy Spirit seals it and makes it effectual, faith grasps it and good works prove it. On the other hand, all those who either live and die without faith in the Son of God are the rejected and condemned, erased from the book of life or the list of the justified, not by God's fault, who certainly has created none for destruction, when the counsel of creation is taken into consideration, but by their own fault, because they did not believe in the only begotten Son, as is written: Whosoever believeth not in the Son is condemned already and the wrath of God abideth on him." (Comm. in Genesis, p. 127.)

"The revealed will of God is the one through which He shows in His Word whom He has ordained to eternal life,

whom He wills to love and be saved, namely, all who believe in the Son; and whom He wills that they be condemned by His just judgment, namely, all who do not believe in the Son." (Just. p. 345.)

"According to the Word we judge concerning election, concerning the life and salvation of those who believe, and concerning the damnation of the impious." (Ib. p. 347.)

"It is necessary that the doctrine of the mode of the revealed election and fore-ordination have certainty and confirmation, as the Gospel exhibits it, by declaring that all that believe in the Son have eternal life, i. e. are elected, and all who do not believe are judged and rejected already." (Ib. P. 2. p. 114.)

"The sum of this doctrine is that all who live and die in the faith in Christ as the Savior, Redeemer, Mediator, Justifier are the foreseen, elect, designated, called, justified and ordained to eternal glory, life and salvation, through the Son and for His sake, out of the pure good pleasure, mercy and love of God." (Ibid. p. 325.)

"In Christ is the eternal election of the Father placed and to be searched for, who has determined in His eternal but revealed counsel to save none except those who would acknowledge His Son, the Immanuel, the God-man, and truly believe in Him." (Theses 16.)

## XXII.

"Why does Christ say: Many are called, but few chosen?—This is no contradiction, nor is the meaning this that God calls those whom He did not want to have in the number of the elect, but whose damnation He desired. For God is not a being that says one thing and means another, but He desires that repentance be preached to all universally and forgiveness of sins promised. The reason why many are called and but few chosen, is given in Acts 13, 46: 'Ye put the word from you and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life.' And Acts 7, 51: 'Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost.' God shows them that He desires the Word of His Son to be heard, through which the Holy Spirit will be effective and give us the power to believe and preserve the Word. But those who do not hear the Word, but despise it, disregard it and resist it

are those who, although called, are not chosen. But of this the divine election is not the fault, which considered in its connection with the unconditional will of God and His unconditional grace, is just as universal as the promises and the call, but the perverted and godless will of men, which with intentional wickedness will not permit or suffer the influence of the Holy Spirit, through whom He seeks to be effective in the Word, but stubbornly casts them away and rejects them contemptuously. Few are then chosen, namely finally and in the end, or in reference to the result, on account of the wickedness and guilt of man. This is the usual answer." (Com. p. 226.)—This explanation is confirmed in the Formula of Concord, Epitome (§ 9-12) and in the Solid Declaration (§ 34-42) as also Luther already in his Hauspostille. But why does Missouri seek so stubbornly to evade and resist this fundamental passage from the lips of the Lord?

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## THE ABSOLUTE DECREE OF MISSOURI.

BY REV. P. EIRICH, HOBOKEN, N. J.

Dr. Walther, in an article in *Lehre und Wehre* 1880, entitled "The Absolute Predestination," labors hard to show that his predestination theory does not involve the conception of an absolute decree. He first endeavors to prove that his doctrine of election at all points accords completely with that of the Formula of Concord and is, in fact, identical with it. But as these utterly fallacious arguments have already been thoroughly refuted over and over again, we do not propose to carry water to the sea by attempting a new refutation here. Two considerations alone seem decisive against his show of proof; namely, that the proposition *that faith flows from election*, or that election is *unto* faith, is nowhere found there, neither the opposite or negative one, that God in election has no regard to faith; and that whilst his opponents do cordially and without reserve subscribe all—every word and sentence—that the Formula contains and teaches concerning election, they are entirely and conscientiously unable to subscribe his ad-

dition. If the authors of the Formula had meant that faith "*flows from election*," it is strange that they did not expressly say it, when too the occasion, as it were, was everywhere forced upon them, if namely they had had the Dr.'s theory in their minds. And the fact that they did not say it, when they do state all that flows from election, and when faith was the pivot upon which the whole Reformation and all the doctrine of our salvation hinged, and to which they tended, seems conclusive evidence that they did not mean it.

But the enquiry, as to whether Dr. Walther's doctrine of predestination involves the idea of an *absolute election* is one entirely separate from that, as to the doctrine of election contained in the Formula of Concord. For if it should appear, that it actually teaches an election theory that must be regarded as absolute, it would have to be acknowledged, of which however no evidence has so far been forthcoming.

Dr. Walther in the second step of his argument gives a statement of the Calvinistic theory of predestination, both Supralapsarian and Infralapsarian, on almost every point, and then exclaims: "How can an election be styled absolute or unconditional which is conditioned by the merits of Christ and by faith which God has decreed to give to the elect!" meaning his own theory. Because then, according to Dr. Walther's idea, election took place through the merits of Christ and contained the decree of bestowing faith on the elect, it is not absolute!!

Surely any man that is satisfied with such an argument deserves no better. For in all conscience, did Calvin hold or teach that the elect should be saved without the merits of Christ and the gift of faith! Did he propose in his election scheme to take *unbelievers* to heaven? Are not the mediation of Christ and the bestowal of faith means of election in the Calvinistic theory, just as faith is a means in Dr. Walther's? The Calvinistic scheme has two links in the execution of the decree of election, namely, Christ's mediation and persevering faith, and Dr. Walther's has only one, to wit, the latter; but the chain of execution is as unbroken and absolute in the one as in the other. If Walther's argument is correct, then the Infralapsarian scheme of predestination is not absolute, because it was conditioned by the fall of man, which was not

decreed. The steps by which the end and aim of our election scheme are reached may be more or less in number, which does not, in the least, change their absolute character, as we see at once, if we compare the Supralapsarian and Infralapsarian theories. The Supralapsarian starts out back of every contingency, and carries forward his decrees absolutely to consummation in the salvation of the elect and the damnation of the reprobates. The Infralapsarian sets out after the contingency of the fall of man had occurred, and then infallibly and absolutely executes its decrees alike in salvation and damnation. And Dr. Walther's scheme starts out after redemption, and infallibly and with equal absoluteness carries out its decrees in the salvation of the small number of the elect, denying that there are any divine decrees concerning the non-elect and holding that they, as far as election is concerned, were left to themselves. Practically the latter are placed in the same condition by this theory with those of the others, although theoretically there is a formal difference. But as far as regards the *elect*, Walther's scheme is just as infallible and absolute as the other two. There is no difference. And Dr. Walther makes out a difference by arguments that are not arguments, but sophistical shams.

Neither does Calvin's absolute decree of reprobation, as Walther argues, make his decree of election absolute, so that only where the former exists does the latter become absolute. The decree of reprobation is not dependent upon that of election and *vice versa*. One decree may be absolute without the other's being absolute, as the 39. Article of the Episcopal Church, the Confessio Marchica and Conf. Helvetica, which all have the decrees of absolute election, but not of reprobation, go to show. Dr Walther makes his task easy for himself, by shutting his eyes against the facts in the case, when he tries to prove that his decrees of election are not absolute decrees, because he rejects the decrees of reprobation.

But the Dr. crowns his effort by remarking: "Indeed it is said, this makes the decrees of election absolute, when it is claimed that God predestinated the elect without regard to faith foreseen, but decreed to bestow faith upon them. How? Is election only then not absolute or unconditional if its conditions are not fulfilled by man, but by God Himself? Is

salvation impossible if man does nothing toward it, and could God only then elect men unto salvation if He foresaw a cause in man that moved Him to elect?" *L. v. W.* 1880, p. 297.

His followers are doubtless satisfied with such reasoning, but we think no one else can be. It is the cat, as the Germans say, going around the hot pap. The Dr. only kicks up dust. We reply to his question: If God fulfills the conditions of election *absolutely*, then election itself is absolute. If the parts and conditions of election are absolute, then election itself is absolute. The whole must partake of the nature of the parts, which constitute it. Indeed, if God decreed an election and then formed decrees of carrying it into execution, these decrees cannot be called conditions of election, but are only links in the chain. Otherwise Calvin's doctrine of election would not be absolute; for it contains the decrees of the mediation of Christ, the effectual calling and perseverance unto the end. And just for the same reason and upon the same ground Walther's doctrine of election is absolute—it is carried out by absolute decrees. If these decrees of execution, of bestowing faith, were conditional—conditioned, that is, by man's wilful or non-wilful resistance, his doctrine of election would be conditional and not absolute, but if these decrees of execution are absolute, i. e. must prevail, wilful resistance or no wilful resistance, then his election is unconditional and absolute. Or does the Dr. mean, that God formed the decree of saving certain persons, or elected them unto salvation upon the condition, that *He* Himself would give them faith? Would he make himself laughable by putting forth such a statement? He, indeed, has reason to expect much, almost anything of his followers in the way of accepting his arguments unchallenged, but still the last straw breaks the camel's back.

We must then conclude that Dr. Walther's theory of election is an absolute predestination and is, therefore, in so far—and that includes everything that is essential—thoroughly and radically Calvinistic. It has no home and never had, in the Lutheran Church. The fact that he has heard of one or two persons in Germany, as *Lehre und Wehre* states, who say he is historically right—of persons, too, who reject

the Lutheran Confessions—cannot change this fact. What all has not been attributed to Luther and our Symbolical Books in that land of scholars! So great a man as Julius Mueller wrote a tract once to show, that Luther was a Supralapsarian! And what new discoveries have Heppe and Schenkel and a host of others made in our Symbolical Books?!! And now Dr. Walther goes to men of this ilk to get their *placet* that he is historically right in his election doctrine! Is not the colored preacher of Richmond wrong, after all, in saying that the *sun do move*, and ought he not to have asserted, that the *world do move*.—Walther on a pilgrimage to the Mecca of Germany—to the learned men there to find endorsement for his new doctrine!! This we consider something new under the sun. What desperate straits must he have gotten himself into to be knocking at the doors of German development men begging for their endorsement! And what vanity to republish their words of commendation and their acknowledgment of his mental ability! He uses *Lehre und Wehre* to sound his own praise! He publishes the eulogies passed upon him!! It is disgusting.

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In regard to recent attacks made upon us by *Lehre und Wehre* we add a few words, reserving a full reply for a future number of the MAGAZINE. Prof. Pieper is doubtless in earnest and means well, even when he only shows his ignorance; as to what St. Louis teaches. For he accuses us of slander and asks the question (*Lehre und Wehre*, p. 229): “Where has Missouri taught, that a Christian should and could also have the assurance of faith concerning the election of others?” Missouri has taught it (*Lehre und Wehre*, 1880, p. 305). We there read: “Phil. 16 expresses the confidence, not the ‘good human hope,’ but the *certain confidence*, that God will complete the good work unto the day of Jesus Christ, which He had commenced in the Philippians. In charity he regards all Christians, to whom he writes, as true children of God, as ELECTED. And hence he has *not the least doubt*, that God will complete their faith.” Was this a prerogative of the apostle? Are we not in charity to consider all Christians as true children of God? But must we, therefore, be entirely certain,



that they are all of the elect, and not have the least doubt of it? And is this a certainty of faith?

But is it not a mean slander when Pieper represents us as teaching, that certainty of election is never attainable by the children of God here on earth, when we in the article referred to expressly stated, that it is reached on the *heights of faith*, but is not constant, and disappears in temptation and internal conflicts? And does not Gerhard teach the same in the words which we quoted in the article referred to and with which we expressed ourselves in entire accord? And would this fact be changed by the circumstance that we did not find this doctrine expressed in Rom. 8, 38. 39, even supposing it was contained in it? Does even Luther explain every passage of the Bible in the same way on every occasion? But we feel sure, it is only a want of understanding with Prof. P. and not malice, that causes him to argue so foolishly and silly. And such a mind is a large enough misfortune without heaping opprobrium upon it in addition. We are sorry for St. Louis that they have discarded the Fathers; for since that fatal step, they are making a sad figure in theology. But conceit, says a German proverb, precedes the fall. They ought to have taken warning. It was the height of ingratitude to discard the fathers and turn against them, after these had set them up in theology and had made them what they are. But this is exactly what conceit and vanity leads to. Who has not blushed for Dr. Walther when he found republished in *Lehre und Wehre* whatever has been said in the way of acknowledgment of his talents and gifts? What would we think of a man who would repeat to others what had been said by way of commendation concerning himself. And Walther publishes it to the world! The *Lutheraner* and *Lehre und Wehre* has teemed for years with this shameful self-laudation, which was disgusting to many of the most worthy ministers of the Missouri Synod. And now has come their degradation. Oh that they might take it to heart and repent and learn humility!

Prof. P. directs his main battery against the point, that man's conversion or non-conversion depends upon his deportment toward converting grace. He thereby evidently teaches that a man may persistently and wilfully resist the Holy

Spirit, trample upon the grace of God, and count the blood of Christ an unclean thing with which he has been bought, and continue therein, and still be converted; and on the other hand, a man may diligently hear the Word of God, pay heed to it, and still not be converted. For man's conversion, he claims, or *non-conversion*, does not depend upon his deportment to divine grace. A man may finally reject it, according to this theory, and still be converted, and he may outwardly use the means of grace diligently and never be converted; he may bring his child to baptism and it may never be regenerated. As Walther holds that in the matter of election God paid no regard "whether men obeyed or disobeyed, but did as He willed," so we now have a theory of conversion to correspond. For if man's conversion or *non-conversion* in no manner depends upon his deportment toward the grace of God, the vilest persistent and wilful despisers of it may just as well be converted as any one else. Their deportment toward divine grace has nothing to do with non-conversion also. Neither the one nor the other depends upon. This is Manicheism and fatalism pure and simple, and the outward use of the means of grace becomes a mere show and ineffectual ceremony. Is it not an outrage that such a theory should try to pass itself off as Lutheran doctrine!

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## THE IDEA OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

The term "Kingdom of God," as a biblical expression, is first found in the New Testament; the idea, however, is as old as and older than time. In fact, the establishment, development and final consummation of this kingdom form the burden of and are the actuating principles in God's government of mankind, and they are, accordingly, also the chief object and contents of His revelations. The object of creation, namely the glory of the Creator, could be obtained only through the complete subjection of the will of the creature to that of the Maker. This object was thwarted by the introduction of sin. For sin is rebellion against God, by disregarding the will of God in deference either to one's own or to

another's will. Through sin, then, God virtually ceased to be obeyed as the absolute ruler of men, and they were living under the government of a different master. Frequently, but with especial clearness in the parable of the prodigal son, Christ shows that the essence of sin consists in the voluntary withdrawal of humanity from the government of the divine will. If God's original intentions were nevertheless to be effected, it was necessary that a restoration be made, that man be delivered from his subjection to a power detrimental to his welfare, and that thus the original relations between God and man be re-established. This is effected in the establishment of His kingdom.

To convey the idea the New Testament employs the two expressions "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of heaven." These terms are essentially synonymous and are not general and universal, but special and specific, referring not to the kingdom of power, which God, by virtue of His omnipotence, exercises over all men, but to the kingdom of grace over the chosen faithful. It is the government in which man, hitherto obedient to the will of the destroyer, is freed from his bondage and voluntarily acknowledges the Lord as His only right King and strives to live accordingly. Hence too the relation between the Ruler and the ruled is designated by "covenant," that is, union and harmony, based not on force or power from either side, but the product of voluntary agreement with mutual promises. It is a covenant of grace on the part of God, because the Bible, proceeding from the true anthropological basis that man cannot extricate himself from the meshes of sin, explicitly teaches that the citizen in this kingdom depends for the enjoyment of its heavenly blessings on the grace and mercy of the Ruler alone.

To establish this kingdom was the gracious will of the Creator from eternity. Its germs were actively laid in the protevangelium, immediately after the fall; the full and complete realization will be accomplished only in the final consummation and glorification of the believers. Everything between these two limits belongs to its development and enlargement. It embraces then both the old and the new dispensations, and forms the contents of the revelations of both Testaments and the chief connecting link between them.

Both treat of the kingdom of God: the old of it in its preparatory state, in which Israel was educated for the mission of showing that this kingdom could be only one of grace and free mercy; the new of the real introduction of the kingdom through the Mediator Christ Jesus. There is union and harmony of purpose, there is organic connection between the two Testaments, and this oneness of character and purpose consists in their both being revelations of God concerning His kingdom of grace. Looked at in any other light they seem fragmentary and disjointed members, only mechanically put together by the force of historical circumstances; but regarded in their true theological aspect, with reference to the plans of God to save mankind through His kingdom founded on grace and received by faith, their inner union as the revelation from one God for one purpose is at once apparent. Nothing has tended more to produce that Babylonian confusion in that school of Theology which loves to claim for itself the aristocratic name of historico-critical, than the failure to observe that this one grand idea of an exclusive rulership of God, as the object of all of His dealings with and revelations to man, is more or less closely interwoven with every word of both Testaments.

Preparatory to this kingdom and in part identical with it, we find the theocracy, which name—a happy invention of Josephus—already indicates its character. The call of Abraham, the choice of Israel as the people of God, His relations to them legislatively and historically, as well as all their institutions, ideals and literature, show that it was the will of God to segregate out of the millions of those obeying only their own will and inclinations, one people, who should acknowledge as their sole Ruler the great Jehovah and the Lord of all. This especial purpose and distinguishing characteristic of Israel is everywhere stated as especially intended and willed by the Author of the call. "The Lord is king" was the watchword of every true Israelite, and to obey His behests and to conform to His law, was to prove true to the demands which the theocratic government made. The great crime which Israel saw in the conduct of the neighboring nations was their acknowledgement of a supreme will antagonistic to Jehovah. And as the supreme rule of Jehovah

was the ideal and aim of Israel's development, it is no more than natural that all the laws and institutions which God assigned to them, and that everything that pious Israelites said and did, bore direct relation to this kingdom, and was subordinated to its welfare. God's chief revelations in the Old Testament, through the law and through prophecy, were all directed to this one end. The law convinced the soul that this kingdom could not be obtained through man's natural powers; prophecy pointed to Him who alone could bring about the vainly sought ideal, and showed that notwithstanding sin had separated man from God, the true connection between God and man could be restored. But not only through these two prominent features of pre-Christian revelations is the all pervading importance of the establishment of the kingdom of God shown, but also in minor particulars. Wisdom among the children of Israel consisted in the fear of God. The poetry of the psalmists is either joy over the union of the soul with God, or grief over the loss of such a union, or desire for man's re-establishment in grace. Royalty consisted not in absolute autocratic government that acknowledged no superior will, but in using political power for the advancement of Israel towards its ideal goal. A king in Israel was called blessed only in so far as he had through his acts and influence induced his people to cling more firmly to the theocratical rule of Jehovah. And, what is at the same time remarkable and important, both through the words of prophecy and through the acts of the true servants of Jehovah, it is clear that they regarded this ideal state of dependence on God's will as purely ethical. It was not to be a subordination by force, or an obedience through servile fear, but was conceived as a willing submission and heartfelt subjection. The distinguishing features of this ideal are then virtually the same as those we find in the New Testament.

As surely, however, as the Old Testament taught in plain words, and typified in its institutions the fact that God's kingdom was the aim of God's revelation, so surely too did it teach that this could not be realized save through the heaven-born Messiah, who would make it possible that the destroyed harmony of creation should be restored. This both the deep consciousness of sin pervading the entire Old Testa-

ment as also the imploring look of prophecy heavenward in the expectation of help from on high, clearly prove. Without this help the realization of this kingdom could only be a vain hope; with the coming of Christ in the flesh it became a reality. The voice crying in the wilderness: "The kingdom of God is at hand," was the announcement of the fullness of time and of the arrival of Him who would definitely realize the Gospel of prophecy. That which lay in the way to the establishment of this kingdom, the load of man's transgressions, his blind and willing submission to the will of God's adversary, his inability even to desire his real deliverance, or to remain faithful after his deliverance, were all removed by this Healer of Souls. The life, labor and death of the Lord are the foundation of this kingdom and the price of its salvation. The Word and the Sacraments are the means through which the Spirit of the Lord introduces men, by faith, into this kingdom itself, and make it possible for them to remain citizens thereof and be saved in it. The merits of the Lord's life and death are then not ends in themselves, but means for attaining the ultimate object prepared from eternity, namely, the restoration of man to the sphere for which the Creator had intended him. This restoration could be brought about only through the means of Christ's merits, and hence revelation and the history of this kingdom give equal importance to the great end of all of God's activity, namely, the establishment of a pure Theocracy, and to the only medium through which this can be effected, namely, the God-man Jesus Christ.

Christ knew well that this was His mission on earth, and it is only by remembering this that we can understand why it is that during all the years of His humility He always insisted upon being the King of Israel. For He, as it is done in the whole Bible, identifies His kingdom with that of God. It has a wonderfully deep significance that the words "This is the king of the Jews" were written over His cross. They are an all-radiant sun reflecting over all the world the knowledge of the true character and mission of Him who was crucified.

The body of which Christ is the head is the kingdom under the new dispensation. The true church, "the com-

munion of saints," is the Theocracy of the New Testament. What was shadow before Christ, has become a reality now; what was a hope then, became a fact through Him; what was predicted then, is fulfilled now. He having efficiently established the kingdom of God, makes all those who believe on Him members thereof and heirs of all its blessing. They are indeed accounted such now only through grace, only through imputation of the perfect obedience of their Mediator. Christians indeed still sin; their hearts have not been entirely purified, nor have their wills become entirely subject to that of their God; but the merit of their Brother is imputed to them, and through Him they are again the children God. This subjective incompleteness on the part of the citizens of this kingdom points to the fact that there shall be a hereafter when even this shall be removed. Even if we did not have direct prophecies to that effect that after death the believers shall be freed from those fetters too that chain them while members of the church militant, we would have a right to infer such a state of future perfection from the plans of God, with respect to His kingdom. God does nothing in an incomplete manner, and although through Christ the subjects of His grace are pure and undefiled, their happiness, and thereby His glory, will not be complete until time is no more, and every stain and spot of sin is removed. The full consummation then of the kingdom of God can and will be found only in heaven, where the church militant will be sanctified into the church triumphant, and where God will be in reality and in truth the King and Lord of all to whom every heart bows and whose glory all confess.

G. H. S.

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HE who has made himself master of the principles and text of the Word runs little risk of committing errors. A theologian should be thoroughly in possession of the basis and sources of faith—that is to say, the Holy Scriptures. Armed with this knowledge it was that I confounded and silenced all my adversaries; for they seek not to fathom and understand the Scriptures; they run them over negligently and drowsily; they speak, they write, they teach, according to the suggestion of their heedless imaginations. My counsel is, that we draw water from the true source and fountain, that is, that we diligently search the Scriptures. He who wholly possesses the text of the Bible is a consummate divine.

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## THE FALL OF MAN.

Early in the history of the human race a calamity occurred, under whose dreadful consequences we are suffering still. Man fell from the high estate in which he was created, and death, and all the various ills that end in death, entered and preyed upon him. He was created in righteousness and true holiness; he lapsed into sin and all uncleanness. This fall took place but a short time after Adam was formed of the dust of the ground and Eve was made of the rib taken from his side. The first pair composed as yet the whole human family, and Satan's plans were subtly laid to compass the destruction of the whole race by poisoning the blood of its head. When Adam fell, humanity fell. There existed no other man through whom our human nature could be propagated in its primeval condition of purity. Humanity was all embodied in Adam, and his fall rendered the transmission of his corrupted nature with its curse to all his descendants inevitable.

The first point that challenges our attention is the cause of the dire calamity that has brought such untold misery upon the noblest of earthly creatures. But this opens a field of inquiry upon which some of the fiercest theological battles have been fought. Was it God's will that man should fall and that the largest portion of our race should perish in consequence? The fact that by the great catastrophe in Eden death came into the world, and that from this death only a comparatively small portion of Adam's descendants are event-



ually rescued, is undeniable. Was this merely a necessary result of God's eternal decree, who, as sovereign Lord over all, executes His pleasure in all parts of His dominions and by His almighty power crushes all opposition that might arise from created wills? Is all this misery in which the creature writhes — all this horror of darkness and death from which his piercing cries go up to the ears of the Almighty, who alone could afford any relief — is this the pleasure of God and the product of the omnipotent will executing that pleasure? So some have thought. Regarded merely as a speculative question, in which the reason commands the heart to be silent, it may be a thought that commends itself to the logical faculty. But that decides nothing. Human reason is no more authoritative in such a question than human affection. That the thinking faculty of man, starting out from the idea of God as an absolute Sovereign with unlimited power, cannot find room for any other causation than that contained in His eternal will, and cannot therefore attribute the origin of evil and misery in the world to any other source ultimately than the pleasure of that sovereign will, no more proves that men are fallen and souls are damned because God was pleased to have it so and therefore willed it so, than that the human heart recoils from the picture of souls banished to the unutterable torments and everlasting despair of hell proves such endless punishment a mere fancy of heartless men. In such matters neither our hard thinking nor our soft sentimentalizing will avail us anything. That which alone can serve us in finding the truth and quieting the soul is the revelation which God has given us, and to this, not to human philosophy or human poetry, we must appeal.

It is well known that Calvinistic theologians, while they usually deny that they teach God to be the author of sin, maintain that Adam fell by the ordination and will of God. As He decreed that for the glory of His grace some of the human race should be saved, while for the glory of His righteousness others should be damned, it was necessary that sin should enter into the world, in order that some might be rescued from it by His grace and others might be condemned by His justice. As the predestination of some to glory em-

braced also the means by which the end should be attained, so the predestination to damnation implied also an ordination to the sin which would render the damnation just. Calvin makes a distinction, indeed, between the will and the command of God in regard to the evil, maintaining that He willed it, but did not command it. He willed it as a means to the accomplishment of His decrees, but did not command it as an iniquity in itself. But the distinction does not change the dismal fact, that, according to his theory of predestination, the fall of man was necessary for the accomplishment of the divine purpose, as human sin is necessary still, and that God, the sovereign Lord of all, therefore so arranged and ordered all things that the fall was inevitable, although He did not command the sinful act by which it took place, but rather formally prohibited it.

A doctrine so devoid of all scriptural foundation and so horrible in its character never found favor in the orthodox church. It results purely from the speculations of reason on the absolute sovereignty of a Being infinite in wisdom and power. If, it is argued, He can not otherwise than doom the wicked to misery, and yet created men in full view of the fact that they would fall into wickedness, He must have willed the sin and had pleasure in the sinner's doom. For did not He make man with a capacity to fall, and could He not have made His intelligent creature without such capacity? Was not the clay in His power, and could He not have formed it with a freedom from the possibility of sinning? Is there any limit to His power? And did He not know what would be the result of making such a creature as man and placing him in such a situation? The argument has force sufficient to carry many souls away from the truth that God is a loving Father, and to lead them to the cheerless belief that He is a dreadful tyrant. Some have even so misrepresented Him as to teach that to human reason He cannot appear otherwise than as such a despot. The questions may puzzle, but they should not for a moment be permitted to shake the faith of Christians that God is Love, and that no divine act can be in conflict with His nature. That should suffice for any true believer, who will appeal from the fatalistic figment which men construct to the living God whom the Scriptures reveal.

Whether therefore we could answer the argument or not, it could have no effect upon the soul that adheres to the truth of Scripture, let reason make of it what it may. But the argument is a mere fallacy by which, specious as it is, the believer in God's all-encompassing love is not nonplussed. God did know what would be the result of making man as He did, and it is true that He might have made him otherwise or refrained from making him at all. Against God's almightiness no creature can accomplish anything, and where God pleases to exercise that there can be no liberty of any kind. The creature *must* do what God resolves that it shall do, and all exercise of creature power against the absolute resolve of omnipotence is futile. If God made men to fall, no power in heaven or earth could prevent it; and if God determined that the fallen creature should be condemned on account of the fall which He had decreed, and which no power could prevent, the condemnation *must* come, whatever men might think of its justice. What need the absolute Sovereign care for His impotent creatures' opinions about His works and dealings? But He does care. He has made us for His glory, and He has made us in His image that we might know Him and appreciate His greatness and give Him the honor which is His due. God could not make us in His image, then be indifferent to our thoughts about Him. These thoughts are pleasing to Him when they are in accord with His thoughts; they are displeasing to Him when they conflict with His thoughts. When the harmony between God and man, which is implied in the creation of the latter in the image of the former, is broken, God is angry and man is miserable. Whether we consciously occupy a position of antagonism against Him, or misrepresent Him so that our thoughts may harmonize, not with Him, but with our caricature of Him, makes little difference: the disharmony is the same in either case, and the curse which is consequent upon the loss of the divine image, that is, of the righteousness of God after which man was made, is inevitable. God does care whether we fulfill our mission or not, i. e. whether we do His will or not. But why, then, seeing that He has almighty power, did He not so make man that he could no more miss his mark than the star or the stone? That brings us back to the old

difficulty. But that too suggests a solution. Is that not identical with the question, Why did He not make us stones instead of men? Certainly then Adam would not have fallen; certainly then death and all our woe would not have come. What woe could a stone have? How could death have any power over a mineral? Almighty power could have avoided the calamity that has come upon our race by not creating the race. But whether it would have been better that you, my dear reader, should be a stone than that you should be a man with all the possibilities of everlasting glory, but therefore also of everlasting shame, you yourself have the intelligence to judge. Whatever decision you may reach, however, God has decided the question by creating man a man, and not a stone, and declaring that His work was very good. But could He not have created us with all our possibilities of goodness and blessedness, without the possibilities of evil and misery? That is a hard question, but not unanswerable. The facts furnish the answer. He made man as He did, and He has done all things well. If anything else could have been done that would have been better, infinite wisdom would have seen it and infinite power would have accomplished it. So far as the omnipotent sovereignty of God is concerned, He could do what seemeth to Him good, and all creatures must submit. If in the creation of man nothing had been taken into account but that, there could, we repeat it, have been no possibility of liberty or choice. Man would be like a machine, that runs helplessly as it is made to run, and has no power to originate or change or stop its motion. But God is not only almighty: He is love. And love has revealed itself in the creation of a being after its image — a being that could love and be loved. How could it find adequate expression in creatures that are mere matter, or in intelligences who in their very nature would be subordinated to His absolute will like mere matter, without the possibility of being otherwise? Such beings could not love, though they could be made to perform the actions, after the manner of a majestic machine, that mimic the actions of a being that appreciates goodness and greatness and loves Him. A loving being must be free — love constrained, necessitated, is not love at all,

and God could not be deceived and could not be pleased by any mimicry of love which its actions would present. Therefore God made men and angels free, not at all that they might fall, but that they might be in the image of God and might love and glorify Him. But being free, being capable of choice, being capable of loving and therefore also of turning away from the God whom they were created to love and did love, they fell. God did not will it so, but He could not accomplish the design of man's creation without making man capable of willing it so.

The creation of a being with such powers and with such liberty did not imply the embodiment in his constitution of any necessity to turn away from the righteousness in which He was created. He was not designed to become sinful as a means of attaining some higher end. The end for which He was designed was to glorify God and be happy in fulfilling this destiny. This end was attained while man retained the divine image in which he was created; for in virtue of this he knew God in His excellent majesty and glorified Him as such. When this image was lost by the unhappy abuse of man's free will, God sent His Son to redeem His fallen creature, that he might "put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness," and thus still attain the great end of his creation. God made man very good, and manifested His own goodness in making him thus. There was no evil in him, nor any seed of evil that would bring forth fruit after its kind. Neither in his body nor in his soul was there aught that militated against the will of his Maker. God was well pleased with His work: it was very good. The dust from which he was formed was among the creatures which God had pronounced good; the spirit which God breathed into his nostrils was after the likeness of the Creator, who is absolutely good. Evil originated in the creature, not in the Creator. Man was good, and was designed to remain good and enjoy God's goodness for ever; but he was free, and in the unhappy abuse of his liberty became evil.

That this change of his moral condition was not effected by any causal forces emanating from God, or even acting in harmony with God's will, is as manifest from the general

tenor of Scripture as we have seen it to be from the nature and design of the creature made in God's image. "Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness," says the psalmist, "neither shall evil dwell with Thee. The foolish shall not stand in Thy sight; Thou hatest all workers of iniquity." Ps. 5, 4. 5. He who has no pleasure in wickedness and hates the workers of iniquity could not by an act of His will bring wickedness into the world and render hateful the creature made for His pleasure. The belief that God is the author of evil would involve a denial of His very existence and brand the Scriptures as false. A being that could will the evil could not be God at all. God does not cause, but hates and condemns iniquity — condemns it because it is in conflict with His own holy nature and good pleasure. "Therefore," saith the Lord, "will I number you to the sword, and ye shall all bow down to the slaughter: because when I called, ye did not answer; when I spake, ye did not hear; but did evil before mine eyes, and did choose that wherein I delighted not." Is. 65, 12. That is God's controversy with man, that he was created for the holiness in which God delights and walks in the iniquity which God loathes. "These are the things that ye shall do: Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbor; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates; and let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbor, and love no false oath; for all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord." Zech. 8, 16. 17. He is the Holy One, from whom all goodness flows, and who not only causes no evil, but who can endure none; He is the light, who not only brings forth no darkness, but who can tolerate none. "This then is the message which we have heard of Him and declare unto you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." 1 John 1, 5. 6.

It is a vain endeavor to trace the origin of evil back to God as involved by necessity in the limitations incident to created intelligences. Such limitation is undeniable. Man, though made in the image of God, is not God's equal. The creature is finite, the Creator is infinite. But the fact that man is not unlimited in His powers, as God is unlimited,

does not imply that the former cannot be good as the latter is good. As the lower orders of creatures were pronounced good, notwithstanding that they had not the moral goodness which was bestowed only upon man, so man was pronounced very good, notwithstanding that he had not that absolute perfection which belongs only to God, after whose image he was made. Man, as man, was perfect, though a perfect man is far from being divine; and in such human perfection there was no weakness that was evil in the germ and that would naturally, in the course of time, develop into dissimilitude and hostility to God. That which by the growth and unfolding of its own nature becomes manifest as evil, is evil before it attains its growth, and must appear as such to the eye of God, though from human eyes it be concealed until it is matured. But God pronounced man very good. There could not therefore have been any concealed germ of evil in him; for that would not only have been in conflict with the statement that he was made in the image of God, but would have rendered the divine verdict of very good impossible.

Accordingly God is not in any sense the cause of Adam's fall. He did not desire it; He did not so make man as to necessitate it. He is not the author of the sinful thought and deed of our first parents, nor did He, as Calvinists dream, will it because of an ultimate purpose to be subserved. It was in conflict with His will; it was hateful to Him; therefore His curse was upon it. Chemnitz, after quoting Art. 19. of our Augsburg Confession, which declares the cause of sin to be the will of the wicked, justly remarks: "Here must be noted also what is meant when it is said that God is not the cause of sin; namely, that He does not will it, nor approve it, nor move the will to commit it. For some understand the statement that God is not the author of sin in the sense that He did not in the beginning create it, nor have it in Himself, nor produce it through Himself; but that men nevertheless sin by the will of God; and that He works it not only permissively, but also effectively in men and through men, yet He is not on that account to be called the author of sin. Therefore it is added, by way of explanation: author and cause of sin." *Loc. Theol.* I, 146. Quenstedt says with truth and force: "The efficient cause of sin as such is not in any

sense God; that is, God is not and cannot be called the cause or author of sin, neither in part nor in whole, neither directly nor indirectly, neither *per se* nor *per accidens*, whether in the form of Adam's transgression or of any other sin. He is not the cause of sin 1. *Physically* and *per se*, because thus evil or sin has no cause; not 2. *Morally*, by commanding, persuading, or approving, because He does not desire sin, but hates it; not 3. *Accidentally*, or *per accidens*, because with God nothing can happen by chance or fortuitously. This conflicts with the divine wisdom, foreknowledge, goodness, holiness, and independence." "That God is not the author of the fall of Adam in particular is proved: 1. From the history of the creation. Such as God created man He desired him to be and always to remain; but God created him righteous and holy; therefore, etc. 2. From the history of the fall. This enumerates only these causes, to wit, Satan persuading and man yielding to the persuasion. Gen. 3, 1. 3. From the prohibition respecting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. 4. From the imposition of punishment. God can not be the author of that of which He is the avenger, says Fulgentius. 5. From the preparation of the remedy, to wit, through the death of His Son." Theol. Did. Pol. II, 49.

The idea that God, by furnishing the occasion for Adam's sin in prohibiting the use of the fruit of a tree growing in the garden, is the cause of his transgression, has nothing to commend it. God did issue the prohibition: "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2, 17. Of every tree of the garden he should freely eat, but not of this. All things were subject to him, but he was subject to God. Of the fact of his subjection to his Creator and Lord the forbidden tree would ever remind him. It was the sanctuary of Paradise, where Jehovah made His presence and dominion known and felt. It is absurd to assume that sin came from God's proclamation of His authority as Lord. Man was good, and the Lord's will was good. Therefore this will was man's delight. To say that it would have been better if the will of God had not been made known in regard to the trees of Paradise, is a double folly. It is folly to sup-



pose that utter lawlessness is better than laws that possibly may be violated—that it is better to have no preaching than to incur the risk of having the preaching disregarded. It is folly to suppose that man, made in the image of God and therefore loving that which God loved and hating that which God hated, would be more likely to violate his Maker's will if he knew it than if he knew it not. The prohibition did not lead man into temptation. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God can not 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." James 1, 13. 14. God's nature is such that sin can have no enticement to Him; He cannot be tempted of evil. But if there is no possibility of originating evil in Himself, how could He tempt His creature to sin? The evil must first be in Him before it could be used by Him as a lure to others. He could not tempt to sin without being Himself a sinner. But He is the Holy One who tempts no man. The law which He gave in Paradise was a manifestation of the same righteousness which was expressed in the subsequent law of the ten commandments, and, like the latter, was intended to guide in the way of holiness, not to entice to transgression. Evil comes not from the law, but from its transgression. Not He who gives the law sets out the temptation, but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust. Sin has its beginning, not in the Creator and His ordinances, but in the will of the creature.

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil was not planted in Paradise for man's temptation and destruction. It too was good and was meant for a blessing, although it was hedged around by a divine prohibition. "By His law God designed to declare: 1. That He is the Creator and Lord of man, whom man, as the subject and creature, is required to serve and obey; 2. That man, endowed with perfect powers of reason and the integrity of his whole nature, and gifted also with the faculty of free will, was able to serve God; 3. That in this precept a certain exercise of obedience should be presented, which would be most pleasing to God and most useful to man. For if man had continued in holy obedience to this command, in due time he would, without the inter-

vention of death or sorrow, have been transferred from the earthly to the celestial paradise and been confirmed in goodness. This should be stated in response to those who inquire why God gave a precept from which He foresaw that man would depart. He commanded man to observe it; He endowed him with perfect powers that He might observe it; He added the menace of death lest he should refuse to observe it. What could have been done more to His vineyard that the Lord had not done in it? Is. 5, 4." *Gerhard, Loci theol. X. § 5. 6.*

Evil is not a creature of God. It is not a creature at all. It has its rise simply in created spirit, using spiritual powers in contravention of the Holy Spirit's will and purpose. Evil does not come from an eternal spirit of iniquity; nor is it necessitated by the limitations of created spirit or by the nature of matter; nor is it produced, directly or indirectly, by the will or act of God. It is not material, but spiritual. Mere matter is incapable of sin, which is possible only where there is rationality. No creature below man, who is made in the image of God, can be sinful. Guilt is not predicable even of the most intelligent of brutes. It presupposes not only spirit, but personality. Spirit as such is neither good nor bad, as matter in itself is neither good nor bad—there are good spirits and there are bad spirits. Only God is essentially good. "None is good, save one, that is God." Luke 18, 19. Men and angels may be good or may be evil. They are persons who are capable of either. Righteousness and sin have no abstract existence. They are qualities of persons and exist only in the concrete. If there were no evil person there would be no evil in the world. Evil has no substantial existence, and in such view can have no cause. It is not a substance, but a quality that belongs not to matter, but to spirit. God did not make sin. Nobody made it. It is not made. It is a deprivation of that which God made. Of course it must have originated at some time and somewhere. But it at no time and nowhere originated by a divine creation or divine volition. God made all good, including angels and men, and never was it or could it be His will that any of His creatures should be otherwise. Sin had its origin simply in the will of the creature, not in the will of the Creator. God made man

intelligent and free, capable of choosing between good and evil. This implied the possibility of choosing the evil. But that man chose the evil, which God abhors and forbade, and thus corrupted the soul which had been made good, was not God's will or pleasure, directly or indirectly, but man's fault.

It is true, God as the Creator and Preserver of the universe, has something to do with the existence of evil. Nothing can be plainer than that Adam never would have fallen, if God had never created him. Just as manifest is it that the fall never would have taken place, if God, instead of making a living soul after his image, had made a lifeless statue or an irrational animal in the shape which He was pleased to give man. But such plain truths decide nothing in regard to the question before us. No reasonable person will admit the propriety of maintaining that, because God creates a person, He is responsible for all which that person does, or that He must have willed the evil which such a person chooses to perform. There might be some plausibility in such an opinion, if the powers which are used for evil could be applied to no other purpose. It might then be argued that God designed the evil, because He created faculties which have no other purpose then that of effecting evil. But man has no such faculties. The powers which are employed in the commission of sin were designed for noble and holy purposes, and the evil results only from their abuse. Sin is a perversion of good gifts which were imparted for good ends. For such abuse God did not bestow upon man his great powers. On the contrary, their abuse was prohibited, and the right use, in harmony with the will of the Creator, was commanded. God abhors sin, and so made man that he should and could abhor it also. But that implied the necessity of making him free, that he might be, not a good machine, running by a necessity of its construction according to the will of its designer, but a good living person, moving by free determination in harmony with his Creator's good and gracious will. How God desired the powers to be used, which are capable of abuse and which were so unhappily abused in the fall of man, He made known to our first parents, and earnest warnings were given them of the dreadful consequences of disobeying His will and choosing ways of their own. In no way

could it be possible to implicate God, even seemingly, in the sin of Adam, but in that of charging the free creature's acts upon the Creator. Such an imputation is, however, as unreasonable as it is unrighteous and blasphemous.

What God has to do with the wicked actions of men is usually explained with some care by our theologians, in order that it might be rendered apparent to all that God is not the cause or author of evil, even though there would be no possibility of committing it without Him. If He had not made and did not preserve us, we could do evil as little as good. When Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, they used powers which God gave them, and without which the sin could not and would not have been committed. "Must not God," asks Hutter, "be regarded the cause of sin, when He grants the power of motion to those who perform wicked deeds? By no means," he answers. "For, in the first place, there is no conflict between these two things, that a being has been created and sustained by God, and that the wicked will of the devil and of man are the cause of sin. Then, there is also a very great difference between a motion in itself and the sin which adheres to it. For a man's soul is undoubtedly the immediate cause of his ability to extend his hand and grasp objects with it; but the remote and first cause is God Himself, who created and fitted the soul for performing such actions by means of the organs of the body. But when a thief extends his hand towards a forbidden object, the impropriety of his motion is not to be ascribed to God, but to the perverted will of the thief." Comp. Art. 8, 6. "It is astonishing," says Gerhard, "that the long-suffering of God should sustain the members, and preserve strength and motion, even in the performance of those actions in which He is treated with contempt. But this takes place through the intercession of the Son, and such goodness of God invites to repentance. For if we should be destroyed immediately when we sin, we could not return to repentance, Rom. 2, 4. But if man, according to his impenitent heart, treasures up the wrath of God, he is sustained, so that to the glory of divine justice God, by means of punishments, may show the greatness of His wrath against sin, Ex. 19, 16. An accurate distinction, however, must be made be-

tween a motion or deed in itself and its imperfection. A deed, as a deed, is not sin; otherwise all deeds would be sins; but the imperfection and defect in a deed is sin. But this imperfection or defect is not from a universal, but a proximate cause, namely, the will of man. Thomas II. 79, Art. I. says: 'The effect of a second cause, inasmuch as it proceeds from that which is subordinate to a first cause, is referred to the first cause; but the defect of a second cause, inasmuch as it is a deviation from the order of a first cause, is not referred to the first. Augustine in *de perf. just.* illustrates this by the example of limping, which does not arise from the moving power of the mind, but from the dislocation of the leg." Loc. VII. § 77. 78. As we could not live a single moment nor make a single movement without the sustaining power of God, which is not withdrawn from us when we abuse the faculties of our minds or the strength of our bodies, He concurs in our wicked works also, not in the defect, but in producing the effect,—not in the form, but in the material. "We distinguish between the action and the *ἀταξία* of the action—between the effect and the defect. The Supreme Being concurs with the actions and the effects, but not with the *ἀταξία* of the actions; for, although the universal cause influences the entire action of the particular causes, yet of the *ἀταξία* and evil, as such, if it adhere to an action, there is no other cause than a creature, inasmuch as in acting it departs from its own rule and the order of the First Agent, God, and applies the divine concurrence otherwise than it should. Hence we say in the thesis that God influences the actions and effects, as such, of second causes, i. e. as the actions and effects are in their entity or substance, to the exclusion of the idea of the defects and faults, which have no entity and which arise from a deficiency of the causes in acting. In short, God influences sinful actions with respect to their entity and natural form, not with respect to their deformity and moral form." Quenst. Theol. I. p. 545, 11. Hollaz writes: "With the formal *ἀνομία* or *ἀταξία* of actions morally evil God undoubtedly does not concur by any positive influence, because wickedness is a defect and privation, not proceeding from God who is most perfect, in whom no defect can occur, but the defect must be in the human will failing

in its action. But God concurs with the remote, not the proximate material of actions morally evil. The former is an indeterminate act; the latter is an act determinate and applied to a prohibited thing. When Eve, for example, extended her hand to the forbidden fruit, there were two acts: first, the extension of the hand; secondly, the extension applied to the forbidden fruit. The former act is said to be the remote material; the latter is called the proximate material. With the latter God does not concur, because His concurrence is general and indeterminate, and therefore the determination to this or that object is not from God, as from the first and universal cause, but from the second and particular cause." *Ex. Th. de prov. qu.* 17. These distinctions are important, as the mind's inquiries should so far as possible be met and satisfied. God made Adam and Eve, and furnished them with all the power which they possessed. It was strength which He supplied that was used by them when they sinned. But He supplied it for quite another purpose than that of sinning. That was its abuse, which God had not only not willed, but which He had expressly forbidden. Sin originated in the will of the creature, in opposition to the holy will of the Creator.

It is in full harmony with the teaching of Holy Scripture when our Confession says: "Touching the cause of sin they teach, that although God doth create and preserve nature, yet the cause of sin is the will of the wicked; to wit, of the devil and ungodly men; which will, God not aiding, turneth itself from God, as Christ saith, 'When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own.' John 8, 44." Augsb. Conf. Art. 19. Some have endeavored to render it plausible that in these words of our Confession that is tacitly admitted which is ostensibly denied; namely, that God is after all the author of sin. A leader in the modern movement to "reform" the Lutheran Church by rendering it Calvinistic declared at the colloquium in Milwaukee that our first parents fell because God withdrew His supporting hand, and this article was cited in proof. But that article would contradict itself, if that were its meaning. God is *not* the cause of sin, though He does create and preserve nature; but if sin arises from the cessation of divine support in holiness, it would; to say the

least, be as accurate to attribute the causality of sin to God as to Satan or man. Man was made good, how then did evil originate in his soul? If we interpret the "non adjuvante Deo" as furnishing the reason why man did not remain good, so that our confession would teach man's fall to be the necessary consequence of God's will to let him fall, man could by no possibility have prevented the fatal catastrophe, and original righteousness with its freedom of will is merely a meaningless phrase. Then God's will alone decided whether man should stand or fall, and the result shows how the question was decided. In that case man's nature was not created "very good," but tended helplessly to evil and sank into sin by its inherent character as soon as God ceased to restrain it by His power. Such an interpretation smites the whole anthropology of the Lutheran Church in the face. The "non adjuvante Deo" of our Confession does not exhibit the cause of Adam's fall. "The cause of sin is the will of the wicked; to wit, of the devil and ungodly men." It has no cause but that will. To say that that will was made wicked by God, or that it was so created that just as soon as it was exercised as a personal faculty of the creature, not as a mere mechanical instrument of the Creator, it must sin, is to contradict the very doctrine which the article was meant to confess. It makes God the cause and man merely the agent or organ of the evil which he had as little power to originate as to resist. The entire scope and context of the article render it manifest that sin was not created and did not lie in the purpose and plan of the Creator, but that the creature, possessed of liberty which implies the possibility of a wrong choice, freely turned away from God. Man's free will did this, "God not aiding," neither by concurring in the form of the act, that is in the sinfulness of the deed, though it was only by His created power that the deed which was sinful could be committed, nor by interposing His omnipotence to prevent the exercise of power which He had made subject to the creature's free will. God did not aid in the accomplishment of the evil, which originated in the will of the wicked. Carpzov says: "*Quae non adjuvante Deo*, to wit, physically or morally. 1. *Physically* God does not aid, because He in no way concurs with the

defect of the second cause, and although He sustains the will which averts itself, nevertheless He does not aid it so far as it turns away and is at fault, nor does He predetermine it, that it should not be able to go astray. 2. *Morally* also He does not aid, because He does not will nor approve the sin, and sin is in no way the object of the divine will." Isag. in lib. symb. 502. The German text seems to favor a different explanation. That says that the cause of sin is the will of the devil and of the ungodly, "which immediately, when God withdraws His hand, turns from God to the evil." But this does not say that God took away His gracious support, in consequence of which withdrawal Adam was necessitated to fall. He did not change His thoughts of peace toward our race, graciously upholding them in holiness for a while, then by withdrawing His gracious help bringing on their fall. He only did not use His power to prevent what the wicked will had devised. The utmost that could be found in the language used in the Confession is that, when the will of our first parents was turned from God, He withdrew the gracious hand which had hitherto supported them, and left them to their choice. But this is more than the doctrine taught in the article and the language of the clause in question warrant, though even taking it in this sense it does not express what Calvinizing Lutherans would foist into the words. "The circumstance," says Luthardt, "that the first expression—*Deo non adjuvante*—was not, like the other, transferred from the Marburg and Schwabach Articles, must forbid our accepting it in a sense in which it would include the Supralapsarian theory. Furthermore, it is a question, how the words themselves are to be exegetically understood. They may be regarded as stating the attending circumstance; namely, that God does not aid in the sin, so that they serve fully to exclude the divine causality in committing the sin. Or, they may be taken as designating the divine presupposition in man's turning away from God, as the German copy reads, 'when God withdrew His hand.' In this case it says no more than that God leaves the sinful will to itself, so that it loses its communion with God. But then He leaves it to itself only when it wills to be sinful." Lehre v. freien Willen, p. 164. Philippi, the greatest of modern Lutheran dogma-



ticians, says: "The *non adjuvante Deo* does not say that the fall was the designed result of the withdrawal of God's gracious assistance. In that case God would still be *causa peccati* (the cause of sin), though it were only *causa remotior* (the more remote cause), whilst the 19. Art. of the Augustana is directed against that opinion. The *non adjuvante Deo* says only that the gracious divine aid, without which it is impossible for man to stand, does not compel him to stand and to persevere. If he wills to fall, the grace which has thus far supported him withdraws, and the fall ensues. The will to fall precedes, if not temporally, at least causally, the withdrawal of divine grace; but it could not, without such withdrawal, accomplish the act of falling." Kirchl. Gtbl. 4, 62. The idea is not that man's will could not originate evil so long as God's will was not that it should be originated, and that therefore the introduction of evil was wholly a matter of God's will, man necessarily falling as soon as God ceased to hold him up; but it is this, that when evil was originated by the will in its self-moving power, the hand of God, by which its execution might have been restrained, was withdrawn and the act was unhindered by God's omnipotence. "By the hand of God," says Dr. Krauth, "here is not meant the moral power by which He sways the will to good, but simply His repressive external power, and the meaning is, that the sinful will consummates itself in sinful act, wherever it is not repressed by the providence of God." Cons. Ref. 374. Our Confession denies that the origin of evil is in any way traceable to God, and maintains that it has its source in the will of the creature, who made a bad use of the good gift of liberty.

Whilst evil came into existence not by divine creation, but by the will of the creature, it did not have its prime origin in man. Angels first fell, and became agents in compassing the fall of man. The external principal cause of our first parents' sin is Satan. "Ye are of your father the devil," says our Lord to the Jews who rejected Him, "and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar and the father of it." John 8, 44. This

makes plain what human philosophy has endeavored in vain from its own resources to discover and to understand. The devil abode not in the truth of God, in the knowledge and love of which he was created, but turned away to lying vanities. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own, not of that which God had created in him, but of that which he had originated by his own will, and which was therefore his own, not God's. After his fall there was no truth in him. He is a liar, and the father of the lies which curse the earth. By lies he seduced man in Paradise and brought death into the world. He was thus a murderer from the beginning. "He said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?" Gen. 3, 1. The lie is insinuated that God could not have said it, notwithstanding the divine words which plainly do say it. When Eve declares that "of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die," he becomes bolder, encouraged by the hearing which his false insinuation has received, and utters the lie openly and directly, "Ye shall not die." Gen. 3, 3. 4. The result was dreadful beyond expression. Our first parents, turning away from the truth of God, believed the devil's lie, and death came. "The devil is the first author of sin; first, because by his own free will he turned himself from God; and, secondly, because he is the cause of sin in the human race by deceiving and seducing Eve in her incorrupt state, so that she departed from God." Chemn. Loc. Th. I. p. 148. The sinful thought was not born in Eve's heart independently of Satan's crafty enticements, nor was it induced by any external violence, against which she was safe in her internal holiness. The devil succeeded by external persuasives. Evil originated primarily in the free personal will of Satan, and he, using the serpent as his instrument, was the principal cause of its coming into existence in man. "The serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty." 1 Cor. 11, 3. "The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world." Rev. 12, 9.

But this does not imply that, when evil had once come into being through Satan's apostasy, the fall of man had become inevitable through the introduction of a cause of which

it would be the necessary effect. Sin is an attribute of mind, not of matter; and there was no such natural relationship between the devil and man that what existed in the former must by identity of nature exist in the latter also. They were not of the same nature. Satan was not human, man was not angelic. Not even the whole angelic nature was corrupted by the fall of Satan and his angels, but only angelic persons. Angels stood in no such relation to Satan as that in which man stands to Adam, so that sin could be propagated among them. None of them were born of Satan, and none of them was created sinful. Evil could arise in them only through their own will. Only in this way also could it infect man. There was no more necessity for man's fall, after the fall of Satan, than there was for the defection of the angels who remained in their estate of holiness. Satan could not be the internal and direct efficient cause of sin in man. That was the will of our first parents. No satanic power could move that as physical forces move matter. Only if the human will, in the exercise of its liberty, should yield to the persuasion and seduction of the devil, would sin have an existence in the human soul as it had an existence in the satanic spirit. Man yielded; man consented to the wicked suggestion; man became wicked himself by following in the footsteps of the devil. Persuasion was brought to bear upon man, but he fell, as Satan fell, by the abuse of his own liberty. "The internal and directly efficient cause," says Quenstedt, "is the intellect and will of the first man, not from any internal defect, which did not exist in the state before the fall, but *per accidens*, wandering and turning away from God on account of external seduction. The regulative principle by which man is accustomed to be moved in action is the intellect, the imperative principle is the will, not excepting the desires and sensitive appetites. After the devil has brought temptation to bear upon all these powers,—for to the intellect he proposed falsehood under the semblance of truth, to the will he presented evil in the guise of good, and the desires and appetites he enticed by a material object and its pleasantness and sweetness—man sinned inchoatively by wicked apprehension and judgment concerning the word of God and of the devil, and consummatively by a wicked choice

of and appetency for the object proposed and by performing the act. But man did not fall on account of the absence or denial of any special grace, nor on account of the presence of any internal weakness and natural defect, but through the accidental abuse of his liberty, whilst his will yielded to the external persuasion and seduction of the devil, and interrupted the gracious influence of God. The fall might not have ensued, though all had taken place which the serpent is said to have done; it followed not without the accession of the most free determination of the human will." Theol. Did. Pol. II. p. 52. The blame of human sin can not be referred in any sense to God; but neither can it be imputed exclusively to Satan. Man is himself at fault. What is said of man subsequently is true also of the fall: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help." Hos. 13, 9.

Satan was successful first in misleading Eve. But the fall was not yet accomplished when she ate the forbidden fruit. It would be a useless speculation to inquire whether Adam would have fallen if the woman had not transgressed and become a subordinate instrument in misleading the man, or what the results would have been if the latter had not yielded to the seductions of the former. We have no means of knowing this. But the Scriptures, while they do attach special blame to Eve, also trace the disaster of our race to Adam as its head. "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her, and he did eat." Gen. 3, 6. Her own experience as to the immediate consequences of her act was used as an incentive in addition to the persuasives which Satan had employed upon her and which she probably used to overcome his scruples. The apostle, in setting forth the divinely ordained headship of the man, lays stress upon the fact that the woman was first in transgression. "I suffer not a woman to teach," he writes, "nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." 1 Tim. 2, 12-14. Two reasons are given why the woman should not usurp authority over the man, but be

in subjection. In the first place, Adam was first formed out of the dust of the earth; afterwards Eve was formed, and, in token of her subjection, not out of the dust, but out of Adam, to be a help meet to him. Secondly, her exercise of controlling influence over the man and his submission to it was disastrous in the beginning of human history. She was first deceived, not he. "These words," says Quenstedt, referring to the passage cited, "are not to be understood of the seduction in itself, but of its mode and order. Adam was not seduced first, so that he was the cause of Eve's transgression, but Eve was seduced first, because she was the cause of Adam's transgression. Adam was seduced by the devil not immediately, but by means of the woman's persuasion. Seduction is either external, through the address of the serpent from without, or internal, through the suggestion of Satan from within. In the former sense Adam was not seduced, but only Eve." *Theol. Did. Pol.* II. p. 53. But it is erroneous to infer from this, as Bellarmine and others have done, that Adam was not seduced by Satan at all. His object was accomplished only when Adam fell, and as the liar and murderer from the beginning he would leave no means un-employed to attain his nefarious end. That was attained when Adam also ate the forbidden fruit. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5, 12. It was in Adam's nature and life that humanity was bound up and represented, and it was in Adam's transgression that the fall of our race was effected.

That transgression was by no means the light matter which some are disposed to regard it. The mere act of eating the fruit of a tree which grew in the beautiful garden and which was among the creatures pronounced good by their Creator, seems to many an offence not sufficiently grave to be attended by consequences so vast and so terrible. But such persons measure sin by a false standard and misapprehend the import of the whole transaction. It was not a mere physical act whose character could be estimated by its immediate effects in the visible world. The prohibition was the expression of the Maker's will; subordination to that will was the natural and normal condition of the creature

made in the image of the Creator; the forbidden tree was the sanctuary in Paradise around which man's happy subjection to his Lord should find its appropriate manifestation; disobedience was the abandonment of the divine image, the separation from God and the good, the lapse into that abnormality in which the creature, declaring himself independent of Him, in whom alone he can attain his being's end, is without God and hope in the world. The sin was the gravest that could be conceived and the consequence was dreadful beyond utterance. It consisted in unbelief, in selfishness, in inordinate desire, the result of which was the prohibited act. Man abandoned the truth of God and believed the devil's lie. God had said: "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it; for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Gen. 2, 17. Satan insinuated that God issued no such prohibition and denied that death would result from its violation. The truth of God was rejected, the falsehood of Satan was accepted. The liar's word was believed, and the word of the God of truth was regarded as a lie. Man turned away from the love in which he was designed to live and be happy, and gave himself up to the selfishness which is its antithesis. "God doth know," says the murderous fiend, "that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Gen. 3, 5. The creature would aspire to something more exalted than the image of God in which he was made, and was moved to seek the selfish end, though it offended Him whose name is Love. The forbidden fruit "was pleasant to the eyes," and the heart gave way to inordinate desires. When the soul was turned away from God, the outward act of transgression must follow in due course. It is but the external consummation of an internal evil of direst import. "When lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James 1, 15.

And death came, as God had declared that it surely would. God had been rejected, His authority set aside, His whole law violated, and the threatened penalty must ensue. "The day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." This death is threefold. "By death was meant," writes Hollaz,

“spiritual, bodily, and eternal death. *Spiritual death*, the root of all evil, is the immediate consequence of the fall, or of the first sin. For in that moment in which man turned his heart from the divine law, he deprived himself of spiritual union with God, who is the life of the soul, and thus deserted by God, he died spiritually. This spiritual death brought with it the loss of the divine image, the total corruption of our entire human nature, and the loss of free will in things spiritual. *The death of the body* follows spiritual death, or the death of the Spirit, embracing all the diseases and miseries surrounding him from without. To this pertain also the hard and burdensome labor to which man is subjected, Gen. 3, 17, and the painful parturition of the woman, Gen. 3, 16. Although our first parents did not die bodily as soon as they fell, still from that moment they were doomed to death, since this is the wages of sin, Rom. 6, 23. *Eternal death* is a perpetual exclusion from the blissful enjoyment of God, joined with excruciating and everlasting torments, which, according to the threatening of the divine law, Adam and all his posterity must have endured, had not Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the human race and the Restorer of the lost image of God, interposed to save us.” *Ex. Theol. Aer. II. cap. 3, qu. 9.*

Man is a living soul still. He is not dead in any such sense that he has ceased to be a body endowed with sensation and reason. He has not become a lifeless thing, like the ground out of which he was formed. To that the body returns, but from that the soul was never taken. It does not die, as the body dies. Spiritual death is not in conflict with a natural immortality of the soul. The wicked live forever in hell; spiritually dead and enduring eternal death, they have still a life which experiences the torments of the second death. It is the spiritual life that was lost, not the soul's continuance in conscious existence. It is in that regard that man is said to be “dead in trespasses and sins.” Eph. 2, 1. That does not mean that he has no longer a soul, or that that soul is not in its nature a living thing. Death is not predicated of it simply and absolutely, which would be identical with declaring it to be annihilated. The subject of which death is predicated is alive unto sin and its misery. But it

is spiritually dead, separated from the blissful source of life and love, and thus deprived of that life which man was made to live and in which alone the powers of his soul can be satisfied and happy. He has a life still, but it is not the blessed life which God designed us to live in fellowship with Himself and the enjoyment of His perpetual presence. It is a life in which we are dead in regard to all that is spiritual, with no power to do and none to enjoy anything lying in that domain. That death ensued at once when the divine command was violated. And corporeal death followed soon—commenced its work immediately and soon accomplished it. The fall, as it brought the separation from the life of God on which the perpetuity of the bodily life depended, introduced the powers which produce dissolution. Bodily death is unnatural; man shrinks from it in terror—a terror which is overcome only through faith in the Redeemer who has brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel. Man possessed immortality in regard to his body also until sin came, and death by sin. Nor can there be anything else in store after bodily death for those who have till then remained spiritually dead, but eternal banishment from God. An eternity of torment is a terrible thing upon which to fix the mind, but it is the just judgment of God upon sin and the necessary consequence of spiritual death. Away from God, who is the fountain of light and the source of life and blessedness, there can be only darkness and death. The fall of man is a fact of most terrible import, and unspeakable is the mercy of God in sending us a Savior to deliver us from its dreadful consequences.

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### SAMUEL HUBER AND HIS DOCTRINE CONCERNING ELECTION.

Samuel Huber was a Swiss, a native of Burgdorf, now an industrial town of about 5,000 inhabitants, to the northeast from Berne. His father, Peter Huber, was school teacher at that place. Samuel Huber was born about a year after the death of Luther, 1547. At first his father had been an adherent of Zwingli, but afterwards espoused the truth as found



in the Lutheran Church. This, of course, also had an influence upon his son Samuel. And thus we find the latter as minister at his birthplace in a hot controversy with the Reformed ministers of Berne about the Lord's Supper. The result of this was that he was deposed from his charge, imprisoned for some time, and finally banished from the country. In the last stages of this controversy the doctrine of election had also become a bone of contention between the two opposing parties. But much as we in general must commend the doctrinal position of Huber, we cannot but look with distrust upon the character he displayed as a defender of Lutheran orthodoxy. He proved himself to be of a quarrelsome, stubborn, and vindictive nature. And this did surely not forebode any good for the future.

After he had to leave Berne he went to Tuebingen, already then for a century the university of Suabia or Wuerttemberg. This was in the year 1588, eight years after the first publication of the Book of Concord. As the attempt of Duke Lewis of Wuerttemberg to obtain the permission of the Bernese government that Huber might return proved futile, Huber staid in Wuerttemberg and was appointed pastor in Derendingen, a village of now a little more than 700 inhabitants in the neighborhood of Tuebingen. Of course he had first to subscribe to the Book of Concord. He now composed some polemical writings against the Calvinists and the Papists, and was looked upon as not only a very zealous, but also a very able defender of the biblical truth confessed in the Symbolical Books of our Lutheran Church. Still there were some fears even then that he still clung to an unfortunate expression first uttered by him in a disputation between himself and the Bernese ministers in 1588, viz., that election or predestination is not particular, but universal, including all men, unbelievers as well as believers. But it was hoped that only his expressions were sometimes a little extreme, he being prompted by the desire to refute the Calvinists as energetically as possible. Once when he had openly expressed his disapprobation of the doctrine of election as it was explained by the Lutheran theologians at the university, he was even cited before the consistory. There, at last, he acted so humbly and modestly, even begging the pardon of all whom he might have offended by

his inconsiderate expressions, and promising to be more careful in future, that everybody was perfectly satisfied. In 1592 he received and accepted a call from Wittenberg in Saxony to be Professor of Theology in the same university that had become renowned by the teachings of the great reformer. Before departing he had all his writings collected into one volume and dedicated it to the theological faculty at Tuebingen as a token of thorough fellowship in faith and doctrine. And at the wish and the desire of the faculty, who wanted to make assurance doubly sure, he added to this dedication the following confession in regard to election: "I have thought it desirable also to add this, because I agree with the entire confession of this Church of Wuerttemberg and its teachers, professors as well as ministers, in all things, without any exception, and also in particular with respect to the article of predestination I agree with that doctrine which the reverend and illustrious Stephanus Gerlach, Doctor and Professor of Socrosanct Theology, has published this year in the theses entitled, Concerning the Eternal Salvation of those that are to be saved. Wherefore as well in regard to the definition itself as to the entire doctrine of election I do not find anything wanting, and I acknowledge a firm harmony, which by the grace of God I desire to guard and preserve as the greatest and most efficacious means of maintenance for the Church, and to bring this about I will by the grace of God use all my powers. Therefore I now, regarding my body, depart to Wittenberg, but will always be present as far as my heart and the bond of union is concerned, and thus I commend this Church and School, where I have sojourned for some time, to Jesus Christ. Samuel Huber."

As Huber had formerly taken offence at those very theses of Dr. Gerlach, to which he now without any reservation subscribed, the Lutheran theologians at Tuebingen could, of course, not in any way object to his being called to Wittenberg. But it was not long before he proved to the Church that he either had been a hypocrite when he wrote the above confession, or that he was an extremely fickle and unreliable person. In December, 1592, he arrived in Wittenberg; and already in the beginning of 1593 he began to defend his old heterodox opinion over against the Lutheran doctrine of his

colleagues, Polycarpus Leyser, Aegidius Hunnius and Solomon Gesner, all three representative teachers of our Church. At first the controversy was carried on in private and in an amicable way. But Huber did not yield. On the contrary, he began publicly to explain and defend his erroneous views in polemical writings against the Calvinists, in his lectures to the theological students, in his sermons, and also in a public disputation. At length he was persuaded to renounce his doctrine and to subscribe to the Formula of Concord. This was the condition of his becoming a Doctor of Theology. He took this degree August 23, 1593. But shortly after this he, in opposition to theses prepared by Aegidius Hunnius, claimed that in baptism all those who are baptized, even hypocrites, are regenerated, and that election pertains to all men, also to Mohammedans and Gentiles, and that all men without exception are justified. He even had the audacity to appeal to the Wuerttemberg theologians for the orthodoxy of his doctrine. When Hunnius held his public disputation concerning baptism, Huber instigated a student to oppose the former in a violent manner and to defend his, Huber's view. On the first of December of the same year his colleagues sent two ministers to him to persuade him, if possible, to settle the matter peaceably. But he would not consent to any kind of conference or colloquy, but wanted to debate about the points in dispute with his colleagues only, in the presence of the theological students. On the 6th of the same month he very meekly asked for a fraternal settlement of the difficulty; but after his colleagues had agreed to this and sent him some articles of agreement, he, instead of answering them, dictated a lengthy refutation of the same to the students who were beneficiaries of the Electorate. On the 22d Huber was ordered by the Court to keep silent until the matter should be investigated, and on the 4th of February, 1594, a committee consisting of three theologians and the same number of representatives of the state inquired into the matter. In the main their labor was in vain. Huber, however, renounced his errors in regard to the regeneration of hypocrites in baptism and to universal justification. As he did not keep quiet, but rather used all possible means to spread his false doctrines, two other committees were appointed and met, the first in June, the

second in August. The final result was that Huber was deposed from his professorship, and when he, although 200 thaler had been paid him to enable him to leave the country, nevertheless remained in Wittenberg and tried to gain adherents among the students, he was ordered to leave immediately. This took place in January, 1595. Now he traveled about, at first in Northern, then in Southern Germany. Sometimes there seemed to be a hope of reaching an agreement with him. But his dishonesty and stubbornness brought all these attempts to nought. They show, however, that he upon the whole was treated in a fair and impartial way. After having been banished from Wuerttemberg, Berlin, and again from Saxony, he at last found a sort of resting-place in Osterwick, a town between Halberstadt and Braunschweig, where he lived with his son-in-law. Here he died in the year 1624. And this also was the end of the whole controversy.

The above summary of the *life* of Huber has principally been taken from *Herzog's Real-Encyclopaedie*, Vol. VI, Article Huber, and from *J. G. Walch's Einleitung in die Religions-Streitigkeiten in der ev.-luth. Kirche* Vol. I, pp. 176 sqq. Compare also *Schroeckh*, *Kirchengeschichte seit der Reformation* IV, 661 ff.

Let us now look a little more closely at Huber's *doctrine*. According to Leyser's Bericht p. 13 Huber in Derendingen began the controversy by opposing and rejecting the following definition of election, as given by Dr. Stephanus Gerlach, Professor of Theology at Tuebingen, which definition Leyser characterizes as in accord with the Word of God and the Book of Concord: "The Election of God is such a counsel and purpose, that our faithful heavenly Father, from mere mercy, in His son Christ, in eternity ordained all those to eternal life, of whom He according to His foreknowledge knows that they will repent and perseveringly believe; whom then He in His own time calls by the preaching of the Gospel, endows with true faith, justifies, or by regeneration makes new men, that they may be holy and irreproachable before Him, and finally also glorifies, in order that the glory of His grace may be the greater." Huber, according to the same authority, on the contrary, defined Election as "the counsel of God, that He in Christ has loved the whole human race and

through Him elected and ordained it to life eternal." He maintained strenuously that Election took place without any regard to faith or unbelief. Therefore he, of course, denied in opposition to Aegid. Hunnius, that faith is the (instrumental) cause of Election, just as it is of justification, and as already Jacob Andreae at the Moempelgart Colloquium in 1586 admitted that it was regarded and called by the Lutheran theologians, and held that it could be rightly called. Those passages of Scripture that show election to be particular and based on the merits of Christ as apprehended by foreseen faith, he interpreted so as to suit his idea. For example, when we read Eph. 1, 4: "According as He hath chosen *us* in Him before the foundation of the world," he declared the word "*us*" here to be equal to "*all men.*" He maintained that all men without any exception have been elected, but that only the minority avail themselves of this universal election, just as the majority of mankind do not avail themselves of universal redemption. He therefore parallelized election and redemption. When St. Paul writes 2. Thess. 2, 13: "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth," Huber explained this as pertaining to those who have utilized universal election for themselves by the sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth, whilst others despise and reject that whereto they have just as well been elected. Huber also expressed his view in this way: "Faith is required in order to apply election to one's self, which takes place in time; but it is not necessary in the decree of election, which was made in eternity."

The consequence of this was and must be that Huber taught an election that was not only universal or comprehending all men, but also mutable or subject to change; in other words, that the majority of those who have been elected to life eternal nevertheless will be eternally damned. Here is an instance of his declaration in this regard: "I confess that when now such universal merciful work of God pertaining to all men comes to men, is taught, announced, and preached (as Christ Himself has commanded it to be preached in all the world), that then men by belief and unbelief divide themselves into two parties. One of those parts is obedient

and follows that to which they have been elected and called by God, and thus by faith obtain whereto they have been chosen in Christ; that is, they obtain life eternal, become holy, blessed, children and heirs of God in Christ, by whom, as Paul says, God has predestinated us unto the adoption of children. The other part, and alas the greater one, will not hear the Gospel, or even if they hear it, they despise it and perhaps forthwith persecute it besides, and thus by their own wilfulness and fault they do not follow after and try to obtain that whereto they by God through His dear Son have been destined, ordained, and chosen no less than the others. And this is the reason that this part, comprising all impenitent sinners, whether they be Jews, Turks, Germans, Italians, Frenchmen, and are called Christians or not, all together will perish and be damned, and as they die in unbelief, so will they be eternally damned and lost." And this he thought to prove by passages of Holy Writ such as the following: Ex. 32, 32: "Yet now, if Thou wilt forgive their sin—; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written." Psalm 69, 28: "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous." Rev. 3, 5: "He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before His angels." 22, 19: "And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city and from the things which are written in this book." Also of Judas Iscariot he held that he had belonged to the elect, but by his own fault had not attained to the benefits of election, because Christ says John 17, 12: "These that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition."

What, now, may have been the *πρωτον ψευδος*, or fundamental error of Huber? Beyond any doubt this, that he did not distinguish between the *voluntas antecedens* and the *voluntas consequens*, the antecedent and the consequent will of God. Of course he knew this distinction and was reminded of it by his opponents, but he rejected it. Concerning this Leyser in his Bericht p. 10 sqq. has the following: "Whenever the old distinction used in the Church of Christ since many years,

viz. between *voluntas antecedens* and *voluntas consequens*, was mentioned, that is, when we wanted to show how both classes of Scriptural passages are to be reconciled, so as not to be compelled to admit two opposing wills in God, namely, on the one hand, when God says that He does not desire the death of the sinner, but that he should turn from his way: or, that He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance; or, that He will have all men to be saved; and on the other hand, when it is written, that God hath appointed a day, in which He will judge the world in righteousness; or that He in flaming fire will take vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:—he (Huber) denied this distinction in the strongest terms, and upbraided us, as if we were inventing a God in whom yea were nay, and nay yea. And in this way, as far as he was concerned, he did away with the just and eternal judgment of God against the impious, unbelievers and damned, or at any rate perverted it in such a way that the judgment of God did not take place according to His *will*, but only according to His permission (*nach seiner Permission und Verhängnis*), as it is to be seen in his *Apol. Conf.* p. 225.

And we may well marvel that Huber cannot get this distinction between the antecedent and consequent will of God into his head, when even every peasant, even the most simple one, can understand it.

A farmer who plants an orchard has not the intention to plant trees for heating the stove; but according to his *antecedent* or first will he wills that all trees and plants may thrive, so that he may have his pleasure in them. If, however, he does not succeed, if the trees die and the plants wither, then it is his *consequent* will that he cuts them down, tears them up, and throws them into the fire.

A prince gives statutes and laws to his subjects, and it is his will, his *voluntas antecedens*, that all of them, if they obey and keep such commandments, may expect and obtain from him kindness and everything good. But if they are unruly and refractory, and wilfully despise and transgress those commandments, the *voluntas consequens* follows, that wills that he punish them soundly and thus avenge the law on them.

An honest man who enters the married life has the *antecedent* and firm will that all the children that God may bless him with, shall inherit his property. But if the children be ill-bred and cause their father nothing but vexation, the *voluntas consequens* will be that he disinherits his ill-mannered children and punishes them severely.

Such a spiritual farmer, prince, and father is our Lord and God in heaven. According to His *antecedent*, first, universal and earnest will He wills that all His trees that He has planted in His paradise on earth may thrive, so that He may find pleasure and joy in them; wills that all men whom He has made His subjects live in accordance with His commandments, in order that they may enjoy His mercy; wills that all the children of man whom He as Father Almighty has created be obedient to Him and trust Him, so that they may inherit His eternal gifts. But since most of these trees decay, most of these subjects transgress His commandments, most children of men are and remain ill-bred and unbelieving: there follows the *voluntas consequens* and this firm will of God that He cuts down such dry, deformed and barren trees and burns them in the fire; that He cause these disobedient subjects which would not that He should reign over them to be brought hither and to be slain; and that He at last destroy and extirpate these mischievous children and this wicked seed.

And these two wills of God are not opposed or contrary to each other, so that yea were nay and nay were yea in God; but the one is subordinate to the other, so that with those that believe in Christ, yea be and remain yea in Christ, that is, that they be saved eternally; but that with those that do not accept Christ, nay also be and remain nay eternally, namely that they do not inherit salvation, but shall be damned. For God does not desire the life or the death of any man absolutely, may man do what he pleases; but God has instituted a certain order in Christ Jesus and revealed the same through His Word, as this above has been explained from the Christian Book of Concord. He, therefore, who follows this order and apprehends and holds Christ Jesus in true faith, he will be saved according to the will of God, as well according to His antecedent as to His consequent will. But he who despises



the order of God, does not accept Christ in faith, he will be damned also according to the will of God, but according to His consequent will, which Damascenus (about 750) also calls "a giving way" or a "yielding" (*παραχώρησιν*), although he according to the antecedent will of God, or according to His will of good pleasure, also could have been saved, if he had complied as he ought with the will of God and His revealed order."

That Huber's denial and rejection of this distinction between the antecedent and consequent will of God, and the necessary result of this, his confounding the *dilectio* and *electio*, the (universal) love and the (particular) election of God, was his fundamental error, is also the opinion of Walch and of Kromayer. The former says in the work cited above, p. 181 sq.: "From all the circumstances we see that Huber's opinion was better than his expressions. In the beginning his intention was good: he wanted to oppose the error of the Calvinists in regard to a totally particular grace of God. But he forthwith made the mistake that he used the word election, and did not correctly distinguish between the grace, love and call on the one, and the election of God on the other hand with respect to our salvation, and that he neglected the same distinction between the antecedent and consequent will of God. For although we must say that the grace and mercy of God pertain to each and every man, and that God according to His antecedent will, so to say, precedes the faith and unbelief of man, heartily desires the salvation of all men, and consequently offers His grace to each and every man and calls him to the Gospel: election proper, as the Scriptures use this word, nevertheless is something particular and belongs to the consequent will of God, so that God, after he had seen that certain men would remain in faith unto their end, then elected them to life eternal. Consequently election only pertains to the believers. It presupposes the faith of him who has been elected; and because God can not fail in His foreknowledge in regard to the faith and the unbelief of men, it necessarily follows that such election must be immutable. In regard to Huber, if he wanted to maintain the expression: 'God has from eternity elected all men to eternal life,' everything would depend upon what he understood by elec-

tion. And if his constant declaration had been this, that he did not understand by election anything else but the universal grace and love of God, this would not have been an error in itself, and his mistake would only have consisted in this, that he used the word election in another sense than Holy Writ and the theologians do. But as he not only persisted in his opinion, tried to defend the same, and, as is usual in such controversies, fell upon other offensive expressions, but also tried to adducé for his opinion such passages of the Scriptures as speak of external election, inasmuch as it is distinguished from the grace, love and call of God: it can not be denied that this could not but cause scruples and had to be looked upon as a real error."

Kromayer in his *Theologia Positivo-polemica* P. II, p. 170 f. says: "Before the publication of the Formula of Concord also some orthodox theologians, e. g. Brentius, as Dr. Stephanus Gerlach says in his first disputation concerning Huberianism, taught an universal election, but without giving offence, taking, no doubt, by a misuse of language (*καταχρηστικῶς*) the word election as equal to love. Whence the Formula of Concord says in (the beginning of) the 11. Article that dissimilar expressions have been used by teachers of our Church concerning this article, but without giving offence. For there is no doubt that if Brentius or other theologians had been reminded of their improper mode of expression, they would have corrected their language and retained their meaning. But after the publication of the Form of Concord, when the Church had already declared its conviction concerning this article, Samuel Huber, a Bernese Swiss, Professor of Theology in the university of Wittenberg, renewed the controversy in regard to the universal election of all men to eternal salvation, and this in such a way that he did not at all acknowledge a misuse of language, but asserted that in the most proper and strict sense the whole human race is elected to salvation, regenerated, and justified. But when he conceded that the greater number of men is damned, he was compelled to concede also that election must be mutable. Whence he made a distinction between *τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς* (the *elect*, using a *noun*) and *τοὺς ἐκκληλεγμένους* (the *elected*, using a *participle*). The latter, he said, denotes all men as elected to

salvation, whilst the former denoted those who would really be saved. He maintained also that no decree of reprobation had been made by God, but that the difference between those that will really be saved and those who will be damned, is made by men. The distinction between the antecedent and consequent will of God he rejected totally, and in the same way our doctrine of foreseen faith; and taught an absolute decree, but a universal one. And as he tried to cast the suspicion of Calvinism upon our theologians, because they asserted the particularity of election, we will show briefly what is the difference between our particularity and that of the Calvinists.

The Calvinists find the cause of the particularity in God, as if He, because of an entirely absolute hatred, had cast away the greater part of men, and, as some express it, predestinated them to eternal damnation. Our theologians look for the cause of the particularity in man, according to that passage in Hosea 13, 9: 'O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thine help?' The Calvinists will have it that only very few men have absolutely been elected to life eternal; our theologians, that they have been elected conditionally, if they should perseveringly believe in Christ. According to our doctrine all men could have been elected to salvation, because the means by which they could have been saved are universal; and that not all actually are elected, the cause of this lies in men. To say that election is universal, is a *σιδηρόξυλον* (a "wooden iron"), a *contradictio in adjecto*, or a contradiction in terms. For if some are chosen or selected from a certain number, they can not constitute the whole and entire number. In Greek the particle *ἐκ* has the meaning of separation, whether you take the word as a noun or as a participle; which can be proven by examples, if you look to the Biblical use. For instance Mark 13, 20, where the Savior says: 'But for the *elect's* sake' (*διὰ τοὺς ἐκλεκτοὺς*: noun), 'whom He hath chosen' (*οὓς ἐξελέξατο*: verb). In Matth. 24, 14 we have the express words of our Savior: 'Many are called, but few are chosen,' etc.

In the same manner John Gerhard meets the arguments of Huber. We will here only append his refutation of one of the principal arguments of Huber and his adherents. That

argument was this: "All the causes of election are universal; hence election itself must be universal." To this Gerhard replies in his *Loci*, de Electione § 205: "I deny the antecedent or major, if it be taken simply and without any limitation" (*simpliciter et nude acceptum*).—If we should say this, our new "reformers" would raise a cry of horror and disgust. Just think, those Ohio men do not even concede without any limitation, that all the causes of election are universal. But Gerhard says so, and then proceeds thus: "But, you say, the love of God is the cause of election; the merit of Christ is the cause of election; and both these are universal.—I answer: In *themselves* they are universal, but by the unbelief of men they become particular. Therefore we must distinguish here accurately. There is indeed a *universal* love that has moved God from eternity that He took counsel to create men in Adam to life and to restore them in Christ to life. John 3, 16: 'God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' But there is also a special love by which God embraces the believers in Christ. The proper and adequate cause of election (if we want to take that term according to the usage of Scripture) is not that universal love, but this special one. This I show in this way. That is a proper and adequate cause whose existence necessarily involves the existence of the effect (*qua posita ponitur effectus*). But the existence of that universal love does not necessarily involve the existence of election. Therefore that universal love is not the proper and adequate cause of election. The minor term, or the assumption, must be proven. This I do in the following way. No one of the elect perishes, Matth. 24, 24: 'If it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.' Rom. 8, 30: 'Whom He did predestinate, them He also glorified.' Rom. 11, 7: 'The election hath obtained it.' But many of those whom God embraces in that universal love, perish, namely the impenitent and the unbelievers, whom God nevertheless has certainly created in Adam to life and in Christ restored to life. Therefore some of those whom God embraces by His universal love, are not elect, and consequently the general love of God is not the proper and adequate cause of election.—You make the objection: The

love of God is the sole and only cause, why men are saved. We answer: The purpose of God to save men, that is, to offer the means of grace (to which pertains creation, redemption, vocation), is universal and has no other cause than that general love of God; but this purpose is not yet election itself, since election has taken place according to this purpose, Eph. 1, 5; 2 Tim. 1, 9, and does not only have regard to the means offered, but also to the persons of those who use these means, and in whose hearts God is efficacious through these means. Therefore only those are elect who believe by the efficacy of the Holy Ghost, who operates through the word, and the others are rejected. Or still more clearly: Election is not the nude purpose to give eternal glory, but it is the decree to give eternal life to those certain persons and to no others. And now the cause why God in time actually saves those and no others, is also the cause why He from eternity decreed to save these and no others, that is, why he elected these and no others. But His general love is not the cause why He in time actually saves these and no others, (for in that love God embraces not only those who are saved, but also those who are not saved). Therefore that general love is not the cause why God has decreed in eternity to save these and no others, that is, why He elected them. The same is to be judged concerning the merit of Christ, which in this matter is to be looked upon not only in so far as it has been acquired, but also in so far as it is applied. In regard to its acquisition the merit of Christ is universal; that is, God has acquired righteousness and eternal life for all; but it is not universal in regard to its application; that is, not all apply the merit of Christ by true faith. And now it is to be proved that the merit of Christ is the cause of election not only inasmuch as it has been acquired, but also inasmuch as it is applied. And this I show thus: The causes of salvation and election are the same, which is proved by the immutability of the divine will. The merit of Christ is the cause of salvation not only so far as it has been acquired, but also so far as it is applied by faith. But the merit of Christ does not concur to election inasmuch as it then already existed, but inasmuch as it was foreseen; and this is the sense of Scripture when it testifies that we have been elected according to the

foreknowledge, 1 Pet. 1, 20; and that those are elect whom God foreknew, Rom. 8, 30, namely in Christ, Eph. 1, 14."

This then is briefly the life of Huber, his doctrine concerning election, and the way in which our Fathers met his delusive arguments. We who occupy the same ground in regard to the doctrine of election that our Fathers did, have sometimes been arraigned as leaning towards Huberianism. Every one who knows what Huber taught can readily see how futile this charge is. We are no more Huberians than Hunnius, Leyser, Kromayer, Gerhard and others were, who successfully refuted Huberianism. For if we hold, as Gerhard held, that all men could have been elected, that Christ merited the possibility of being elected for all men, and that the cause that not all men are actually elected, solely and merely is to be found in the foreseen wilful and obstinate unbelief and resistance of the majority of mankind: we are as far as Gerhard was from teaching that all men have actually been elected. Also in regard to Huberianism we take exactly the same position that the great teachers of old did. The doctrine that election took place in view of faith is an invincible weapon as well against Huberianism as against Calvinism. But he who rejects this doctrine against the clear teaching of Scripture and our Confessions, must, if he wants to be consistent, either become a Huberian or a Calvinist. In other words, he must believe and teach an absolute election. All our Lutheran teachers, as far as we know, call that election absolute that does not take regard to the application of Christ's merit by faith.

St.

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## TESTIMONIES OF THE ANCIENT CHURCH CONCERNING THE SCRIPTURES.

Translated from Chemnitz' Examen, Part I, p. 39-44, by G. H. S.

What we have so far adduced from the words of Holy Writ themselves are the strongest testimonies upon which a pious soul can safely rely. For they place before us the judgment of the Holy Spirit Himself concerning the Scriptures. For as the ancients say, that nothing should be believed con-

cerning God, unless God Himself revealed and testified to it, so also should we believe concerning the Scriptures what they themselves say of themselves, or better, what the Author Himself, the Holy Spirit, judges and speaks concerning His work. But we will yet add the agreement of the Ancient Church concerning the authority, perfection and sufficiency of the Scriptures. For we love and venerate the testimonies of the ancient and more pure church, by whose agreement we are both aided and strengthened, although faith must rest on God's Word and not on human authority. Therefore we do not place the testimonies of the fathers above, but below the Scriptures.

But first I quote the statement of Irenaeus, Book 3, chap. 1: The apostles first preached, but afterwards through the will of God handed down to us in the Scriptures the future ground and pillar of our faith.

Augustine, *De Civitate Dei*, 19, 18: The State of God believes in the Sacred writings, both Old and New, which we call canonical. Thence faith originates, by which the just lives, through which we walk without wavering as long as we are absent from the Lord.

Chrysostom, Homily 1 on Matthew: It would indeed have behooved us to be in no need whatever of the assistance of letters, but to have shown so pure a life in all things that in place of books we would have made use of the grace of the Spirit. But because we have shaken off this grace from us, let us watch well that we steer aright with what we have. Thus God spoke to the patriarchs not through writings, but mouth to mouth, because He had found their hearts clean. But when afterwards the whole people of the Jews had fallen into the depths of vice, then of a necessity writings and tablets had to be given to them, as also the admonition administered through these. And we see that this was the case not only with regard to the saints of the Old Testament, but also with regard to those of the New. For Christ indeed left nothing written for the apostles, but promised in the place of writings to give them the grace of the Holy Spirit. And that the latter is much better than the former, is testified to in Jeremiah 31. Paul, 2 Cor. 3, says that because in times past some have erred heavily in regard to doctrines, others through

the wickedness of their deeds, there was need again of an admonition laid down in written words; and adds, Consider what a sign of extreme foolishness it is, since we have lost that first worthy state, to be unwilling to make use of even the second remedy unto salvation; and to despise the heavenly writings as though they were laid down without end and in vain. For Chrysostom says that the first honored state, when without writing and by the living voice alone the Apostolic doctrine was handed down, has been lost, and shows for what reason and for what purpose God gave us the Scriptures, not only in the Old, but also in the New Testament. For he knows nothing of the difference concerning which the Papists fable.

Theophylact puts this sentiment of Chrysostom in this shape: Because heresies would sprout forth that would destroy our morality, it seemed a worthy object that the gospels should be written; because, having learned the truth from these, we will not be led astray by the falsehoods of heresies.

Augustine, *De Doctr. Christian.* Book 2, chap. 9: In those things that are plainly stated in the Scriptures are found all those which embrace faith and the morality of life; namely, hope and charity. It is therefore Augustine's view that all things pertaining to faith and the morality of life are found in the Scriptures, and that in those passages which are plainly stated in the Scriptures. What therefore, I ask, is to be thought concerning those things which the Papists attempt to force upon us beside and outside out of the Scriptures?

Augustine, *Contra Literas Petiliani*, Book 3, chap. 6: If anyone either concerning Christ, or concerning His Church, or concerning any other things that pertains to our faith and life—I will not say if we, but what Paul adds, if an angel from heaven should announce to you anything beside what ye have received in the lawful Scriptures and the gospels, let him be accursed. Lindanus, in speaking of this passage, insults the ears by contending that he is not accursed who promulgates a gospel in addition to what has been written, as more things have been handed down by tradition than by writing.

Further on the Epistle of John, tract 2: Especially should you notice and entrust to your memory that over against insidious errors God desired to establish a stronghold in the



Scriptures, against which no one would dare to speak who in any way wished himself to be regarded as a Christian. For when He offered Himself to be touched, it did not suffice Him unless He could confirm the hearts of believers from Scriptures; for He regarded us of later times when we could not touch Him, but could read of Him.

De Bono Viduitatis, chap. 1: When can I teach you more than that which we read in the Apostle? For the sacred Scriptures fix the rule for our doctrine, so that we dare not be wiser than we ought. Therefore let me teach you nothing else than to explain to you the words of the Teacher.

Athanasius, *Contra Gentes*: The Sacred and divinely inspired Scriptures suffice for all instruction of truth.

Chrysostom, 2 Thess. 2: All things are clear and plain from the divine Scriptures: whatever things are necessary are manifest.

Jerome, *Ad Galatas*: That is the teaching of the Holy Spirit which is promulgated by the canonical writings; if the Councils set up anything against this, I regard it as a sacrilege.

Basilius in his sermon on the confession of faith: If the Lord is truthful in all His words, and if all His commands are truthful, it is manifestly a departure from faith and a criminal pride either to reject anything of the things that have been written, or to add anything of what has not been written, since Christ has said: My sheep hear my voice, and follow no stranger, but flee, because they do not know his voice. The same he says in "Mores" 72, that it behooves the hearers, learned in the Scriptures, to prove those things which are said by the teachers, and to accept those things which are in harmony with the Scriptures, but to reject what is discordant. And to the same rule he applies the statement of Paul, Gal. 1, 8. If an angel from heaven preach any other gospel to you than that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed. Of also 80, 22: What is the mark of a believer? To dare nothing, to add nothing, for if everything that comes not from faith is sin and faith comes from hearing and the hearing through the Word of God, then everything which is outside of the divinely inspired Scriptures, because it is not of faith, is sin. Likewise Epist. 80: We do not regard it as just to make a law and rule of doctrine out of a

custom that obtains. Therefore the divinely inspired Scriptures are upheld by us as judge, and among whom are found doctrines in harmony with the divine word to these also the acknowledgment that they have the truth belongs.

Origen, on the 3 chap. to the Romans: Paul exhibits an example to the teachers of the church, that they should present to the people those things which they speak not as resting on their own authority, but fortified by divine testimonies, for to this the great and gifted apostle did not believe that the authority of his words would be able to suffice, unless he taught that what He said was written in the law and the prophets: how much more should we, so insignificant, regard this, that when we teach we produce not our own sentiments, but those of the Holy Spirit. Gerson, in the first part of his examination of doctrines, cites a certain remark on the expression: Moses and Elias appeared with Him, namely: Every revelation which the Law and Prophets together with the Gospel does not confirm is suspicious.

Epiphanius Hæresi, 65: We are able to give the answer to each and every question not through our own ratiocinations, but from the agreement of Scriptures.

Worthy of eternal remembrance are the words of Constantine the Great with which, according to common report, he himself opened the Synod at Nice. But the occasion of these words must also be taken into consideration. Sozomenus, Book 1, chap. 17, mentions that there were various opinions expressed. Some thought that nothing should be confessed anew save the faith handed down from the beginning; others, however, maintained that there should be no rash adherence to the opinions of former day, without investigation or examination, and thus the matter was disputed from conflicting sides. Constantine, therefore, as Theodoretus writes, Book 1, chap. 7, spoke words in favor of harmony, saying that it was unworthy that, as the enemies of the church had now been subdued, they were attacking each other and giving the enemies occasion to hoot at them, especially in the discussion of divine matters in which they had the teaching of the Holy Spirit recorded, that is, transferred over in writing as in documents and official papers, for that is the meaning of the word *ἀναγράφει* used here. For, he said, the evangelists

and apostles and the oracles of the ancient prophets clearly instruct us what is to be held in reference to divine things. Then, putting aside our hostile discord, let us draw from the divinely inspired writings the solution of the questions. .

Thus also Euagrius, Book 2, chap. 16, writing concerning the Ephesian and Chalcedonian Synods, reviews the opinion of John of Antioch approved by Cyril. From words of the evangelists and apostles concerning Christ we know that the pious men have set up, etc.

And Cusanus writes that it was the character of the ancient universal synods that the sacred evangelical writings were established as the center.

Likewise Augustine, Epistola 163, says that this was adhered to also in private discussions on religious topics. Wherever, he says, a topic shall have been set up; let us have the canonical books present, so that, though proofs may be adduced on both sides, the matter may be brought to a decision.

Chrysostom, Homily 13 on Genesis: It is said that concerning Paradise matters are to be understood not as written, but in some other way. But when the Scriptures want to teach us anything of that sort, they explain themselves and do not suffer the reader to err. I therefore pray and enjoin that, closing our ears to every other thing, we follow the canon of the sacred Scriptures as a guide.

Origen, on Ezekiel, Homily 7: He who leads an evil life will not easily seduce men into false doctrine, but those will whose walk is unblamable. Therefore let those who have a care for their life not be captured by the blandness of the heretics into an agreement with their doctrine. Nor let him take offense at the faults of me who does the teaching, but consider the doctrine itself. Hear also in what manner Origen teaches that the doctrine itself shall be considered. Let us, he says, imitate no one; and if we do wish to imitate any one, then Christ Jesus has been set up for us as the One to be imitated, the acts of the apostles are described, and the deeds of the prophets we know from the sacred volume. This is a reliable example, this is a trustworthy model, and if one seeks to follow it he walks securely.

Cyril, De recta fide ad Reginas: It is necessary for us to

follow the divine writings and to deviate in nothing from their precept.

Augustin, *Contra Maximium*, Book 3, chap. 14: Neither should I, in a prejudicial manner, prefer the Council of Nice, or you that of Ariminum. I am not held by the authority of the former, nor you by that of the latter. According to the authority of the Scriptures, not that of any individual, which authority of Scripture is over us all, let the topic debate with the topic, the cause with the cause, the reason with the reason.

Origen on Jeremiah: It is necessary for us to call in the Holy Scriptures as testimony; our understandings and explanations without these witnesses have no authority.

Jerome on Titus: Without the authority of Scripture garrulity has no authority.

The same on Matt., chap. 23: Whatever has no authority from Scriptures can with equal facility be despised as approved.

In the commentary on Psalm 86, which bears the name of Jerome, it is said: The Lord will narrate in the Scriptures of the people and the princes who were in them. How will the Lord narrate? Not by word, but by Scriptures. In whose Scriptures? Those of the people, that is, the sacred Scriptures which are read to all men, that is, that all may understand. Plato wrote not for the people, but for the few, for scarcely three men understand him. But these, that is, the princes of Christ, wrote not for the few, but for all mankind, so that not a few, but all, understand. He says also "in the Scriptures of the princes," that is, of the apostles and evangelists, who of these were in them. Mark what he says: Who were, not, who are; so that with the exception of the apostles, whatever might be said afterwards should be cut off, and have no authority. Therefore, however holy and however learned one may be subsequently to the apostles, yet he has no authority. Therefore the Lord narrates in the Scriptures of the people and princes who of these are in them.

Chrysostom on Matt., chap. 24, Homily 49: When you see an impious heresy, which is the ally of the Antichrist, standing in the sacred places of the church, then they who are in Judeah should betake themselves to the mountains, that is,

those who are in Christianity should betake themselves to the Scriptures. For the true Judeah is Christianity, the mountains are the writings of the prophets and apostles; for thus it is written: His foundations are in the holy mountains. But why should in such a time all Christians betake themselves to the Scriptures? Because in such a time, in which heresy lays hands on the churches, there can be no other proof of true Christianity and there can be no other refuge for Christians desirous of learning the truth of faith, except the divine Scriptures. For formerly it was shown in many ways what the church of Christ is, and what heathenism is. But now it can be known to those willing to learn what the true church of Christ is in no other manner except only through the Scriptures. Why? Because heresy has all things similar. Wishing therefore to know what the true church of Christ is, whence can it be learned in so great a confusion of similarity, except only through the Scriptures? Therefore God knowing that this great confusion of things would come in the latter days, commanded that the Christians who are in Christendom, willing to accept the firmness of true faith, should flee to no other thing except to the Scriptures. If, however, they look to any other source whatsoever, they will be confounded and will perish, not understanding what the true church is, and thereby will fall into the abomination of desolation which stands in the sacred places of the church.

Chrysostom on Ps. 95: If anything is said except from Scripture, the understanding of the hearers is lamed. But whenever the testimony proceeds from Scriptures, it confirms the words of the speaker and the mind of the hearer.

Augustine on Ps. 57: Let our volumes be removed from the center and let the divine book proceed to the center. Hear Christ speaking, hear the truth speaking.

Tertullian against Hermogenes: I worship the fulness of Scriptures. Let the workshop of Hermogenes teach that it has been written. If it has not been written, let him fear that Woe destined for those who add or detract.

Augustine, De Peccatorum Meritis, Book 2, chap. 36: When there is a dispute concerning a very obscure point, and in case there are no certain and clear testimonies of the divine

Scriptures corroborating, then human presumption should restrain itself, and by doing so yields nothing to the other part.

Cyril, or it may be Origen, on Levit. Book 5: If ye cannot finish all the meats of the sacrifice on the second day, eat nothing of them on the third day, etc. I, he says, think that by these two days can be understood the two Testaments, in which should be sought and found every word that pertains to God, and from these all knowledge of things should be taken, but, if anything remains which is not discerned from the divine Scripture, there should be taken for the authority of knowledge no other or third Scriptures.

Augustine, De Unitate Ecclesiae, chap. 3. Let us not hear: This I say, that thou sayest: but, This the Lord saith. There are certain Authoritative Books to whose authority we both consent, which both believe; there let us seek the Church, there let us discuss our matters. Likewise: Let there be removed from the center whatever we bring up against each other not drawn from the divine canonical books, but from other sources. Perhaps one may ask: Why should this force be removed? Because I do not wish to explain the sacred Church by human evidences but by divine oracles. Likewise, Whatever they may adduce or from whatever source they may produce, let us rather hear, as we are His sheep, the voice of our Shepherd. Therefore we search in the sacred canonical writings of the church.

Chrysostom, Homily 13 on 2 Cor. Let us not have the opinions of the many, but examine into the things themselves. For it is absurd when concerning money matters we do not believe others, but count and compute them ourselves; concerning things much more important we follow blindly the opinion of others, especially since we have the most exact balance, guide and rule, namely, the declaration of the divine laws. Therefore I pray you all, that ye discard what appears good to this one or that one, and inquire ye concerning all these things of the Scriptures. •

Chrysostom on the 22d chap. of Matt.: Whatever is asked in regard to salvation is now entirely contained in the Scriptures.

Origen on Matt. Homily 25: As a testimony to all the

words which we produce in doctrinal matters we ought to draw forth the sense of Scriptures, as confirming the meaning we find. For as all the gold which was without the temple was not sanctified; so every sense which is outside of the divine Scriptures, however admirable it may seem to some, is not sacred, because it is not upheld by the meaning of Scripture. Therefore we ought not to draw on our own thoughts for the confirmation of our doctrine, unless one shows that these are sacred, drawn from that which is contained in the Holy Scriptures as in certain temples of God.

Cyprian ad Pompejum utters a very fine sentiment which Augustine says without doubt to be the best. The object of religious minds is briefly both to lay aside error and to find and search out truth. For if we turn back to the head and source of divine tradition, human error ceases. If a stream of water, which at first flows copiously and abundantly, suddenly ceases, do we not go to the fountain that we there may learn the cause of the cessation, whether, the veins having dried up, at the source, the water was exhausted, or, running forth naturally and full, it stopped somewhere on the way? This it also behooves the priests of God to do, and if anywhere the truth has wavered or faltered, let us return to the authoritative head, to the evangelical and apostolic doctrine, and from there let the manner of our action arise, from whence has also arisen both the order and the origin. And further on he shows how doctrines are to be proved. Whence, says he, is this tradition? Does it come from the authority of the Lord or of the Evangelists, or does it proceed from the mandates and letters of the apostles? For that those things are to be done which are written, the Lord says and commands to Israel: The book of this law shall not depart from thy mouth, that thou observest to do all things that are written. If then this holy tradition is commanded in the Gospel, or is contained in the letters and acts of the apostles, then let it be observed, etc. I am not ignorant of the fact that Cyprian adduced these things in defence of rebaptism, into which error he had fallen. But Augustine, refuting this error, does not say that this principle or axiom is false, namely that recourse must be had to the source of apostolic doctrine laid down in Scriptures, that from thence

the stream must be followed to our own times, that all traditions, which claim this title, must be compared with Scriptures and be proved by them, but concedes that this is most excellent and must be done without hesitation in Book 5, chap. 26 of his work on Baptism against the Donatists. He shows that Cyprian erred in the application of Scriptures. That principle then concerning the Scriptures remains fixed, also with Augustine's agreement and commendation.

Augustine, *De Pastoribus* chap. 14: I seek the voice of the Shepherd. Read this to me from the prophet, read to me from the Psalms; recite from the law, recite from the gospel, recite from the apostle. Then I recite the church, scattered over the whole orb, and the Lord saying: Those who are my sheep, hear my voice and follow me; let human volumes be discarded and the divine voice resound.

Augustine, *De Unitate Ecclesiae*, chap. 6: Read this to us from the Law, from the Prophets, from the Psalms, from the Gospel, read from the apostolic words and we will believe.

Chap. 10: There must be no agreement with the Catholic Bishops, if they perchance fall into error and entertain opinions against the canonical books of God.

Chap. 12: Whoever preaches another Gospel, let him be accused, or let him read this to me from the Holy Scriptures and be not accused.

Chap. 16: Let them prove their church if they can: not by the words and rumors of the Africans, not by the councils of their Bishops, not by the letters of any debaters, not by fallacious signs and indications, because against these we have been prepared and made cautious by the Word of God, but by the precept of the law, by the prophecies of the seers, by the songs of the psalmists, and by the words of the Shepherd Himself, by the preaching and labors of the Evangelists, that is, by all the canonical authorities of the sacred books. Likewise: Let him not say: It is indeed true, because this one or that one did this or that miraculous thing, or because men appeal to and give heed to the memory of us mortals, or because this or that suits here, or because this man or that man has seen such a vision while awake or dreamed it while



asleep. Let all these figments of lying men or the portends of deceptive spirits be removed. For it does not behoove that we should be believed because we say that we are in the church of Christ, because innumerable bishops of our communion commend what we hold, or because this is promulgated by the councils of our colleagues, or because throughout the whole orb, in the sacred places where our communion gathers, so many wonderful hearings of prayer and healings have taken place, etc. Likewise the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, when after the resurrection He offered His body to His disciples to be seen with the eyes and touched with the hands, that nevertheless they should not think themselves to be deceived, judged that they should be confirmed by the testimonies of the law, the prophets and psalms. These are the evidences in our cause, these are the foundations, these the bulwarks, says Augustine.

And chap. 20 he concludes: Demand from these that they show certain manifest testimonies from the canonical books. Remember the words of the Lord; They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear these.

And ever memorable it is that Augustine, in his Confessions, Book 6, chap. 5, describes himself as having escaped from the snares of the Manichaeans by this very conviction concerning the Scriptures: Thou didst persuade me that not they who believed, but they who did not believe thy books were culpable. And accordingly we are too weak to find in a clear manner the truth, and on this account the authority of the sacred books is a necessity to us, I already began to believe that thou, wouldst in no manner have been about to attribute so excellent an authority to these Scriptures throughout all the lands, unless Thou hadst wished that through these Thou shouldst be believed and through these Thou shouldst be sought.

And in another place he confesses thus: But Thou didst not suffer me by any fluctuations of thought to be taken away from that faith through which I believed in Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, and in the Holy Scriptures which authority commends to Thy Holy Church as the way of the salvation of mankind laid down by Thee to that life which will be after this death. And the ancient catechisation was such an introduc-

tion, by which the catechumens were persuaded, and the divine truths were explained which were embraced in the Scriptures. And of those things which were comprehended in Scripture the sum and substance was explained and declared to the catechumens. And when they responded that they believed these these things and were willing to observe them, they were admitted to the sacraments. Thus catechisation was an introduction to Scripture. In this manner these things are gathered from Augustine's work *De Catechisandis Rudibus*, chap. 6, 9, 26, and throughout the whole work.

I could adduce more statements of the fathers, but the foundation being laid by the Scriptures themselves, it suffices to keep certain ones before our eyes which show the agreement of the ancient Church, by which we are thus aided and confirmed that faith does not rest on human authority, but on the Word of God. And there are indeed certain famous statements of the fathers which speak in general of the Word of God and of the teachings of the apostles. But I know in what manner the adversaries elude these; namely, by saying that not all the words of the Lord and not all the teachings of the apostles are recorded in writing. Therefore I have especially collected those statements which speak distinctly and expressly concerning the Scriptures. But the testimonies of the ancients, which they spoke concerning the Canon of the sacred Scriptures and concerning the writings of the fathers, we will produce later in their places.

We have therefore also the testimony of the ancient church concerning the perfection and sufficiency of the Scriptures, that they contain all things which are necessary for faith and the morals of life, that they are thus the rule, the canon, and the norm, from which in religious matters is to be proved and confirmed whatever is to be received as God's Word. And by the light of this most manifest truth the eyes of the adversaries are so firmly held that they are compelled to confess by words that the sacred Scriptures are the most sure rule of faith. But hear, I pray, how cunningly Andradius eludes this. For from this you will learn in what sense they wish to be understood, when for the sake of honor (as is said) they sometimes say that the sacred Scriptures are the rule of faith. For these are Andradius' words:

All things are indeed thus to be measured by the judgment of the divine Word that we approve of nothing contradicting that which has been written. Yet the Catholic faith is not thus to be circumscribed and hemmed in by the boundaries and confines of the sacred Scriptures, so that we should believe and embrace nothing which is not recorded in writing in the sacred books. For although everything comprehended in the sacred books is most true, yet not all things that Chris.

tian faith believes and that religion venerates is recorded in the documents of the sacred volume. These things Andradius wrote at Trient, from which you see how deformed, imperfect, defective and patched together they take the rule of faith from Scripture. Certainly the testimonies of the ancients do not speak thus of the Scriptures, and the name "canon" or "rule" does not permit this. For Theophylactus says: A canon or a rule does not admit of addition or subtraction. And Photius says: Just as in a canon or norm, when you add something, or take something away, you lose the whole, so also in faith.

And against Eunomius, who said that he received the symbol, which the ancients called the rule of faith, in such a manner that he indicated that it stood in need of a more exact addition, Basilius, Book 1, speaks thus: A measure and rule, as long as nothing is lacking to make them a measure and rule, admit of no addition to their completeness, but only the defective stands in need of an addition. But when they are imperfect they do not deserve this name, that they should be called a rule or measure, etc. This same answer I also wish to be given to Andradius. If the Scriptures are not otherwise a rule of faith except in that manner in which he imagines, then they are not even worthy of this appellation that they should be called the rule of faith. Indeed Pighius, *De Hierarchia Ecclesiae*, Book 1, chap. 4, clearly says, that on account of the obscurity and flexibility of the Scriptures themselves they stood in need of another sure and inflexible norm and measure, to wit, the traditions of the Church. Such a miserable, deformed, imperfect, leaden, uncertain and flexible rule is to them the Scriptures. Go now to Trient and ask of the fathers whether the sacred Scriptures are the rule of faith. The answer our princes returned when a safe conduct was under consideration, is worthy of everlasting remembrance. Among other things it was asked by ours that they should insert these words from the council at Basel concerning the judge in controversies: And it is decided that in controversy the divine law, the practice of Christ, of the apostles and the primitive church, together with the councils and the Doctors, who have truthfully established themselves on this law, shall be regarded as the truest judge in this council. This seemed not admissible to the fathers at Trient, that the statements of the councils and the fathers should be received only in so far as they truthfully were established on the sacred Scriptures. Thereupon they expunged that sentence of the Basel Council, and in its room substituted these words: And it is decided, that controversial topics are to be discussed in the council at Trient according to the sacred Scriptures and the apostolic traditions, the approved councils, the agreement of the Catholic Church, and the authority of

the holy fathers. Andradius indeed thinks that he is able to overthrow with a single argument everything, both from the sacred Scriptures as also the testimonies of the fathers concerning the perfection and sufficiency of the Scriptures. He has heard of geometrical demonstrations, not so much to prove as to compel. This is, namely, his demonstration: God always had a certain Church on earth. But the true Church is not able to depart and separate itself from the true faith. Therefore of a necessity we must believe whatever the Church formerly or now either handed down or believes, even if this cannot be proved by any testimony of Scripture; and consequently, not the Scriptures, but the sense of the Church is the most exact norm according to which our faith must be regulated and formed. This is indeed a mighty "argument," which attempts with a single blow to hurl the Scriptures from their position, so that they are not to be the rule and canon of our faith. This single "argument" would have been able to condemn even Christ with all the apostles, because they contended with the testimonies of the Scriptures against the agreement of the Pharasaic Church. But the answer is easy. It is most true that the true Church cannot be separated from the true doctrine and faith. For that is the true Church which holds and confesses the true and wholesome doctrine of the Word of God. But when that body, which bears the name of Church, departs from the true doctrine of the Word of God, it does not follow, that therefore the false doctrine is saving and the errors, which that body holds, are truth; but this follows, that that body, when it no longer has the true doctrine, is not the true Church. Therefore the truth of the Word of God does not, as Andradius thinks, depend upon the Church; but, on the contrary, the genuineness of the Church depends on and is judged by the truth of God's Word which it embraces and confesses. For the Church is not an autocratic or independent assemblage, but should show and prove by sure and reliable arguments that that doctrine which it holds and confesses, is divinely revealed, true and wholesome.

But these arguments it takes from the records of the canonical books of the Bible, as we have proved by the statements of the ancients, and this must also be taken into consideration, that also in the true church on the foundation can be built wood, hay, stubbles, 1 Cor. 13. Sometimes the true Church, through the prevalence and overawing of another direful body, is thus hidden, as Elijah could say: I alone am left. And when the Son of man shall have come, think you that He will find faith on earth? Because if anyone at the time of Elijah would have judged from the agreement of the visible assemblage concerning the truth of doctrine, he would have been entirely mistaken. Therefore I place over against

Andradius' postulates the statement which is recorded in Decree 11, Quaest. 30. He who is in authority, if against the will of God or beside that which is prescribed in the sacred Scriptures, he says or commands anything, let him be regarded as a false witness of God and a sacrilegious person. I place against it also the statement of Augustine cited above. For in the discussion concerning the true Church there are many questions which cannot be accepted "geometrically" without proof, but must be proved "ecclesiastically." Whether, for instance, that body which arrogates and usurps for itself the title of church is always and without doubt the true Church, whether it have the truth of God's Word or not. Secondly, whether from the status of the church the judgment is to be made concerning the truth of doctrine, or whether from the truth of doctrine divinely revealed must be judged if it is the true Church. Christ in giving a reliable token desires this to be the true Church: My sheep hear my voice. And Paul says, Ye have been built upon the foundation of the prophets and the apostles. Augustine, disputing against Petilianus in regard to what and where the Church is, does not wish it to be sought and demonstrated in the words and rumors of men, not in the councils, not in the writings of the fathers, not in signs and indications, but in the divine books of the Canon. Let us not hear: I say this, thou sayest that; but let us hear: The Lord saith this. It is therefore false, what Andradius dreams, that something is to be believed for the reason that that visible organization which bears the title of Church has observed and does observe it, even though it cannot be proved by any testimony from Scripture. For true are the words of Augustine: If any one, even an apostle or the Church, or indeed even an angel from heaven, should announce to us in regard to anything that pertains to faith or life, beside what we read in the Scriptures and receive in the Gospels, let him be accursed. There are besides yet two other standing arguments of the Papists, namely concerning the uncertainty on ambiguity, and concerning the obscurity of the Scriptures; but upon these my opponent Andradius does not wish to enter. For he concedes that the sacred Scriptures are very true, sure, firm and immutable, and where they inculcate dogmas or precepts, to be reliable and not at all ambiguous; but that by the heretics the words of Scripture had been perverted from this real and genuine meaning, and arbitrarily drawn into various not diverse opinions. Also concerning this there is harmony between us; for we will not dispute what the Scriptures have become for the heretics by accident and what they are in themselves. Concerning the obscurity of the Scriptures Andradius is not able to apply that distinction which I adduced from Augustine against the Jesuits; namely, that while there

are many obscure and difficult passages in Scriptures, yet everything that refers to faith and our morality of life, is found in plain and open scriptural passages. That also which Irenaeus says must be taken as a proof: Although there are many obscure and parobolical passages in the Scriptures, yet the rule itself of truth is plainly stated in the Scriptures. In order that he may not appear to accomplish nothing, Andradius declaims considerably about the danger there lies in the obscure passages of Scripture, if anyone out of curiosity or audaciously would twist them into an impious and sacrilegious opinion. But in this whole declamation he fights without an adversary. For we also say that the obscure passages of Scripture are not to be explained contrary to that sentiment which is set forth in the plain and clear passages; that by no means is to be developed from the obscure passages of Scripture any statement which can not be shown in other and manifest passages of Scripture. In regard to what Andradius jests concerning certain mysteries of faith as drawn from obscure passages of Scriptures, we simply place over against this the words of Augustine. Nothing scarcely is drawn from these obscurities which is not found most plainly stated elsewhere. And against Petilianus, chap. 5. Because many things are stated in the Scriptures figuratively and obscurely, let us read the clear and manifest passages. If we do not find these in the Holy Scriptures, then there is no way in which the locked ones can be opened and the obscure ones explained. These must therefore for the time being be placed aside, which are stated obscurely and covered with the veil of figurative speech and can be interpreted according to our and according to their way. And chap. 16. Let them not collect and cite what is stated obscurely or ambiguously or figuratively; if everyone would want to do this, he can interpret according to his own notion. Such passages cannot be rightly understood or interpreted except when first those passages which are plain and clear are held firmly by faith.

The same: Bring forward a passage which requires no interpreter, and on which we cannot dispute whether something else is not spoken of, and you do not attempt to twist into your meaning. Chap. 19. Whatever passages are ambiguously stated and can be interpreted in your favor and in ours, help the cause of neither, but plainly such sustain an evil cause only by causing delay. Further, these are mystical, hidden, figurative messages: we demand something manifest which requires no interpreter. To this distinction concerning the obscurity and perspicuity of Scripture may be added another, concerning what Paul speaks, 2 Cor. 4: If our gospel is hid, it is hid to those that are lost: in whom the God of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the gospel should shine unto them. Also 1 Cor.

1: The carnal man perceiveth not the things which are of the Spirit. But the Lord opens the minds that they understand the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit having been given, Luke 24. Jer. 31. To this refers also what Augustine says, Epist. 3: So great is the depth of the books of the Christians, so that I would profit in these daily if from the earliest youth down to decrepit age I had sought to learn these alone with the greatest of leisure, the deepest study, and the best talents; not by this that in regard to those things which are necessary to salvation there is found in them so great a difficulty, but when one has grasped the faith without which he cannot live piously and aright, then there remains for the advanced to be understood so many passages covered with the multitude of the shadows of mysteries: and so great are these not only in the words in which they are expressed, but also in the things which must be understood, the depth of whose wisdom is hidden that there may be applied to the most aged, wisest and most desirous of learning what is written: When man shall have finished, then he commences.

These distinctions then having been made and established, it remains firm and unmoved what Ps. 18 says: The precept of the Lord is clear, enlightening the eyes. Ps. 118. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light to my paths. 2. Pet. 1. The prophetic word is like a light shining in a dark place.

Cyril, *Contra Julianum*, Book 7, in answering to the objection that the Scriptures had homely and trite diction, says: That they may be known to all, to great and small, these things are presented in a useful manner, in familiar words, so that they do not transcend the understanding of any person. And Book 9: Julianus is ignorant that there is no difficulty to those who are versed in the writings of the law. But to him and his are entirely inaccessible whatever sentiments are in these. Lactantius: As if God, the Maker of the mind and the voice and the tongue, could not speak clearly: Verily the great providence avoided tricks of speech in regard to those things that are divine, that all should understand what He Himself spoke to all.

Augustine: This very word is perfect and brief, and God did not wish it obscure; brief, in order that there be no failing to read; but plain, that none may say: I cannot understand.

Chrysostom, Homily 1, on John: His teaching is clearer and brighter than the sun. The same, Homily 9, on 2 Cor.: For always when Paul says anything obscurely, he again interprets himself.

Ambrosius, Book 3, Epist. 5: For He speaks to us thus that we can understand His words. Book 2, Epist. 7: Paul generally thus interprets himself in his words, that he who treats him finds nothing to add of his own, or if he wants to

say something, must rather perform the functions of a grammarian than that of a dialectician.

Augustine, Tract. 21 on John: We are perhaps acting rashly because we desire to discuss and scrutinize the words of the Lord. But why have they been spoken except to be known, why have they been uttered except that they be heard, why heard, except that they be understood?

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## WHAT DO THE MISSOURIANS TEACH CONCERNING WILFUL RESISTANCE?

Rev. Prof. Stoeckhardt in "Lehre und Wehre," for July, according to his wonted honesty, gives at last a clear and decisive answer to the above question. And as we all have for a long time been anxious to know what this answer would be in plain and unmistakable words, we hasten to lay it before the readers of our MAGAZINE.

We are now told *what wilful resistance is* according to the conception of the Missourians. This is said in the following passages. P. 294: "*Natural resistance, found by birth in all men, necessarily develops into actual, wilful resistance.*" P. 298: "This actual resistance is only the development and unfolding of natural resistance which is the necessary adjunct and consequence of being born in sin." P. 302: "God has to break the first, beginning resistance. How much more must He by His powerful arm oppose that resistance which has been unfolded and developed and grown strong by longer activity." According to P. 297 and what precedes and follows, resistance is in every respect the same in all men, in those that are converted and saved, and in those that are not; it is just as wilful in the one class as it is in the other; that is, before conversion. The only difference between men touching wilful resistance is that it does not in all men show itself in such a sharp and glaring manner as it did in Paul before his conversion (p. 306), and that God in some takes it away, whilst in others He does not, though it is the very same kind of resistance and could in the one case just as readily and easily be taken away as in the other.

According to p. 298 *no man can do otherwise than resist wilfully*, nay, to harden himself, if God does not interpose. Nevertheless, God imputes this pertinacious opposition that no man can omit, that He alone can take away, as a *peculiar* and *special* offence and fault to those men from whom He does not take it away, and holds them responsible for it.

According to this, wilful resistance is no *wilful* resistance,



no "*mutwilliges Widerstreben*" at all. There is no real difference between it and natural resistance. Wilful resistance is nothing else but the *necessary* development and outgrowth of natural resistance. It is to natural resistance what actual sin is to original sin. Whenever inbred natural resistance shows and manifests itself in any actual resistance, the Missourians call this *wilful* resistance, "*mutwilliges Widerstreben.*" And if you take it and define it in this way, of course you will have to say, and everybody will say, that *this* wilful resistance is necessarily found in all men, and also that no man can omit it, until he has been converted; that before conversion it cannot cease, unless God checks, stops and breaks it. But of *this* wilful resistance you would also have to say, as Prof. Stoeckhardt really does, p. 299, that it is to be found in every man, *even after conversion.* For also in a converted person, in a Christian, the inbred natural resistance manifests itself in many ways. Just as little as he is totally free from actual sin, just as little can he then be free from wilful resistance. Just as original sin manifests itself in manifold ways by actual sin in *every* Christian, in the very same way, according to this Missouri theory, will inbred natural resistance show itself in every Christian by a manifold wilful resistance. Thus wilful resistance like actual sin would be found in every man, as well after conversion as before it, as well in St. Paul as in Herod. The only difference would be this, that after conversion or in a Christian it does not dominate or rule, whilst it does this before conversion and in every man who is not a Christian. And are now, indeed, the Missourians prepared to say this? Can they show from the Bible, the Confessions, Luther, and all our truly orthodox Lutheran teachers, that this view is the correctly Biblical and Lutheran one?

Furthermore, if you define wilful resistance in this way and yet want to hold fast to the clear and undeniable doctrine of Scripture that God has ordained and instituted a way to heaven adapted for every and each man, and that the Word of God is really a divine power to save all men: the taking away of this wilful resistance in all men must necessarily be a part of this universal way to salvation and an effect and result of the preaching of the Word in every case where it is heard as it can be heard by an unconverted man. For if this were not the case, that so-called universal way to heaven and salvation would not really be a universal one, could not be such a one that *every* poor sinner may and can be sure that by and on it he can get to heaven. And converting and saving grace whose principal and essential part and office it would and must be to break and take away wilful resistance, if it were really universal and intended for all men, could not but convert and save *every* man without any exception. For if

the new Missouri theory be right, it will not do to say that the cause why God, much as He wants and desires it, does not convert and save every man, is man's wilful resistance. You might just as well say that the cause is man's sinfulness. Surely, because men are sinners, God would be perfectly righteous and just, if He had not done and did not do anything for their salvation. But if God now has prepared a way of salvation for all sinful men, you cannot say that any man does not get to heaven on this universal way because he has original and actual sin. And the very same is true in regard to wilful resistance, as the Missourians now take it. If it be the *necessary* outgrowth and development of inbred natural resistance in all men, it can just as little be the cause why God does not by conversion bring all men to heaven on this universal way of salvation as actual sin can be such a cause. In fact, if God is not willing and ready to take away such wilful resistance from every man, He does not really want and desire the salvation of every man, and He has not prepared a way to heaven which every man can go. For in respect to most men just the most necessary and vital thing God would not be willing and ready to do, viz. to take away wilful resistance that makes conversion and salvation impossible, that is *necessarily* found in *every* man, that only He can take away in any man, and that He also can take away in every man. If really such be the way to heaven, we should like to know who, except enthusiasts and fanatics, can derive any consolation from it. It is of a piece with absolute election, that horrible and terrible mystery of the Calvinists.

Again, if the above Missourian definition of wilful resistance be correct, Prof. Stoeckhardt's assertion on p. 294 can not be correct, when he says: "In the first place there is no doubt that in Holy Writ 'resistance,' and an intensive, wilful resistance, appears as the *characteristicum* of all those who perish and are damned." How could that be possible? Prof. St. will no doubt agree with us when we say that a *characteristicum* is something that is characteristic of a person or a thing, something that distinguishes it from others. And now, as we have seen, on pp. 296 seqq. he tries to show that this very resistance is to be found in all men. How can that be a characteristic quality of a man which is common, and necessarily and unavoidably common, to all men? Prof. St. could only say that *this* is a *characteristicum* of those who are converted that wilful resistance does not in them rule supreme. But would that accord with the Bible and our Confession? Do they not clearly teach that the very *existence* of wilful resistance in any man prevents and precludes him from being converted and remaining a child of God? We will here only point to Matt. 23, 37: "How often *would* I have gathered thy children together, and *ye would not.*" Here clearly the *mere exis-*

tence of this "not-willing" or of *wilful* resistance is given as the cause that hindered the divine will from being executed, in other words, that hindered conversion. The same is the import of e. g. the passage in the Formula of Concord (Mueller's Ed. p. 713), where it reads: "God has determin'd in His counsel that He will harden, reprobate and condemn those who are called through the Word, if they reject the Word and resist the Holy Ghost, who wishes to be efficacious and to work in them through the Word." Here again the simple existence of *wilful* resistance is mentioned as the cause of reprobation and damnation. Consequently the Scriptures as little as the Confessions favor the idea that *wilful* resistance is to be found in all men, and that in some it prevents conversion, whilst in others it does not.

Finally we would like to know how according to this new Missourian theory it can be said with any truth and honesty that the grace of conversion is not irresistible. Prof. St. says on p. 307: "This much we know from the Scriptures that the Lord our God does not do violence to the will of man, but that He first terrifies man by the law, then invites him by the Gospel, and invites, exhorts and persuades him so long, until man is convinced and overcome." All this is well and correct enough, and is exactly the manner in which we try to describe and explain what the Holy Ghost in conversion does in regard to the will of man. But we do not think and teach that the Holy Ghost does all this in an irresistible way, whilst Prof. St., according to his whole theory *must* say this, though in that passage he seems to deny it. Or we should, indeed, like to hear how he can retain and hold fast the irresistibility of grace with his theory. If *wilful* resistance is simply taken away by God, what possibility is there of man's resisting? To resist *wilfully* is the utmost that man can do. If God by taking away *wilful* resistance prevents him from exercising it, he can not possibly resist the Holy Ghost in any way. Consequently converting grace, according to the Missouri theory, is irresistible. It will certainly not do for Prof. St. to say that it is not. He has to show that according to his theory it can be and is resistible. But his whole theory makes grace irresistible and requires an irresistible grace.

Of course here, as in the doctrine of predestination, the Missourians take refuge in a divine mystery. Whenever they are cornered or driven to the wall they resort to a divine mystery. That forms also the conclusion of Prof. St.'s article. But that will not do. "Don't draw any conclusions!" is always their cry, when they are in want of sound arguments. Yet our Confession draws conclusions also in this case, when it says that the Holy Ghost *can* not convert and save those who resist *wilfully* (Mueller p. 555, 11). Where do the Holy

Scriptures say this, except by inference? And how would Prof. St. prove our Lutheran doctrine of the Holy Trinity, of the Communication of the Natures and the Attributes in Christ, of the Procession of the Holy Spirit also from the Son, of the Ministry, and others, from Holy Writ, if he were not to draw any conclusions? We may, nay, we must draw all legitimate conclusions that we can, in order to get at the true sense of Scripture. We may also, nay, we must try to harmonize the different expressions of Scripture, if we want to be true theologians. We have only to beware that the conclusions we draw and the harmony we get at be not in conflict with any explicit and plain doctrine of the Bible. If we beware of this, we may, or rather ought to, try to harmonize two different series or sets of passages that seem to contradict each other. So we all do in regard to the doctrines mentioned above. And so we ought to do in regard to the doctrines of Election and Conversion. This we hold to be a good and sound principle of Lutheran hermeneutics. The doctrine that God has elected in view of faith harmonizes the two seemingly opposed doctrines of the universal grace of God and the particular election, and this harmony is altogether in accord with Holy Writ and our Confessions. And so the doctrine that converting and saving grace is not irresistible and that every man can omit wilful resistance by the power and grace he has when it is to be omitted, harmonizes the two seemingly conflicting doctrines that God has to do all in conversion and salvation, and that man is responsible for his conversion and salvation. And this harmony again is in perfect accord with the Holy Scriptures and our Confessions. It is, indeed, true that "we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus," Eph. 2, 10. "It is," indeed, "God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." The Lord has to "open the heart," Acts 16, 14; else no man can attend to the things which are spoken by God through His Word. It is now as true as ever: "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the hearts of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live," Deut. 10, 6. If the Lord did not do this, it would never be done, and no man could live. The same holds good of Ezek. 11, 19, 20: "And I will give them one 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 Lord." And 36, 26, 27: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I 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 will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep

my judgments, and do them." Nor do we deny the truth of Jer. 31, 18: "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned." Nobody ever heard or saw us allege anything that really contradicts these and similar passages of Holy Writ. We believe them from all our heart; they are our consolation. And the Missourians are sadly and wantonly transgressing the eighth commandment whenever they say or intimate anything to the contrary. But we know also from a good many other passages of Holy Writ, e. g. Matt. 23, 37, that the good and gracious will of God according to which He earnestly and sincerely wills the conversion and salvation of every sinner, can be, and very often is, thwarted and brought to nought by the wicked will of man. And from this we see that spiritual creation, regeneration, and resurrection differs in this from what is otherwise called creation, generation and raising from the dead, that whilst the latter is not in any way dependent on the will of those who are created, generated and raised from the dead, whilst they can not hinder it in the least, but *must* be created, generated and raised, whether they want it or not: the former is in so far dependent on the will of man, as he can hinder and prevent his being created anew, his being regenerated and raised from spiritual death. And this is according to our conviction just as well and as much divine truth as the contents of the passages cited above. To both we hold, both we believe. We dare not explain the one series so as to lose sight of the other. We hold it to be not only right, but our solemn duty to study whether we can not harmonize them. This we think also belongs to searching the Scriptures, which Christ commends, nay, commands, John 5, 39, and to the pondering in the heart, which is commended in Mary, Luke 2, 19, and to the prophesying, which is to be according to the proportion (analogy) of faith, Rom. 12, 7.

And if we now according to Scripture try to harmonize those two series of passages treating of conversion and regeneration, we will surely reach the same result that has been reached by our Lutheran Church in her Confessions and in the teachings and explanations of her acknowledged theologians, viz. that converting and saving grace is in all its stages *really* resistible, that it never acts in such a way that man can not actually resist it and prevent it from attaining its end and purpose; and that wilful resistance, in contradiction to natural resistance, is of such a nature that as long as it exists it prevents the Holy Ghost from going on in His work of conversion and salvation. Man, deeply depraved as he is, is yet *by nature* a creature that can be converted and saved, and this by a grace and power of God that is not irresistible. He has the passive capacity of being converted and saved (comp. Book of Concord, Mueller's Ed., p. 593 sq.). This he owes solely to the grace of God who did not let him fall as

deeply as the devils did who are not capable of being converted and saved. And this is just as little a merit of his as it is his merit that he notwithstanding the fall still has a rational soul, a conscience, an immortal spirit. And thus it is no Synergism or Semipelagianism to say that man, as he is by nature, can be converted by a resistible grace. For the Scriptures undeniably teach that converting and saving grace *is* resistible, and this in general, in every case, not only in some cases. And as according to Scripture and experience some men are converted and saved, there is no evading the legitimate conclusion that man can be converted and saved by a resistible grace. And in accordance with this we say: Wilful resistance is this; when a man acts in such a way, in regard to converting and saving grace, that God would have to leave His ordinary way of conversion and salvation, and use an irresistible grace, to convert and save such a man. Whoever acts thus, he "forecloses the ordinary way to the Holy Ghost, so that He *cannot* effect His work in him," Formula of Concord 555, 11. And we hope, Prof. St. will readily see that by defining wilful resistance thus, we cannot say that it is to be found in *all* men, and that the Holy Spirit simply takes it away. For that would presuppose an irresistible grace, which we leave to the Calvinists.

The fundamental error of Prof. St. in regard to this point is this, that he really does not teach a *wilful* resistance in contradistinction to *natural* resistance. He really only knows of natural resistance. Natural we call what is inseparably connected with nature, as it is now, and necessarily flows from it. And as according to Prof. St. "natural resistance *necessarily* develops into actual, *wilful* resistance," p. 294, he in reality only speaks of *natural* resistance. He decidedly does violence to the word "wilful," "mutwillig;" for he does not mean to convey the idea that these words are generally used to convey. He seems only to use these words because they are in general use in the Church. And this we can not deem honest. It can not but confuse and mislead. And this is in general our complaint against the Missourians during the whole controversy. We could not find that they tried to bring out their position as clearly and unmistakably as possible; they rather tried to disguise their real position by using old ecclesiastical and theological terms in another sense. But this is not a Christian way of warfare.

According to Prof. St. there is no resistance in man that does not necessarily flow from his nature. No man can help to resist in the way in which he resists (p. 298). The species of the resistance is the same in all men; only the degree or the manifestation may be different, though that would not make any difference in regard to conversion. The very same resistance is found in those who are converted as in those

who are not converted (p. 297). If, now, we do not want to use words in order to conceal our real meaning, we must say that according to this theory the cause why some men are not converted and saved and have not been elected, is by no means their wilful resistance to converting and saving grace. The cause that some are not converted, not saved, and not elected is *not* to be found in *man*. For then, all men being essentially exactly alike, either all men or no man would be converted, saved and elected. The cause is only to be found in God, in His unscrutable will. And if that be Biblical and Lutheran truth, we would like to know what Calvinistic error and falsehood is. Yes, and we would like to know how our Savior can teach, Matt. 23, 37, that the will of man can thwart and bring to nought the gracious will of God; and how our Confession can teach (Mueller's Ed. p. 555, 11), that in some men the Holy Ghost *cannot* have His work. That is all sheer nonsense, if the Missourian theory be right. And no "mystery" can avail here. To say yes and no concerning the very same thing in the very same respect is no "mystery," but a flat contradiction. And we emphatically deny that such a contradiction is to be found in the Word of God. It is merely the outgrowth of the new "reformatory" spirit that has taken hold of the Missourian leaders. "From this preserve us, Heavenly Father!"

St.

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## HUMAN RESISTANCE TO DIVINE GRACE.

Missourians have deemed it expedient to shift the controversy on predestination to another point. Whilst it is well to follow them in all their windings and expose their error in all its tortuous ways, it would not be conducive to the cause of truth to lose sight of the main question, glad as Missouri would probably be if that were entirely forgotten. That question is whether God has elected a comparatively small number *unto* faith, i. e. whether He has selected a few who shall and must be saved and to whom therefore He gives faith, or whether He has elected those who appeared before His all-seeing eyes as believers, i. e. whether He offers the same grace by His appointed means to all men, to the end that they may believe, so that all are actually saved by His proffered grace if they do not themselves block up the way of the Holy Spirit by their wilful resistance. That introduces the question in another form. It is this: Does God prevent or overcome such wilful resistance in the case of some elect persons whom He purposes to save, whilst in others, i. e. those who are not of the elect, He does not prevent or overcome it, so that they cannot be saved, or does He, on His part, in all cases do everything that is needed to salvation, so that if any one stubbornly resists it is not because it is impossible for him to do otherwise, but because He *would* not come to Christ that he might have life, though God made it possible for him to come? The question is whether there is a resistance on man's part that prevents God's work, not how such a resistance is to be explained. On this question the division



has been made between us and Missouri, and there is no prospect of ever uniting again unless Missouri will abandon its dangerous error and cease troubling the Church with its Calvinistic innovations.

Towards the close of last year the Missourian leaders expressed themselves to the effect that the German pastors generally had reached a decision on the matter in controversy, and that further discussion seemed useless. Appearances indicated that they felt themselves unable to gain anything by prolonging the controversy, and that they saw the danger of losing prestige and adherents. Subsequently, however, a new face was put on the matter, and the war was again prosecuted with vigor. They sought to give the question of wilful resistance a shape that would make it appear as if they were contending for the truth that conversion is wholly by the grace of God, and that we were striving to uphold the error that it is partly by the power and merit of man. This impression they endeavor to produce by pushing into the foreground a psychological problem and drawing inferences from statements made to elucidate it, without even taking the trouble to understand the statements whence they make their deductions. We have no time to engage in unprofitable quarrels, and are not much concerned about Missourian quibbles, which we are sure will convince no one, though they may serve to give their error some plausibility in the eyes of those who have made up their minds to be loyal Missourians at all hazards. But because some of our great theologians, on account of the language employed by them, are represented as teachers of error; because some men are perplexed by the seeming discrepancy between our standard writers in treating of it; and because an elucidation of the subject would be conducive to clearness on an important theological question, the readers of the MAGAZINE will not regard it as useless labor if some farther space be devoted to the nature of wilful resistance. Perhaps we may contribute a mite to the better understanding of some terms used and thus to the explanation of the somewhat complicate subject.

The first point that challenges investigation is the nature of that resistance which is denominated wilful. By this epithet a distinction is made which it is important to observe.

It implies that there is a resistance which is not wilful. Accordingly that which is said of resistance thus specified is not to be applied to resistance of every kind.

The word wilful etymologically indicates that the act to which it is applied emanates from the will. A wilful act can not be involuntary, i. e. without a volition. The pulsation of the heart, the respiration of the lungs, are not wilful. They take place by the ordinance of God, independently of our knowing and willing. That with which the will has nothing to do cannot be wilful.

But not everything is wilful which the will has some agency in producing. An act may be performed in pursuance of an operation of the will, and yet not be a wilful act. It may, *in the first place*, be performed ignorantly, so that as to the form it is willed indeed, but as to the matter it is not. To this class some would assign the actions of persons in their sleep, when the members move in obedience to volitions which are not guided by intelligence, though others would explain such phenomena by assuming a diseased state of the nervous system, in which the movements made are spontaneous. Be that as it may, it is certain that acts take place in virtue of a volition without involving the agent's willing of the quality or the result of the act. Thus a man may do wrong without willing it, though he does will the act which the law prohibits. It is a sin of ignorance. He may fire a revolver in accordance with a volition, but have no will to injure any person, though the act may result in the destruction of another's life. In both cases the act proceeds from the will, but in neither case is it wilful. *Secondly*, an act may be done without due deliberation, as when a man under great provocation strikes another, or under strong impulse gratifies an appetite in violation of his own principles and character. Such an act is willed at the moment, but it is not wilful. *Thirdly*, an act may be performed in pursuance of external constraints, so that it is willed under the circumstances, though under other circumstances the will would decide against it. Thus a person under arrest may will to walk to prison rather than to be dragged thither. The act is willed, but it is not wilful. General usage decides that an act which is performed ignorantly, or inconsiderately, or constrainedly, is not wilful. A wilful act

is one that is performed with a knowledge of the matter, with a deliberate intention, and with a free choice; and the freedom referred to in the latter element is an exemption as well from internal forces necessitating the volition through the sensibilities as from external forces necessitating the volition through the judgment. An act is not wilful when there is no choice.

So predominant has the idea of fixed determination become in the modern usage of the word wilful, that the elements by which such a firm resolution are reached have been dropped from the definition, and the unyielding adherence to a purpose has alone been retained as its meaning. When a person intelligently chooses, deliberately resolves, and freely puts forth a volition, all the strength and stability that is in him concentrates upon the thing willed, and he wilfully maintains it. Omitting the element of settled purpose and design reached by an intelligent choice, we have the meaning more usually attached now to the word wilful, as given by Webster, to wit: "Governed by the will without yielding to reason; obstinate; perverse; inflexible; stubborn; refractory; as, a wilful man, a wilful horse." In the older as well as in the more modern usage of the word the fundamental idea is that of asserting self by force of the will, always implying the possibility that self could determine the will otherwise, not that it is swept along by a fate which can neither be evaded nor resisted.

Wilful resistance to divine grace is resistance which emanates from an intelligent and deliberate act of the will, determining either that the means of grace shall not be employed, or that the end shall not be accomplished which is set forth as their design. It is thus opposed to natural resistance, which does not proceed from free choice and which belongs to the constitution of our fallen nature, even independently of any deliberate choice or positive acts of volition.

To set in a clear light the nature of wilful resistance to divine grace it is necessary to inquire into the nature of natural resistance, from which it is distinguished. The nature of man since the fall is such that by its very constitution it is repugnant to God and all His means and operations

for the salvation of the sinner. All men naturally resist the grace of God. "The carnal mind is enmity against God," says the Holy Spirit, Rom. 8, 7. "From this it is evident," says our Confession, "that free will can not only by its own natural powers do or co-operate nothing to its own conversion, justification and salvation, nor obey the Holy Spirit, who through the Gospel offers him the grace of God and salvation, believe and consent; but that, on the contrary, by its inborn evil and rebellious nature it hostilely strives against God and His will, unless it be illuminated and governed by the Spirit of God." F. C. Sol. Decl. II, § 18. This resistance is in the fallen nature of man, and is therefore universal. No human being is exempt from it, except the man Christ Jesus, who alone was without sin. It does not come by the individual's choice or volition. The mind of flesh which is at enmity with God is the natural mind. The sin that is in our nature moves the will of each person; the whole nature is corrupt, and all the imaginations and thoughts of man's heart are only evil continually: but the evil is not originated by each individual's personal volition; it exists independently of all such volitions and controls them. Men are not born good as Adam was created good; they do not become evil by a personal act as Adam became evil by his own unhappy choice. They are conceived in sin and born in iniquity. Each person has his own will, but the basis of each person is the nature which all have in common, and that nature is corrupt. The nature of the race dominates the will of the person. The latter cannot by a volition change the former. Will is personal, but the nature of all asserts itself in the personality of each. Original sin does not exist in opposition to the will of the individual, as it does not come to the individual in pursuance of each one's own personal act. It originated in the personal will of Adam; it does not originate in the personal will of each one of his descendants. In that sense it is not voluntary in the corrupt posterity of the corrupted head of the race. But each human person has his subsistence in the common human nature. Person and nature are not the same. Paul had the human nature, but human nature was not Paul. He had his own personal being distinct from the nature which formed the basis of his person. But there is no human

nature except as it is concrete in persons, and there are no human persons except as they have their substratum in human nature. Because that nature controls the individual persons, each one's will is carried along with the current. In that sense original sin is voluntary. Every man's intellect, sensibilities, and will are, by reason of the sin in our whole nature, repugnant to God, to His gracious will, and to all His communications and operations. Man can will and do nothing against his nature for the reformation of his nature, and he cannot will that anything should be done for him or in him against the constitution and current of his own nature. This is the natural resistance to the grace of God which is common to all men, and which only the power of God can overcome. "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. 2, 13.

This would seem to render it impossible for man to be converted or saved, except by an exercise of God's almighty power, in which the will of man is entirely ignored and the intelligent creature is treated like inanimate matter. Human speculation has accordingly devised the theory, which has disturbed the Church in the past and is disturbing the Lutheran Church now, that God from eternity singled out some persons, simply because it was His pleasure to do so, who shall and must be saved, and that no resistance on the part of these persons should be able to withstand the power of God. It is a specious theory, which renders the matter plain to the human understanding, and as a philosophical speculation it merits respect. But Christians, in view of the warning, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit," Col. 2, 8, and of the admonition to bring "into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ," can not be satisfied with this. Upon a candid examination of Scripture they are constrained to pronounce such theory a species of refined rationalism which contravenes the Holy Spirit's words and dishonors God.

For the Holy Scriptures in unmistakable terms teach that man may thwart the design of the Holy Spirit and prevent the accomplishment of His saving purpose; in other words, that the grace of God is in no case irresistible. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and

stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." Matt. 23, 37. From these words of our Lord it is unmistakably clear that the will of the Lord was to draw these people to Him, and that they hindered the accomplishment of the gracious will by their stubborn resistance. What was done for others who became Christ's disciples and found peace, was done for them; but they did not become Christ's disciples, because they would not. Nowhere is it said that the reason why some will not come to Him and have life, while others do come and are blessed, is to be found in God. There is nothing in the Scriptures to warrant the notion that God wants to save some and therefore applies resistless power for their salvation, whilst He does not want to save others, and therefore supplies no power that would suffice to save them; so that the result would be that according to the antecedent will of God some shall and must be saved and others cannot be saved. The Bible always puts the blame and shame of his damnation upon man himself, never upon God. "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." Acts 7, 51. That is the way in which it explains the fact that, though the saving power of the Spirit is brought to them, they are not saved.

Keeping in mind that there is in all men a natural repugnance to the will and way of God pertaining to the soul's salvation, and that yet some are saved, and that there is in some men a resistance which renders the accomplishment of God's saving will in their case impossible, it is manifest that a distinction must be made between the resistance which is common to all men, but which is not an insurmountable barrier in the way of their salvation, and the resistance which is found only in some men, but which prevents the accomplishment of the Holy Spirit's work. If the resistance were in all cases the same, it would either be a barrier to the saving grace of God in every soul, so that no one could be saved, or it would be a barrier to the gracious work in no case, and the good will of God, which is the salvation of all men, would be executed in all alike. Then either no man would be saved, because all resist, or all men must be saved, because resist-

ance does not baffle the Holy Ghost's design. Necessity is therefore laid upon us, if we would understand the Scriptures at all, and not dishonor them by shoving them aside as an unintelligible mass of inconsistencies, to distinguish, as our fathers have done, between the resistance that is common to all men, but that does not in itself prevent conversion, and the resistance which is confined only to some men, but which excludes the Holy Ghost and prevents His operations in the soul. The Formula of Concord has clearly set forth the whole subject, and that too in the very connection which has given rise to present troubles. If salvation is by grace alone, Calvinists argue, then those to whom God gives the needful grace must be saved, and those who are not endowed with grace must inevitably perish: God determines all that, and man has nothing to do with it. And as the Bible speaks of an election of grace according to the good pleasure of His will, such election, they continue, must determine which persons shall receive the needful grace, so that they shall and will be saved, and which persons, accordingly, shall not be so favored, the former alone being the few chosen among the many called. Our Confession replies to all such unscriptural speculation: "As to the declaration (Matt. 22, 14), 'Many are called, but few are chosen,' it is not to be so understood as if God were unwilling that all should be saved, but the cause of the damnation of the ungodly is that they either do not hear the Word of God at all, but contumaciously contemn it, stop their ears, and harden their hearts, and in this way foreclose to the Spirit of God His ordinary way, so that He cannot accomplish His work in them, or when they have heard the Word make it of no account and cast it away. Therefore neither God nor His election, but their own wickedness, is to blame if they perish. 2 Pet. 2, 1; Luke 2, 49. 52; Heb. 12, 25." Epit. XI. § 12. That is the wilful resistance which renders the accomplishment of the Holy Spirit's work impossible, as distinguished from the natural resistance which is common to all men, but which the Holy Spirit overcomes where wilful resistance is not superadded.\*

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\*That the principal theologians of our Church have with great unanimity taught this doctrine, has been incontrovertibly shown in this MAGAZINE, and we do not deem it necessary to occupy space in repeating the evidence. We refer the reader especially to pp. 159-171 of the present volume.

But the distinction thus made does not remove all difficulty. Such removal is indeed impossible. Whatever explanation may be made of the doctrine of conversion, there always will remain in it a mystery which the human mind can not fathom. The mystery lies not in the question, Why is God willing to save only a few out of the many souls who are equally condemned by original sin and equally redeemed by the blood of Jesus? That is simply not true, and there is no mystery about it. The truth is as plain as the sun at noon-day, that God "will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth." 1 Tim. 2, 4. The reason why not all are saved, notwithstanding that God is willing to save one as well as the other, is that not all will let Him save them. And here it will not suffice to say that some resist and others do not. In one sense all resist. All have by nature the carnal mind which is enmity against God, and no man can rid himself of that carnality and enmity. But when the Holy Ghost approaches man with His converting and saving grace, some are contumacious and resist wilfully, refusing the light and the life which He brings. This is not because God forcibly overcomes opposition in the one and declines to use His almighty power in coercing another. He coerces no one. In His infinite mercy He seeks the salvation of all alike. Yet one wilfully resists, the other does not. The same natural repugnance exists in all alike; the same grace to overcome it, wherever the means of grace are dispensed, is offered to all alike: why then do some wilfully resist, while others do not? That we do not profess to know; that we do not in this world expect to know: it is to the human mind an unfathomable mystery. To endeavor to solve it by referring it all to the divine decree of predestination, making the whole matter plain by teaching that God did not want to save some men and that He therefore withheld from them the grace which is needful to prevent wilful resistance, is a wanton impeachment of God's mercy, which contradicts the Scriptures in more than one fundamental point, and from which Christians should shrink with horror. The distinction made by our Church between natural and wilful resistance, while it has not the aim to explain a mystery, is necessary for the understanding of numerous passages of Holy Scripture and serves to guard Christians against the abomination of perverting these texts,



shifting the mystery to another point, and then rationalistically endeavoring to solve that mystery by making the damnation of the lost a result of God's unwillingness to save a large portion of our condemned race, though He is willing to save a small elect portion, and therefore does save the chosen few. It must be insisted upon, as well for the sake of the truth, as for the sake of the peace and comfort which the truth alone can bring, that the reason why many are lost, notwithstanding that they are called, is that they wilfully resist the Holy Ghost.

But when such wilful resistance is spoken of in this connection, some are at once ready with the objection, that, if this is to throw any light upon the subject, man must be responsible for its exercise, and that the omission to exercise it must accordingly lie in his power. This being assumed, it is regarded as a necessary conclusion, that wilful resistance requires less strength to overcome it than natural resistance, inasmuch as no man can overcome the latter, while, according to the assumption, any man would be able to overcome the former. This challenges further examination. Certainly the antecedent probabilities would be against a doctrine which implies human inability for the less, but ability for the greater. If it is not in man's power to refrain from natural resistance, how would it be in his power to refrain from the wilful resistance which seems but an intensification of that which is natural? We do not wonder that upon such a superficial view the proposition that man can refrain from wilful resistance seems more than dubious. For the underlying opinion is that natural resistance, taken pure and simple, can not be omitted by man, but that when wilfulness is superadded the resistance thus complicated and intensified can be omitted. That bears its erroneousness on its face. But that nobody has maintained. It is a total misapprehension or perversion of the meaning of those theologians who claim that man can by his own power omit wilful resistance. They never thought of teaching that, while man can not refrain from natural resistance, he can refrain from it when wilfulness is superadded. That would be absurd. But for such an absurdity our great teachers are not responsible. Such imputations only manifest lack of thought on the subject. What our theologians mean

is not that intensified natural resistance may be omitted by human power. Their doctrine is that the wilfulness which man superadds he may also refrain from superadding. He may, but he need not, throw into the fire the Bible that is offered him, or strike the messenger who tells him about Christ. He may, but he need not, when he has heard the word of salvation, obstinately refuse to give it the attention which it challenges and drown its voice by plunging into the sea of lust and worldliness. There is nothing that compels him to such wantonness. His own reason tells him to listen to any message that promises to promote his happiness, and there is therefore nothing in his nature, hostile as it is to the offers contained in the Gospel, that would necessitate his refusal to hear what its offers are. Such refusal, in spite of all the motives to hear, is wilful and wanton, and he could and should refrain from it. And when he has heard, not his sinful nature, which does not render conversion impossible, but the wantonness of his personal will is responsible for it, if he casts the truth to the winds. He could do otherwise. For while his nature rebels as soon as the contents of the Gospel become known, the proffered grace is sufficient to check its opposing impulses and to introduce influences moving the will to reflection and further hearing.

What our theologians mean may be illustrated by an example. That man, by virtue of original sin, has in his soul the evil disposition to lie and deceive for the accomplishment of his selfish ends, no one who believes the Bible or knows his own heart can doubt. Of that evil in his soul he is powerless to rid himself. But is he on that account incapable of refraining, in any given case, from wilfully telling a lie or practicing fraud upon his neighbor? When we say that he can refrain from such wilful lying and deceiving, we do not imply that he can put aside the original sin out of which such misdeeds spring; least of all do we intimate that the addition of wilfulness to the lying and deceiving confers a power to omit it which did not before exist. That which is in our nature is the power to refrain from the wantonness and wilfulness in any special case, not from the thing to which the wantonness and wilfulness is added. In the sinfulness of our nature lies the repugnance to the grace of God which is common to all

men and from which no man can refrain, because no man can put away that sin of his nature out of which his repugnance flows; but the wilfulness is something superadded by his will and, by the meaning of the terms, subject to his will. A man cannot help having the lusts of the flesh, but he can help that hoggishness which in some men characterizes the exercise of those lusts.

That wilful deception is a different thing from natural deceitfulness, and that man has a power over the former which he has not over the latter, is beyond dispute among men who are at all capable of understanding the subject. The one is a fault of our nature, the other of our personal choice. We have no power to change our nature, but we have power over the personal acts in which that nature seeks utterance. Hence we find gross outbreaks of sin, even among heathens, censurable in a special sense and degree. All men recognize that they are not the result of necessity, but of a special criminality superadded to that in our nature. When one loses all shame in his indulgence of vicious propensities he has sunken to a depth of degradation that did not lie in the necessities of his nature, and the infamy into which he plunges does not belong to all men. Of course his nature is no better if he refrains from such shameless deeds, and does not become in itself worse by indulgence in them. His depravity is total in either case. Before God there is no more merit in a Socrates than in a Nero; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. But that is not the point here under consideration. The question is whether the brutishness into which some men sink is any more a necessity of their fallen nature than of the equally fallen nature of other men who refrain from plunging into it. Manifestly it is not, as nature itself teaches and as the argument of St. Paul in Romans 1. places beyond all dispute. The evil which is born in us will be there in spite of all our outward decency and decorum. But men may lead externally decent lives notwithstanding, and it is their shame if they do not. Wilful and wanton wickedness that renders them infamous they can avoid, although they cannot remedy the evil nature which may find vent in such wanton forms. They cannot refrain from the evil that is in them, but they can refrain from that which renders them out-

casts from decent society. Without going at all beyond the contents of our depraved nature there are sufficient motives to decide the will against such recklessness of conduct, so that a man may be a murderer without wilfully destroying another's life and foolishly bringing himself to the gallows, or an adulterer without stupidly subjecting himself to the danger and disgrace attaching to overt acts. Shameless deeds may be regarded as an intensification of the natural sinfulness in which they have their origin; but it is not absurd to allege that man has the power of abstaining from such deeds, though he has not the power to abstain from the sinfulness out of which they spring.

But to this representation an objection is raised. It is this. The selfish impulses of our nature may be gratified in various forms. Deception may be practiced without taking the shape which any given case would suggest. It may even assume the form of resistance to the special temptation offered in any particular instance. One may decline to lie or deceive in a given case, because it would seem bad policy to do it. He has choice between a number of ways in which his natural propensity to evil may find expression. He may not wilfully deceive in a particular form, because he has choice between a variety of forms which are subject to his will, while the fundamental propensity may still find gratification. But in regard to wilful resistance to the grace of God the case seems different. It appears to be generic, not specific. Refraining from wilful resistance in any given form implies refraining from it in any and every form. A man may easily omit wilfulness in regard to any particular sin, but his will decides upon sin still, though in another form. He chooses and wills, but he chooses among the evils which lie within his capacity and decides upon an evil at last, though he, for satisfactory reasons, did not wilfully perform a certain evil act. He had power to will it or not to will it, although he had not the power to will no evil at all. In that respect there seems to be no analogy between the cases in question. But the whole objection rests upon a fallacy. That wilful resistance to divine grace is generic in any other sense than wilful deeds of sin in any other direction, is an unwarranted assumption. The impulse is to special acts in either case, and the absten-

tion from willing these acts may arise in the one case as well as the other from motives that involve no other than carnal powers.

When we speak thus the word will is understood not in that wider sense in which it includes the various appetites, desires and affections which furnish the direct motives of volitions, but in that narrower sense in which it designates merely the mind's decision and mandate after the choice has been effected. The motion of the sensibilities urging upon us a certain action or course, does not in itself render such action wilful. What is done under the impulse of strong feeling or passion is always distinguished by thoughtful minds from that which is done in wantonness or malice. Not even when the judgment has chosen a certain act from among those by which the impulse of the heart might be gratified, can such act in every case be pronounced wilful. A wilful act is one that is intelligent, deliberate and free. What is done *ignorantly* can not have the element of wilfulness, though it is not done without a volition. When a somnambulist does something in his sleep, or when a waking person does a wrong thing without intending the wrong, the movement of the body, in the latter case certainly, in the former case probably, did not take place without an act of the will, but it is not wilful when there is no clear knowledge of the act, as in the former case, or of the quality of the act, as in the latter case. A sleep-walker who shoots a person in his dream, or a waking man who shoots another by accident, will not be charged with wilfully destroying life. Even when an act is done intentionally, though without intending the evil which it involves, we do not pronounce it wilful; as when Christians are persecuted under the impression that in this way a service is rendered to God. The ignorance in regard to the moral quality of the act forbids the application of the epithet. Secondly, an act can not be wilful when it is done *inconsiderately* or rashly, even though its moral quality be well known. The excited feeling, the impetuosity of passion, may exist without wilfulness. An act performed under strong provocation, when the impulse of feeling is too powerful to be resisted, may be very wicked, but it is not wilful. Courts of justice always make a distinction, and the intelligence of

mankind generally has pronounced it right, between that which is done with due deliberation, so that malice aforethought is apparent, and that which is done in passion, so that the true character of the agent had not the opportunity to assert itself. Finally, an act is not wilful when it is done *by any kind of constraint* that leaves no room for freedom of choice. A man does not wilfully absent himself from his family when, being placed under arrest, he wills to walk to prison rather than to be dragged thither. He is not free to choose, and although he wills to do what he does, he would not will it if the constraint were removed. What he does is under the circumstances voluntary, i. e. it is by an act of his will, but it is not wilful. Wilfulness always implies the possibility of doing otherwise.

No resistance to the grace of God could therefore properly be called wilful that is not the result of previous consideration and free choice. The blindness of intellect and perversity of the affections which in spiritual things are natural to man, will not fail indeed to move the will in opposition to the Holy Spirit's work. The will acts in accordance with the influences which inwardly are brought to bear upon it. The soul cannot put forth volitions in regard to things of which it knows nothing and respecting which it has no motives. There must at least be a prior perception of the object about which the will is to be employed, before any impulses or desires which lead to a choice or volition respecting it can arise in the soul. No man can wilfully oppose that which has never come within the range of his thought and feeling. He who has no concern but to have what is needful for the gratification of his animal appetites can not properly be called a wilful opponent of the art and science of which he has never heard. His base disposition naturally resists the suggestion that he should substitute esthetic pleasures for brutish indulgences, but his resistance becomes wanton and wilful only when the esthetic feeling is awakened within him and despite is done to the claims which it asserts in his soul. If the lower be chosen in preference to the higher—the animal in preference to the rational, or the rational in preference to the moral—the sensual inclination, perhaps heightened by habits of indulgence, is influential in determining the will

but does not coercively necessitate a decision against the higher. Why one prefers the sensual, another the beautiful, a third the morally good, while all are equally in the bonds of iniquity, psychology cannot inform us. It is a mystery of the same kind, although in a lower domain, as that which confronts us in the doctrine of conversion. But it is the fact that we are here concerned about, and that is plain. The will is moved by forces which lie behind it, and its act becomes wilful when it has discerned the object to which the act pertains, and has made its choice. In regard to spiritual things the natural man is ignorant, and any wilful resistance to grace must be, in the first instance, against the use of the means. This lies wholly within the powers of nature, and one may wilfully resist the motives prompting to their use or refrain from such resistance. If he does not wilfully resist such use, the question will confront us in a different form. Then wilful resistance may lie against the grace itself as imparted by the means. His nature is hostile to grace, but that does not block up the Holy Spirit's ordinary way of operating upon the soul. If it did, no man could by any possibility ever be converted. What does debar the Spirit and His saving work is the assertion of the personal will, as distinct from the human nature which forms the basis of personal life, against the proffered divine power and gift. Such personal assertion of the will is not common to all men, as is evident from the fact that some do not "stop their ears and harden their hearts, and in this way foreclose to the Holy Spirit His ordinary way, so that He cannot accomplish His work in them." Such stopping the ears and hardening the heart is not, when the saving grace of God is brought to man, a necessity of his nature, corrupt and hostile to God and all spiritual things as that nature is. If it were, the salvation of man would, by reason of his possession of that corrupt and hostile nature, be entirely out of the question, and every soul would be irretrievably lost. Grace overcomes nature, and regeneration is possible. But when the ears are stopped and the heart is hardened by a personal act of the individual, so that not only the blindness and depravity of nature, but the stubbornness of the person with his individual will is thrown against the power of divine grace, not even God can save,

simply because in His infinite wisdom He has devised a plan according to which it does not please Him to drag souls to heaven by physical force. No man is forced by his nature to resist wilfully, and no man is forced by grace not to resist wilfully. If nature were irresistible, all men would be lost; if grace were irresistible, all men would be saved. Sin and grace are equally universal. Those who stop their ears and harden their hearts are responsible for their suicidal misdeed. They might have done otherwise. "Neither God nor His election, but their own wickedness, is to blame if they perish." And when our Formula of Concord uses these words, it must be well observed that the reference is not to the sinfulness which is in our nature and which exists in all men alike, but to that special personal sin according to which some men stop their ears and harden their hearts, "and in this way foreclose to the Holy Spirit His ordinary way, so that He cannot accomplish His work in them," which is not said of others who, though equally sinful by nature, do not thus by a superadded personal wilfulness effectually debar the Holy Ghost.

This doctrine of our Confession does not, as Calvinists dream, ignore or deny the fact that man's will is by nature not free, but in bondage under sin. No man who reads the Scriptures with reverence will dispute the fact that men "walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart," and that they are "dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. 4, 18; 2, 1. All soteriology goes wrong that takes no account of this, and thus starts wrong. When the grace of God approaches man, it finds no more assent to its claims than it would in a stock or a stone. But the twofold fact, that man can and does resist the grace of God, as a stock or stone can not, and that man is capable of being converted, as a stock or stone is not, should guard intelligent men against pushing such figures, good and true as illustrating human inability in spiritual things, beyond the proper point of comparison and into the extreme in which they become falsehoods. Man has no more power to transform himself into a child of God than has a block of wood or granite. Spiritually he is dead, and can



no more make himself spiritually alive than a corpse can give itself corporeal life. But that does not mean that man has ceased to be a man, and that he is no more capable of being saved than the devil. The Scriptures teach us otherwise. When Christ came to save men, He came to do a possible thing, and in many His merciful object is accomplished. Though man could not save himself, he was capable of being saved. Minerals and vegetables and irrational animals were not designed for eternal blessedness, and are therefore not to be compared with the human race in this respect. Angels were meant, like men, to enjoy God forever; but those who fell are lost beyond redemption. The former classes of creatures could not, by the constitution of their nature, attain the glory of the children of God; the latter class, though originally more highly endowed even than man, lost by their fall the capacity of being saved. Man stands alone among God's creatures as fallen and salvable. But his salvability implies no power of self-redemption or self-regeneration. God alone can save him. He gave His own dear Son to redeem him; He gives His Holy Spirit to sanctify him. When this sanctifying grace is brought to him by the means which God has appointed, he can do nothing but resist it. He is not free to accept it. The blindness of his understanding regards the Gospel as foolishness; the corruption of his heart impels him to scorn the peace and happiness which is offered him in Christ and to seek it in the gratification of the flesh with its affections and lusts. The foolish thoughts and the depraved desires influence the will of the individual against all offers of grace and salvation. Man is not naturally free to choose life or death, because his nature is already decided against life as offered in Christ. His will is not a power that stands outside of the reach of his evil nature. It is a personal power, but a personal power of the individual soul that exists only in virtue of the human nature which it possesses. The wicked impulses of that nature act upon the personal will. If there were no other force to act upon this, it would inevitably be determined to resist, pertinaciously to resist, every appeal of divine grace. But there are other forces introduced, else there never would be a soul's conversion. And when man is said to be in bondage, it is not meant that by a neces-

sity of coercion he must go to hell, no more than it is meant, when grace is given him, that by a necessity of coercion he must go to heaven. The power of grace, which makes men free, so counteracts the power of sin, to which they are in bondage, that each soul can be saved, if it does not so assert its personal will, notwithstanding all the influences of divine grace, as to thwart the saving purpose of God. Our nature is corrupt and moves the will against the work of the Holy Ghost; but the Holy Ghost introduces powers which are designed to move the will against our corrupt nature. When man does not wilfully resist, the Spirit will accomplish His saving end, notwithstanding the corruption and resistance of our nature; when he wilfully resists, corrupt nature gains the victory, notwithstanding the new powers of grace by which nature might have been overcome, if the individual's personal wilfulness had not interposed and prevented the gracious work of God. In the one case grace decides, and all the glory belongs to God, who introduced salutary powers which did not lie in our common nature or in the individual's personal will; in the other case the blame belongs entirely to man, who, moved by his evil nature, though not coerced by that nature against the influences of the Holy Spirit, renounced the proffered grace and, by a personal act, superadded to all the evil impulses of his nature which grace would otherwise have overcome, chose death rather than life. The glory in the former case belongs wholly to God, because He alone prepared the redemption, which was entirely beyond human ability, and He alone furnished the new spiritual power by which nature was overcome. The shame in the latter case belongs wholly to man, because he was not compelled, though his nature is corrupt, persistently and stubbornly to resist the Holy Ghost's saving influences and to reject the Lord Jesus, since the same grace and power was offered him which effected the salvation of those who did not wilfully resist.

Although it is impossible to explain why some wilfully resist divine grace and are lost, while others do not so resist and are saved, it may be possible to set that resistance, in its various stages, in a clearer light. The seemingly conflicting statements of our great theologians will, we are convinced,

be seen to involve no discrepancies when the fact is taken into account that such resistance may be made in three different conditions of the subject. It may be effected by a person, first, in his purely natural condition, or, secondly, in the process of conversion, or, thirdly, after conversion has taken place. That the powers by which the resistance is dropped will, according as the one or the other condition is had in mind, be differently characterized, is a necessity involved in the different cases. All our standard writers are perfectly agreed that God forces no one to heaven and forces no one to hell. They are a unit in teaching that the divine grace which would lead to eternal blessedness may be resisted by human power, and that thus the accomplishment of God's saving will may be prevented by the sinful will of man. They are equally a unit in the doctrine, that there is no necessity which compels wilful resistance in any case, but that such resistance is born of the human will, is subject to its decision, and may be omitted. It was plain to them, as it is to us, that if this were not the case, those who cannot omit such wilful resistance would be absolutely beyond the reach of saving grace, as the Holy Spirit can not accomplish His work in those who block up His ordinary way. They would thus be irremediably consigned to damnation, either by an absolute divine decree of reprobation, or by a blind and relentless fate. Such a solution our fathers unanimously shrank from with unutterable horror. They taught that man can resist and that at every step he may refrain from wilfully resisting, notwithstanding the natural repugnance to divine grace. Whether he refrains by the power of nature or by that of grace depends upon the circumstances. This we shall endeavor more fully to elucidate, leaving out of the account the third condition mentioned, as not necessary for our purpose.

Wilful resistance, in the first place, may be directed against the grace of God, or the work of the Holy Spirit, before that grace has wrought in the soul. We here leave out of view those varied acts of divine providence which later theologians have usually embraced in the term *prevenient grace*, and which are designed to direct the soul's attention to its higher wants and to the claims of Christianity in regard to

satisfying these wants. For the present it may be better to pass them by, as they only render our question more complicate and are not essential to its elucidation, because, although all such acts are manifestations of divine mercy and aim ultimately at man's salvation, they are not operations of divine grace in that specific sense in which this directly offers the blessings of Christ's redemption by means appointed for this special purpose. God in various ways leads individuals and communities to think of their souls' present and eternal welfare; but the salvation which these souls need He ordinarily gives only by His Word and Sacraments. Man may stubbornly reject all the lessons of divine providence, and thus wilfully resist all the pedagogical dealings of God with them. But all such dealings appeal to powers in man that are purely natural, and all their results, even when there is no wilful resistance to their influence, belong to the domain of nature, so that in no case would they immediately effect the soul's salvation. But just as soon as such pedagogical acts bring a person to the means by which saving grace is offered, the question of wilful resistance confronts us in the form to which our present inquiry pertains. A person may by the death of a friend be induced to think of his own future; he may by the reports which he hears of the blessings offered by the Christian Church have longings awakened in his soul for such blessings as satisfying the desire for happiness which he has felt, but which all his efforts have failed to gratify; he may stubbornly set his will in opposition to all such stirrings in his soul, and endeavor to quiet the aching of his heart by sensual gratification, by seeking riches or fame, by pursuing ideals of beauty or virtue; and he may thus wilfully resist all appeals to the higher moral and religious elements which, in virtue of conscience, are still in his nature. But he may also refrain from resisting, and may thus be led to read or hear the Word, which supplies gifts and powers not bestowed by any providential acts of God. So far everything lies plainly in the sphere of nature. Resistance and refraining from resistance are equally acts of the human will emanating from powers innate in the soul, as no new powers of grace are supplied aside from the divine means which now first come into consideration. When the Word

thus comes to a person, what are his powers and what does grace do for him? He may by the powers of nature hear or refuse to hear. But if he hears, what then?

Conceived in sin and born in iniquity, by nature at enmity against God, man can naturally do nothing but resist all the proffers of grace and salvation made by the Gospel. The law indeed appeals to his conscience, and never can that appeal be entirely without result. All claims of righteousness, as summed up in the ten commandments, are inwardly approved. Man has not the power to will the good which the law demands, but he has the power, nay more, he is under the necessity, by virtue of the constitution of his nature, of sanctioning the law's claims and confessing their obligatoriness. He knows that its demands are right and that obedience is his duty. But the knowledge of duty does not imply the will to perform it. Such will he has not. The carnal desires of his heart, which furnish the motives of action, overmaster the feeling of obligation as found in conscience. Accordingly there is in the soul a resistance to the requirements made by the law, though in such resistance there is at the same time a conflict with the individual conscience, which stands in league with divine righteousness against the flesh. The law may therefore prepare the way for man's regeneration, but can of itself accomplish nothing. "If there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law." Gal. 3, 21. But if the law, which finds in the moral nature of man a ready response to its claims, can accomplish nothing, it would seem vain to hope that any saving result could be obtained by the Gospel, which has no such hold upon our nature. For "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Cor. 2, 14. But the Gospel imparts new powers, as the law does not, so that while the latter would seem more efficacious, as finding the soul ready for its reception, the former, though it meets only with repugnance, can really effect what the law cannot. It contains in it the power to overcome the enmity which lies in our nature. That power it exerts inevitably when the work begins; that is to say, when the Holy Spirit approaches the soul with its en-

lightening and flesh-subduing power, it finds no thought or feeling in harmony with it, so that it could thus receive a welcome, but it must first create the disposition to receive it. And this is not to be understood merely in the sense in which a love for a science or an art may be enkindled by a gradual acquaintance with its beauty. Such a love presupposes a power in the soul which is dormant and needs only to be awakened. But there is no dormant love for the Gospel within us, and therefore none can be awakened. To the intellect its teachings are all foolishness and to the sensibilities its promises are all repugnant. Not that there is an antipathy to life and salvation in themselves. Death and damnation are not man's intelligent choice. He wants to live and be happy. But the life which is in Christ and the happiness which is received through the forgiveness of sins by faith in His merits, are foolish and abhorrent to his nature. The Gospel itself must prepare for itself appreciation and reception. It does this first of all by the introduction of light. Naturally man is not only ignorant of spiritual things, but blind in regard to them and averse to their claims. Not only does the Gospel reveal things which the mind could not otherwise know, thus enlarging the domain of our knowledge, but it brings before us truth which we have no power to apprehend and appreciate. It at once brings light and opens the eyes to see what is exposed to view. Paul was sent to the Gentiles "to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God." Acts 26, 18. But this light does not fall upon the soul and produce its designed effect in the same way as the sunlight falls upon the soil and accomplishes its end. Man is a living soul, and can do what the vegetable cannot do, notwithstanding that he is dead in trespasses and sins. He can resist, and by resistance frustrate the designs of grace. When the first proclamation of truth is made to him, he cannot prevent the addition of what he reads or hears to the stock of his information, but he can close the book or stop his ears and hear or read no further, and can persistently refuse to pursue any train of thought or feeling that may have been started within him; in other words, he may wilfully resist the work of the Holy Spirit at the very outset, diverting his attention from the truth by fixing it upon the

things which are pleasing to the flesh. Is there any necessity laid upon him in either case? He may refuse to go to church at all, willfully resisting the use of the means. But he may go to church and hear. When he hears, he may believe or reject. That he cannot by his own reason or other natural power do the former is forever settled in the Lutheran Church. But that is not the point of inquiry now and here. When the message of salvation in Christ is delivered to the sinner, his nature opposes the converting grace which accompanies it. Of this there can be no doubt in the minds of those who accept in their plain meaning the Scripture declarations respecting man's blindness and enmity to God. If it be asked whether, when the good tidings of redemption through the sacrifice of Christ are made known, the soul has in itself the power to confide in the truth of the tidings and be comforted, the answer must be emphatically in the negative. Nay, more: if it be asked whether it has of itself the power to refrain from repugnance to such offer of salvation, the answer must still be a decided no. Man does not and can not, in the condition of sin and death which is his by nature, choose the life and salvation which are offered in Christ. But when it is asked whether he may not refrain from stopping his ears or closing his eyes, or even from refusing attention to instruction whose subject-matter is repulsive to him, the question is of different import. If a student dislikes mathematics or Greek, and therefore refuses to learn his lessons or listen to the instruction given in these branches, no teacher would accept as an excuse the allegation that he *could* not open his eyes or his ears for the purpose of learning his lessons. Notwithstanding his repugnance to such studies, he has the power to read and to listen, and his plea of inability only shows his lack of character. So when one closes his ears against the Gospel, it is a mere refuge of lies to say that because of his natural repugnance to its contents he could not do otherwise. Of himself he could not do otherwise than dislike and eventually reject the good tidings of salvation; but he could do otherwise than refuse to hear them, by which hearing that which was hateful might have become precious to him. As one by an effort of will directed to the study of Greek may learn to love what was at first repulsive, so the determination

of the will to hear the Gospel, notwithstanding the heart's repugnance to its contents when these are once made known, may result, by the power which that Gospel contains and conveys, in an ardent love for those contents as the dearest truth which the human mind can entertain. We are not overlooking the difference between the two cases. That difference is great, but it does not effect the point which we are endeavoring to illustrate. There must be in the student the possibility of liking the Greek, else his original antipathy could never be overcome. There is no power in it to create a faculty which does not exist in the mind. At best it can awaken a power and develop a taste that was previously lying dormant. The antipathy to the Gospel message, on the other hand, has its roots in the inner depths of our being, and there is no dormant power which needs only be awakened to secure ready entrance for the Gospel: But the Gospel is the power of God; faith comes by hearing. It does not call into exercise a power that is hidden away in the recesses of the soul, but it confers a power which nature has not. The condition of its bestowal is the use of the means by which it pleases God to communicate the gift. And that use, so far as the outward acts are concerned, lies within the scope of natural ability. "This preaching of the Word," says our Formula of Concord, "all those must hear who would be saved. For the preaching and hearing of God's Word are the means of the Holy Spirit, by, in, and through which He will operate efficaciously and convert men to God, and work in them both to will and to do. This Word even a man who has not yet been converted to God and regenerated can hear and read externally; for in those external matters, as above said, man even after the fall has to some extent a free will, so that he can go to church and hearken or not hearken to the preaching. Through this means, to wit, the preaching and hearing of the Word, God operates and moves our hearts and draws man, so that he through the preaching of the Law learns to know his sin and God's wrath, and feels true terror and contrition in his heart, and through the preaching of and meditation upon the holy Gospel of the merciful remission of his sins in Christ a little spark of faith is kindled in him, and he accepts the forgiveness of sin for



Christ's sake and comforts himself with the promises of the Gospel. And thus the Holy Ghost, who works all this, is given into the heart." Sol. Dec. II. 12-54. That is as clear as it is Scriptural. Man cannot convert himself, but he can, notwithstanding his natural repugnance to the truth in Jesus, hear what the Word has to say, and the Holy Spirit does the saving work through that Word. If he wilfully refuses to hear, the Holy Spirit, who works through His appointed means, cannot accomplish His saving purpose in him.

What is claimed thus is not that man can by his natural power choose the grace and truth which the Gospel offers. That does not enter into the question at this point. What here must engage our attention is the possibility of giving ear to the Word, independently altogether of the results which, in the mercy of God, that Word is designed to accomplish. The man who, by an act of his personal will, determines to hear the Gospel, notwithstanding his natural repugnance to its contents, has not yet, by such resolution, determined his will to accept those contents. That he could not do, because all the motives in his nature acting upon his will impel to the contrary. But he can read the Bible and he can go to church and hear the Word preached. There are natural motives why he should do this, and there is the natural ability to be influenced by these motives to such volition and action. These are not conversion, nor are they any personal preparation for grace or application to grace. They pertain simply to the external means, without any comprehension of the ends which God designs to accomplish by them, or any acts of will pertaining to these ends. The point is lucidly set out by Hollaz when he writes: "Non-resistance is twofold, pedagogical and spiritual. Pedagogical non-resistance is to be found in a sinner in regard to external things that invite him into the church. For example, some unregenerated men refuse by means of their feet to walk into the church, some do not refuse to do this. Such pedagogical non-resistance, corresponding to external hearing, lies in the power of free will. But spiritual non-resistance, agreeing with internal hearing and assenting, is due to the assisting and preparatory grace of the Holy Spirit, as this breaks and checks natural and actual simple resistance that it may not become malicious, wilful, and con-

tumacious, although this grace, because of the extreme malice of men, does not always attain this end." Ex. Theol. Acr. III. sec. 1, cap. 6, qu. 16.

In many cases, however, probably in most cases, there is not at once that wilful resistance which cuts the person off from all further influences of the Holy Spirit. He who refuses to hear the Word at all stands purely in the domain of nature, and experiences no supernatural influence. But in a Christian country there are few who can keep entirely aloof from the power of the Gospel. The light which emanates from the Christian Church penetrates into every nook and corner of the land. Whether people desire it or not, something is heard of the wonderful plan which God has devised for the deliverance of our wretched race from sin and death. Some are thus induced to read and hear, that they may learn more of these marvelous works of God. Some give them an occasional thought, especially when Providence thrusts them upon the attention. Some harden their ears and hearts against them. Only the latter belong properly to the class of those who at the outset wilfully resist all efforts of divine grace to save them. While they refuse to hear, nothing can be done for them, because the Holy Spirit will not depart from His ordinary way of reaching men's hearts by means of the Word. By their wilful resistance to all motives brought to bear upon them in order to lead them to hear the Gospel, they have put themselves beyond the reach of the Holy Spirit, and they have done this by no necessity of their nature. They might have refrained from such obstinate and wilful resistance, as they had precisely the same opportunities and powers as those who did refrain. Their resistance was a matter of their own choice, and their condemnation is just.

But this is far from exhausting the subject. There are many who, although they do not thus resist at the outset, are still not eventually saved. Wilful resistance may take place as well after the Holy Spirit has begun His work in the soul as when the first proffers of grace are made. Nor do we think that the subject is clearly presented in all its aspects when it is viewed in the two conditions of the soul before grace has produced any effects within it and after conversion has taken place. We know that it is difficult to speak clearly of the s ec:

ond condition mentioned above; namely, of that in which grace has wrought, but in which conversion has not yet resulted and in many cases never does result. It may even seem absurd, in view of the figure of death as applied to man's spiritual state, to speak of such an intermediate stage. There is good reason for regarding it as inconceivable that one should be in a condition in which he is neither dead nor alive. The argument is used with some force, that if the soul is no longer dead in sins, it must have been made alive by grace, however small may be the spark of life which pervades it and however feeble may be its manifestations; and when it has such a spiritual life, however faint may be its pulsations, it is in the state which the word conversion is meant to designate. But forcible as the argument seems, it fails to satisfy the mind intent merely upon truth. The fact that many of our most acute theologians, famous as well for their profound knowledge of Scripture as for their sharp discrimination, have refused to recognize its force, raises an antecedent probability against it. That, of course, is no refutation. But it is a reason for scrutinizing the matter more closely. In the first place, the argument is built entirely upon a figure of speech. That is strongly against it. Not that a truth figuratively stated is any the less a truth on that account. The form of expression can influence only our apprehension of the matter expressed, not that matter itself. But it is manifestly begging the question to urge that, because man is pronounced spiritually dead by nature, the first effect of grace in his soul must be to complete the work of conversion and make him a child of God. The figure of death and quickening does not in itself warrant a conclusion of such far-reaching import. Before this could be admitted the mind must be satisfied that that was really had in view as the point, or at least one of the points, of comparison between a corpse and its restoration to life and the helpless sinner and his conversion.

In the second place, it is not inconceivable even in the case of a man's restoration to corporeal life, much less in the case of his restoration to spiritual life, that the effect should be accomplished by a gradual process. Life might begin in some part of the body, as death sometimes begins, so that it would be difficult to determine the exact point when the man

may be pronounced alive, as it sometimes is to determine exactly when he is dead. In the spiritual quickening this difficulty has been acknowledged by the most eminent theologians, some of whom have denied that such a precise moment when death has ended and life has begun can be fixed. Thus Chemnitz points out various stages in the conversion of man, and remarks: "Conversion or renovation is not a change that is instantly accomplished and perfected in all its parts in a single moment; but it has its beginnings, and its progress through which it is effected amid many infirmities. It is not therefore to be thought that I am to wait, with a secure and indolent will, until conviction or conversion has been accomplished, according to the stages already described, by the influence of the Holy Spirit, without any movement on my part. For it is not possible to point out, with mathematical accuracy, where the liberated will begins to act. But when prevenient grace, that is, the first beginnings of faith and conversion, is given to man, the conflict between the flesh and the Spirit at once begins, and it is manifest that this conflict does not take place without a motion of our will." *Loci Theol.* I. p. 199. It is true, Chemnitz, as is the case with our older theologians generally, uses the word conversion in a wider sense as synonymous with renovation or sanctification. But that very fact indicates that they were unwilling to adopt a doctrine according to which all who are converted are brought at once to a point at which, in the twinkling of an eye, they are transferred from a state of absolute death to one of absolute life. Chemnitz expressly repudiates the idea that such a precise mathematical point can be designated where the new power of free will begins. That there is a point at which he who was in God's eye an unbeliever and condemned becomes a believer and is justified, is not denied. Such is, for example, the moment of baptism in the case of a child. No doubt a similar moment is reached by every person who becomes a child of God in maturer years. What we maintain is not that a man may for days and even years be neither dead nor alive, neither a believer nor an unbeliever, but that he may be long in a state of transition in which, though he is in fact, as known to God, not yet an heir of heaven, he experiences operations of the Holy Spirit within, which may lead to his conversion, but

which he may wilfully resist, so that his conversion is never actually accomplished.

In the third place, we may boldly appeal to experience in regard to the point before us. Man is by nature dead in trespasses and sins, and nothing but the grace of God in Christ can ever renew him unto life. In that death he is blind as to his intellect, sensual and worldly as to his sensibilities, hostile to God as to his will. Is it in accordance with the facts as they daily stare us in the face, that grace produces its results upon all these faculties simultaneously and effects a sudden transition from death to life? Are there not many who have some illumination of intellect, which nature never gave them and never could give them, but who are still not converted persons? Are there not many who, through the light which has dawned on their intelligence, receive impulses in their feelings in the direction of heavenly things, but who still live after the flesh? The appeal to experience is indeed precarious. Some will probably assert that notwithstanding all the knowledge of spiritual things which an unconverted man may possess, he remains spiritually blind. The explanation in such case would be that the matter, the truth known, is supernaturally revealed and would never have been discovered by natural power from natural sources, but that the spiritual discernment of such object of knowledge is still wanting as long as the soul is not converted. In other words, it is denied that there is any illumination by the Spirit of God prior to the change of heart in regeneration. The consequence of this would be that conversion does not take place through illumination, but that illumination takes place only through conversion. How the standard teaching of the Church would be affected by such a theory we have not now the space to point out. It will suffice for our purpose merely to indicate the inconsistency of such view with the customary teaching of the Church. Furthermore, some will probably maintain that the feelings to which we have referred are merely natural products of natural knowledge, denying that the Holy Spirit has anything more to do with them than that He has revealed and brought to the mind the truth by the Scriptures, all the light derived thence and all the effects of that light in the heart lying entirely in the sphere of nature. How much of natural

power in spiritual things such a theory would imply as still remaining to man in his spiritual death, the reader may judge. It will again suffice for our purpose merely to indicate the synergistic implications of the view thus advanced. Finally, the great delicacy of the matter under consideration from the pastoral point of view, and the great danger of mistakes in the care of souls, if the doctrine be adopted that men may have their intellect and sensibilities moved by grace without actual conversion, may be urged against such doctrine. It will probably be maintained by some that timid Christians will be driven to despair by the thought that, after all, they may not be believers at all, notwithstanding that they have given diligence to know the truth, and notwithstanding that such truth has produced in them a desire to share the salvation which the Gospel proclaims and to follow the Savior in whom that salvation is found. To such an objection it might suffice to answer that where there is an earnest desire to be saved through the blood of Jesus and a firm resolve to follow Him, the case is no longer one that would belong to the class of which we speak, and a pastor who would regard such a one as yet an unbeliever would blunder in the same way as many do who apply the Law where the Gospel should be ministered and the Gospel where the Law should be used. Against such blunders no doctrine is secure. The true use of the doctrine would be to warn men that they must not rest content and become carnally secure on the strength of some knowledge which they have gained and some feelings which have resulted, but that only faith in Jesus saves the soul; that true faith works by love; that those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its affections and lusts; and that if, notwithstanding our knowledge of divine things and our impulses to serve God, we live after the flesh, resisting the Spirit and obeying the law of our members, we are not Christ's. Moreover, practically it will amount to the same thing, whether we regard such persons as converted and again falling from grace by their resistance of the Holy Ghost, or consider them as not yet converted and hindering the accomplishment of the Spirit's purpose by their wilful opposition to the work begun in their hearts. The objection drawn from the practical consequences of our doctrine is therefore invalid, as it lies equally against

any other explanation of the facts which are undeniable. But the argument from experience, because it may so easily be met by different interpretations and uses of the facts involved, we admit to be indecisive. We therefore turn to the Scriptures as our final appeal, whose decision is absolute.

In the fourth place, the inspired record certifies us that there are persons who have spiritual light and impulses without being children of God. "A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it." "Now the parable is this: The seed is the Word of God. Those by the way side are they that hear; then cometh the devil and taketh away the Word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved." Luke 8, 5. 11. 12. Among the four classes into which our Lord in this parable divides the hearers of the Word, this first class is beyond question composed of those who are not converted. There are two statements which bear on the subject under consideration. The devil takes away the Word from their heart, and they do not believe. It is therefore not a case in which the persons obstinately refused to be hearers. They did not keep at such a distance that the Word could not reach them, and they did not close their eyes and ears, so that they could not see or hear the words in which the heavenly truth is clothed. The tidings entered the mind through the ordinary avenue of sense. Whatever may have been the effect when it entered, it is certain that the Word was not powerless. It was taken away from the heart, not from the ear. Such a person is not converted, but neither is he in precisely the same condition as one who has never heard the Word. He is yet an unbeliever, but he was nearer the kingdom of God than one who had never heard of the Gospel, and nearer than one who, having heard of the Gospel, wilfully refused to hear it. Some light had shone into his soul; so much is certain. And some motion may have taken place in his feelings. With this came some divine power, in virtue of which another step might have been taken, until by degrees the purpose of the Holy Spirit might have been accomplished in the soul's conversion. An example of the effect which the Word may produce even in an unconverted heart is found in Acts 24, 24. 25. There we read: "After certain days, when

Felix came with his wife Drusilla, which was a Jewess, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. And as he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." That the Word produced some effect in the soul of Felix is plain from the text; that he was not converted by it is also clearly evinced by the narrative. Such passages of the Scriptures show that conversion is not of such a nature that it must take place in the twinkling of an eye, so that a person is either converted, as it were by magic, at the moment when the Gospel is first heard, or is not converted at all. The Scriptures furnish no warrant for the notion that grace first works faith, before any light is poured into the understanding or any motion takes place in the feelings. On the contrary, while the sanctification of the heart begins with faith, so that all the thinking, feeling, willing prior to the Holy Spirit's production of faith in the soul is that of an unregenerate person and is therefore not good as a personal act, the Holy Spirit ordinarily works faith by introducing into the mind the truth which is to be believed and thus giving the light and exercising the power which result in the soul's believing and without which it never could believe. In other words, there is a pedagogical illumination which must precede faith and prepares the way for its production, although there is a larger illumination that follows. "The first and chief design of illumination," says Hollaz, "is to prepare man for conversion. For thus the natural darkness, the ignorance of the mysteries, and the errors opposed to them, are expelled from the mind of man by grace, and he is imbued with a knowledge of God and of sacred things, and illuminated, as if by light, so that he is prepared to receive justifying grace. This illuminating grace therefore precedes the completion of conversion." Ex. Theol. Acr. III. sec. 1, cap. 5, qu. 1.

To these operations of the Holy Spirit in the soul, as well as to the pedagogical acts of God apart from the means of grace and to the impulses to read and hear the Word, there may be a wilful resistance, which prevents any further operations looking to conversion. At any stage of the process which, according to the Holy Spirit's design, is meant to result in



faith, wilful resistance may set in and stop all further progress.

When the question is proposed, how can the sinner refrain from wilfully resisting the work of grace at these more advanced stages, the answer must, in the nature of the case, vary from that which is given to the same question with reference to the beginning of the work. By his own natural power the sinner can decide, for instance, whether he shall read the Bible or not read it, go to church or not go, listen to the sermon or not listen. These are matters which in his nature he has motives to decide in the negative, but which he may, without any spiritual powers, decide in the affirmative. But when the Word has set before his mind the truth which alone can make free and save, the case is different. His whole nature rises in opposition to the message. To his intellect it is folly, to his sensibilities it is distasteful, and to his will it must therefore be hostile. Is there any possibility that to any soul it should be otherwise? If not, conversion is an impossibility, unless it should be by coercion through the omnipotent power of God. But if there were such a coercion in any case, the mercy of God to all men would render it certain that it would be applied in all cases, and that consequently all men would be converted and saved. That is not done. There are comparatively few that be saved. These are the few who do not wilfully resist, while the large majority obstinately refuse to follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit. By what power do these few refrain from such wilful resistance? The answer is obvious. It is by the power which, at each step in the process, the Holy Spirit has imparted. In the beginning there is nothing but the power of nature, and to make the beginning nothing is necessary but the capability of being saved, which is in all men alike. Any man can go to church or let it alone. He needs no grace for that. But not any man can, by the power in his fallen nature, follow the light which the Gospel gives and the emotions which may arise from that supernatural gift. He needs other powers for this than those which nature possesses. These other powers are supplied step by step as the work of grace goes forward. If one does not wilfully resist the motives which lead to the hearing or reading of the Word, that Word read

or heard will give him light and supply him with strength to read and hear further; and if he does not wilfully resist these new impulses in his heart, further grace and strength will be conferred to hear and heed further, until faith is wrought in his heart. Then, too, he may wilfully resist the sanctifying and saving grace and fall from faith, but then too he has in the grace which he possesses sufficient power to refrain from such suicidal resistance. In short, a man needs all the strength which at any time he possesses to refrain from wilfully resisting the grace offered him; and as the gift imparted arouses conscious opposition on the part of our nature and makes the omission of wilful resistance more difficult, so it conveys greater power to refrain from such resistance. "For he that hath, to him shall be given; and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath." Mark 4, 25.

Why in the beginning wilful resistance may be refrained from by the power of our own nature, while in the progress of the work such power would not suffice, thus becomes apparent. As long as only natural motives appealing to natural powers are in question, the will can be determined by nature for or against them. Whether a man shall go to church or not, or, being there, listen to the sermon or not, depends upon the inducements which can be offered to his judgment and his desires. These inducements can be effective only as they lie in the sphere of nature. Whether he thinks of making his church-going pecuniarily profitable or expects to have his taste gratified by the music and eloquence, or whether he hopes to have some yearning of his soul satisfied through the Gospel of whose power to help he has heard reports, the motive would be merely natural, and the resistance which sin presents to grace would not necessarily be aroused, at least not consciously. If there is then a wilful resistance to the inducements offered, it is a resistance that did not lie against the divine offers of grace presented as such, but against motives of a purely natural sort, proximately leading to a purely natural act, although ultimately designed by the Spirit of God to lead to the grace which is conferred by the means and the salvation which is thus attained. But as soon as the mind is made aware of the contents of the Gospel, as

revealing the gracious plan of saving sinners through Jesus' blood, nature rebels, and it would not, with the whole force of corrupt nature aroused in opposition, lie in our power to refrain from wilfully resisting the proffered grace, since there would be nothing in the soul to counteract the strong forces acting upon the will and carrying it along. There must therefore, with the light which enters and arouses natural opposition be also an impartation of power to check the motions of the flesh against the saving truth and furnish thoughts and impulses in coincidence with the light introduced, so that the soul is again in a condition in which it is possible to refrain from wilful resistance and in which the fault is its own if it does not refrain, as it would be false to say that it could not do otherwise. Such checking of our natural opposition and bestowal of new impulses is the inevitable result of the light introduced at each successive step that is not wilfully resisted, and which, when not resisted, in all cases results in conversion. The latter has taken place, not just as soon as the light begins to dawn upon the mind, or as soon as, in virtue of its introduction, there are motions of the sensibilities tending towards the new objects of knowledge, but as soon as these have determined the will, though it be in much weakness and conflict and vacillation, to own Christ as the Savior.

Keeping in mind these different conditions in which men may be regarded when wilful resistance is spoken of, it is easy to account for the seeming discrepancies of our theologians in their statements on the subject. They are perfectly agreed, and when their declarations seem conflicting it is because they have different conditions in view, in regard to which it would be incorrect to use the same predicates. To illustrate this we shall present the words of two authors, who seem to occupy extreme ground as representatives of what some would call two conflicting forms of doctrine. These authors are Baier and Huelsemann.

The former says: "We distinguish between a malicious resistance, which others call stubborn, wilful, habitual, pertinacious, and a natural resistance, which others call inborn. The latter of these flows directly from the corrupt nature of man and is common to all mortals; the former arises from a

peculiar fault and purpose of man, and is contracted voluntarily from malice, being greater and more pertinacious in some, in others not so great and less persistent, according as the acquired malice varies. This natural repugnance is gradually diminished through the grace conjoined with the Word in conversion itself, and is at length overcome; nor does it in itself, strictly considered, hinder conversion. But the other, malicious resistance, which is superadded to the natural, as it is not common to all the unregenerate equally, so men are able to abstain from it by the powers of free will; or, if they are not now able, after they have contracted vicious habits, nevertheless if they had been rightly educated and trained to virtue they would to some extent have been able to be free from it." Theol. Pos. III. cap. 4, § 39. It is scarcely necessary to remark that in these words Baier does not mean to say, that while man is unable, by his natural powers, to suppress the repugnance lying in our nature and therefore common to all men, he can by his own powers overcome that repugnance when the special opposition which emanates from conscious volition, and which is found only in some men, is superadded. Such an imputation would be an insult to the memory of that acute theologian. The natural resistance, he expressly states, is overcome by the grace of God conjoined with the Word, so that the converting grace is the grace which conquers the resistance in our nature, step by step, and makes the attainment of its end possible. If this were not so, no soul could be converted, since original sin involves such a resistance in all men. That which hinders conversion is the special determination of the will against the converting grace, which overcomes natural opposition, indeed, but which could not be claimed to override the special determination of the personal will in opposition to it without involving the twofold error, first that grace is irresistible, and secondly that those whom God designs to save He converts by coercion against their will. Baier, in common with all the standard writers of our Church, rejects these errors. They all teach that grace can be resisted and that God forces no man into heaven. Sinful nature resists, but that prevents no man's conversion. Grace has provided for that in providing for conversion at all. The opposition of nature is restrained

by the new powers of grace which the Word introduces, so that the will, gradually liberated from the enslaving power of ignorance and lust; may be rendered free to follow the new motions of grace. Formally the will is still capable, even in man's fallen condition, of performing its functions. The sinner can will by nature as well as think and feel. Such formal power he could not lose without losing something that belongs to his essence and therefore losing his humanity. What is wanting to him is material liberty, i. e. the power to will the good for which he was created. The influences brought to bear upon his formal power of willing are, in his corrupt condition, all such as to contravene his original destiny. He is sinful, and all his thinking and feeling therefore tend to volitions that are sinful and are thus coincident with his sinful nature. What does Baier mean, then, by saying that a man may, by the power inherent in his nature, abstain from the malicious resistance which is superadded to that which is natural? If he meant that, without any liberating influences introduced into the soul by the Word of God, man can resist all the sinful forces which lie in his nature and which are arrayed in opposition to the sanctifying and saving will of God, so that when the converting grace is offered to him he can render himself a passive object upon whom that grace can operate without resistance, we would not hesitate to say that he had fallen into an error. But that he does not mean this is evident beyond all controversy from the fact that he attributes the overcoming of man's inward enmity against God to the grace which is conjoined with the Word. He does *not* say that natural resistance can be abstained from by the powers of free will, as he certainly would imply, against his own explicit declaration, if he meant that man can by his own power refrain from oppugning the saving truth which the Gospel presents. What then does he mean by the wilful resistance which is superadded to the natural and from which it lies in man's natural power to abstain? It must be borne in mind that this resistance, according to his description, is not necessitated by the sinful nature of man and is therefore not found in all men, but only in some individuals. By his own definition, therefore, everything is excluded that flows by necessity from the corruption of our nature. When the

Gospel is brought to men they cannot help regarding it as foolishness; before it can seem anything else the grace which it brings must exert its enlightening power, so that the soul may see in it the wisdom of God. Such repugnance to it is natural. But that does not at all imply that when it is preached men must put their fingers in their ears, or run away beyond hearing, or cast stones at the preacher, or raise a riot to suppress its adherents. These things lie in the power of the human will and are among its possibilities. But instead of this men may, notwithstanding the hostility which lies imbedded in their nature, against the truth of God determine to hear what the preacher has to proclaim. No change of heart is necessary to form such a determination. The motive may be simply curiosity to hear what this babbler has to say, although it may be a nobler motive than this without transcending the powers of our corrupt nature. Among the things which lie within the scope of human intelligence and sentiment, even in the depraved condition of humanity, there is a wide range. From the brutish lust of the debauchee to the refined sentiment of the philosophical moralist there is a vast stretch, though the whole distance lie within the limits of the natural and in the domain of depravity. There may thus be various motives for listening to such a message as that which the Gospel brings, as there may be various motives for refusing to hear and even for persecuting its preachers. Those who hear may be converted; "faith comes by hearing." Those who wilfully refuse to hear cut themselves off from the only means by which their conversion could be effected. Such wilful resistance is not at all necessitated by the sinfulness of our nature. It may be abstained from, and abstained from by the powers of free will, without at all involving any spiritual ability or merit in such abstinence. That is obviously what Baier means, and meaning this he is in full accord with the Scriptures and with our Confessions, which know nothing of a natural inability, on account of the sinfulness of our nature, to go to church and hear, or of a natural necessity, by reason of our depravity, to persecute the prophets and slay them that preach Christ as the Savior.

But there may be a wilful resistance also after the soul has refrained from that malicious refusal to hear the Gospel

which Baier has in view. Those who wilfully oppose themselves to the use of the means of grace cannot be converted, and it is their fault that they cannot be, as they might have refrained from such opposition, the whole matter lying entirely in the sphere of natural ability. But it does not follow that all who hear are therefore converted. The natural resistance comes into exercise with full consciousness and force only when the truth begins to shine in on the soul and makes its import and its purpose manifest. Then the subject assumes a different aspect. The question then becomes a different one, because the domain which has been entered is different. When the truth in Jesus comes appealing to the soul through the intellect, which has inevitably received some light by the Word that has been heard, our nature rises in rebellion. But the grace offered is sufficient to overcome the opposition which it arouses by the necessity of our nature. Men can be converted without coercion, notwithstanding this natural repugnance to its gifts and requirements. What does wilful resistance mean when the work of the Holy Spirit has been begun in the soul by the partial illumination, and the introduction of such influences as this partial illumination necessarily implies? The design of God, and the way in which that design is to be accomplished, has then, at least to some extent, been brought to the consciousness of the sinner, and his volitions in regard to it would not have reference merely to the employment of some means of instruction and persuasion, but to the end at which such instruction and persuasion aim. His nature, under such circumstances, would impel him to oppose, and all the influences of his natural thought and feeling would lead to a wilful and resolute opposition. Hence nothing could be expected but a wilful as well as a natural resistance to the supernatural light and power which the Gospel brings. Can a man then by his natural power abstain from wilfully resisting the proffered grace, to which our whole sinful nature is repugnant? This question Baier does not answer in the affirmative. He does not take this case into consideration. But this is the case which other dogmatists have considered, and which has led to a different decision. The evil powers of nature can be overcome only by the good powers of grace. Wilful resistance in such a case could be conquered only by the influences which the supernatural

power of the Word exerts. These break the force of the carnal impulses, which would lead to obstinate resistance, and render it possible for the spiritual forces introduced by the Word to move the will to their own ends. When wilful resistance then interposes, it is in opposition to the grace which is sufficient for its prevention, and when the soul then abstains from wilful resistance it is only in virtue of the new powers which check the carnal forces and the new influences which counteract the old and move towards the accomplishment of God's gracious will. This is the case and condition which those of our theologians have in view who say that wilful resistance cannot be overcome by natural power, but that it is conquered only by grace. Of these we take Huelsemann as an example.

This celebrated theologian writes: "By nature every unregenerate person despises the preaching of the cross, because it does not harmonize with his reason. For 'the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them.' 1 Cor. 2, 14; Rom. 8, 7. On account of this natural resistance the preaching of the Gospel is not withdrawn from any people or person. For according to the design of God it is properly and ultimately to serve the purpose of removing that natural resistance, so that the unwilling become willing. Hence natural resistance is precisely that with which grace has properly to deal, that those thus resisting may be changed and brought under the obedience of faith. 2 Cor. 5, 20; 10, 5; Luke 1, 78. 79; Tit. 3, 3; Rom. 15, 18; 16, 26; 1 Pet. 1, 2. etc. But obstinate contempt or wilful resistance it is called when a person wantonly rejects the spiritual powers which God truly and really communicates to man through every ordinary preaching of the Word, so far as God imparts this gift and thus bestows everything that on the part of God is necessary to remove natural resistance, whether man accepts this gift or not. To such wilful resistance belongs also the fall from faith or godliness in the case of those who are converted, which fall is the opposite of perseverance. This contempt and resistance is superadded to the natural and takes place only after the contents of the Word have become known. This wilful is clearly distinguished from natural resistance in Thess. 1, 7. 8: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven



with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." Here a distinction is made between those who are ignorant and in whom there is only natural resistance, and those who are wilfully disobedient. The same distinction is made in Rom. 10, 16. Such wilful resistance deserves that the Word of God be taken away, whether a person be really converted or not yet really converted, and that because the expression of such contempt might have been overcome by the grace which the preached Word always and everywhere imparts to every intelligent and attentive hearer. For every first grace prepares its way in man, so that he can yield to its efficacy, and does not require any other grace to precede it. If it were not so, there would be no grace that is efficacious, because every grace which could be conceived as the first would require another to precede it. As it is the nature of seed always and in some way to germinate and grow up, and contrary to its nature not to germinate, so our Savior testifies that the earth upon which the seed is cast of itself brings forth first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. Mark 4, 27, 28. Just so is it the nature of the Word always to work something, the first operation in man being that he becomes able not to resist the work of the Holy Spirit who seeks to lead him to assent, or that he is able to refrain from wilful resistance. After this is removed, the Word according to its nature makes further progress; I say, according to its nature and to the design of God. Luke 8, 18. Hence if man resists, notwithstanding that he has heard the Word, jeering at it or casting it to the winds, such resistance is obstinate and wilful, although the person is not yet fully converted, but belongs to the wayside hearers. Matt. 13, 19. For by the powers received through the Word which was heard he was enabled to refrain from resistance. This is the ground of our Lord's saying, John 15, 22: "If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin: (to wit, of contumacious resistance). And Matt. 23, 37: 'How often *would I . . . . .* but *ye would not!*' De Aux. Grat. p. 147-149.

We are convinced that a closer inspection of the explanation given by our theologians will convince a candid and un-

prejudiced mind, not only that their seemingly conflicting statements are reconcilable with each other, but that both classes of statements are necessary to set forth the full truth on the subject which they all embraced with complete unanimity. They all teach that God alone converts the soul; that His will is the conversion of all to whom the Word of God comes; that the appointed means in every case convey the grace necessary to this end; and that the reason why not all to whom such grace is brought are converted is that some resist as others do not. They all teach that by reason of original sin there is resistance in every soul by nature; that such natural resistance does not render conversion impossible; that there is a resistance which blocks up the ordinary way of the Holy Spirit, so that He cannot accomplish His work; and that such resistance as thwarts the design of grace is not by inevitable necessity forced upon any one. Whilst but few of those with whose writings we have become acquainted express themselves distinctly in regard to the power by which the resistance that forms a barrier to conversion is overcome, they all agree that obstinate resistance to the outward use of the means of grace—to the motives appearing in consciousness for going to church, for giving attention to what is said there, etc.—may be omitted by mere natural power, as in such a case there can as yet be no spiritual power in the soul by which it could be omitted; but none of them denies—none even of those who, like Baier, teach that wilful resistance may be omitted by man's free will, i. e. by his natural powers—that when the divine truth and power asserts itself through the Word in the soul, arousing opposition to the contents of that Word now made known, such natural repugnance cannot be overcome by nature, and would certainly become wilful and persistent resistance if grace did not introduce the power which renders it possible to refrain from it. And that power to refrain is given not only to a few, but is imparted in every case where the Gospel, which is the power of God, is preached, as some of them, like Huelsemann, expressly declare.

In conclusion we are constrained to repeat that our inquiry was instituted as an essay towards clearing up a difficult theological question, not at all as a contribution towards settling the present controversy on predestination. Those are permitting themselves to be deceived who suppose that

the theological problem discussed, forms the point of dispute between us and Missouri. However this problem may be solved, Missouri's absolute predestination and particular grace will remain a falsehood, and Ohio's doctrine that God would have all men to be saved, and by His means saves all who do not themselves frustrate His design, remains forever true.

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## INDEPENDENT THOUGHT.

Who shall do our thinking for us? Or, is the world liberal enough to let a man do that for himself? If the present age has sometimes been characterized as an irreligious age, it has not on that account become more free in its own thought or more liberal toward the thought of others. The great crowd is too apt to lift up its voice in wild cries of approval, simply because a statement or saying reaches its ears from the platform or stage; and when the crowd cries, it is selfish and illiberal enough to demand that every man shall join in the cry.

It surely is right to give credit wherever credit is due. It is never advisable to undervalue the intellectual work of others. So vast is the field of thought and observation, and so great are many of the questions that shake up the souls of men, that here no man can afford to work alone. The man of thought, perhaps more than any other, needs the help of his neighbor. He must profit by the labor of others; he must have the advantage of their experience; and to look with admiration and high esteem upon the man who in climbing the hill of learning has reached a position far in advance of ourselves, is not a reproach, but rather an honor.

But the question is not whether we may make use of facts that have been collected by observations or experiments made by others. This may certainly be done without sacrificing true independence of thought. Nor is the question this, whether we may utilize the classifications that others have made. For if we can obtain any real help from men in advance of ourselves, let us by all means honest and honorable reach for it with outstretched hands and grateful hearts.

But a man must not lie down in the vain hope or expectation that others will drag him along with them up the long hill. Let him stand on his own feet in the onward and upward march. In a moment of passing infirmity the soldier may perhaps be permitted to lean on his comrade, but in the long part of the journey he must depend for success on the endurance of his own limbs. Every man must think for himself.

The question here is therefore not, Who shall supply us with food for our thought? though this might be made a question for discussion; for no one should be content with impure and corrupt sources. But the question is rather like this, Shall we look to others to have our food digested for us? Shall others draw our conclusions for us? Who shall be our master? Shall others furnish the substance, the mode and the end of our thought, so that we have nothing to do but add our approval?

I am aware that the terms "independent thought," "freedom of thought," and the like, do have their somewhat unsavory odors about them. But may we not rescue these very significant terms from their filthy associations and apply them to the things to which they legitimately belong?

Infidelity, atheism, and the whole long line of other corruptions of doctrine have always known how to apply to themselves beautiful and attractive names. To hear them tell it, they are the people of "advanced thought;" they are the advocates and champions of progress and reform; they are bearing in their hands the banners of liberty; they are pushing forward the car of human improvement. It is the repetition of the old lie under the fruit trees of Paradise: If you eat, you will make progress; you will be like a god; you will see things with open eyes. They do not seem to know, that the thing they call a car of progress is nothing but a juggernaut, under whose clumsy wheels many a poor fool who has been silly enough to lie down before it has been crushed for time and for eternity.

All these attractive names, these very significant terms, do not properly belong to such bunglers at the work of reform. They are ours. By every right of propriety and fitness they are ours. They are legitimately Christian property, and

we must not be satisfied to have them forever remain infidel booty and plunder. We want men free. Liberty is a Christian goal. In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt die, is the voice that pleads, not for bondage, but for liberty. The other voice that says nay, if thou eatest, then shall thine eyes be opened, is the real slave-holder who wraps the chains of bondage around the limbs of mankind. We want men to do their own thinking. Does not our divine Master Himself cry out to His disciples, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free?" And St. Paul's writing to the people of Corinth sounds like a true cry for freedom and independence, when he says, "Quit you like men, be strong."

Indeed, imbecility is a failing of our age. If we had more of the rugged nature of the men of other days, men whose sentences were not always shaped by the rules of modern rhetoric, but whose hearts were in the right spot, the cause of true progress and liberty would make more rapid advancement. And this imbecility does not decline in the proportion in which infidelity advances. But the reverse is true; it abounds most wherever unbelief has its rankest growth. The promise was, your eyes shall be opened; but the realization is, that men have closed their eyes and followed the voice of the deceiver.

Too many men of our day are strongly inclined to bow down in the presence of so-called human greatness. Distinction in any special department of effort commands too much respect, — not like the respect mentioned in the commandment, Honor thy father and thy mother, but rather like the servility with which men seek to win the favor of the powerful and the great. So men who have perhaps performed great services for their fellowmen are expected to perform the still greater service of doing their thinking for them, and they who stand high either in learning, or wealth, or official position, are by common consent accepted as masters by those who are in these respects their inferiors. It is indeed marvelous, what immense camels some men will swallow, if the dose is prescribed by some recognized authority.

This preacher, or that professor, has said this, that, or the other, and therefore this, that, or the other, as the case may

be, must be true; for they who have said it are the men who ought to know.

Good; yes, they ought to know. But the question is, do they know? Infallibility has often been mistaken,—when men have assumed the attribute of infallibility. Would it not be well to look into our food before we take it into our stomachs, and not trust too much to the cook?

We must read? Certainly, but we must read thoughtfully. In his way Shopenhauer was probably correct in saying, "When we read, another does our thinking for us." For some people the writer does do the thinking for his reader, but only because the reader is too indolent, or careless, or indifferent, or, what is worse than all, too deeply impressed with reverential awe toward his author, to do that for himself. When we read, our business is to think for ourselves.

Books are indeed wonderful agencies of progress. By all means let their real value be fully recognized everywhere. We will not gainsay when Luther says, "Every good book is a deed, and every good deed a book." We will unite with Alonzo of Aragon in saying, "Old wood to burn, old wine to drink, old friends to trust, old books to read." Every good book is indeed an act for progress and a stroke for liberty. The pen has done more for the cause of freedom than the sword. New books and old, the modern and the ancient, if they are good, are so many blows struck for the true enfranchisement of the race. But books are by no means a benefit to the intellectual dyspeptic. The more he reads, the more his digestion becomes disordered. When a man reads it is therefore his business to think for himself.

Where shall we look, then, for true liberty of thought, for advanced thought, for independent thought? Yes, I use these terms, and that, too, without apology; and ask again, who is the real free thinker, the true liberalist?

The distinction is claimed by infidels and atheists, and the advocates of many other forms of unbelief. Therefore let these men step to the front, until we hear their account of the matter. Let them be arraigned before the proper tribunal, that they may tell us what their liberty is and in what their boasted free thought, advanced thought, and the like, consists.

Gentlemen, what have you to say for yourselves? Oh,

you are scientists. You have broken away from the old forms of thought, and you have attached yourselves to new and advanced ideas. You have taken your portion of the inheritance and have gone into a far country. Your eyes are open now, and you know now that the old Book of books is a tyrannical taskmaster. You rejoice now that you have been drinking at the fountains of scientific wisdom, and that this wisdom has made you free.

Good, gentlemen; please be congratulated upon your newly fledged liberty. But pray, may we not enquire what sort of a thing this newly discovered liberty is? What new things do you know? What new knowledge can you impart? What sort of a living have you out yonder in the far country, where no restraints of home are upon you, and where no old landmarks hinder you? If you have departed from the old teachings, pray tell us what new attachments you have formed? What new bride have you espoused?

Like a chorus of many voices the answer presses upon our ears; for who is more ready and fluent to talk than the scientist? Oh, yes, yes, thanks to science, we have discarded the old Mosaic records. They are not reliable. The old theory of origin and creation is not true. We are free from the old superstition. Mankind did not spring from a single pair, as Moses has written. Science has opened the skull of the Ethiopian, the man whose skin has been darkened under the burning skies of the torrid zone. Science has unfolded the convolutions of his brain. Science has looked at his prolonged heel. Science has measured his thick lips; and after all these measurements and investigations science has said that this black man, this distorted denizen of the African jungles and deserts, did not spring from the same loins from which the white-faced Caucasian has come into being.

Well, that is sound, accurate, scientific. Who will now gainsay, after science has spoken? Must not this be the end of all controversy? Who will have the temerity to stand by the old Mosaic account?

But hark, our court must not yet be closed. Another grand chorus of voices is struggling to utter testimony. Let us hear these voices confirm the testimony of our first witnesses, so that we may all drink of the waters that are so

copiously distilled at this fountain of science, and so that if possible we may all be made free.

Yes, these also say, you are quite right. The old Mosaic account is not correct, Moses tells of the creation of original distinct species. Moses says, man springs from one distinct original stock. Moses testifies that the lower orders of animals have each descended from an original pair, each species after its own kind. Moses tells us that plants, flowers and trees, have been propagated in a similar way, each one having been made to produce distinct and separate seeds after its own kind.

But all this Mosaic teaching is wrong. We know it is wrong because science tells us so. The scientific teaching is, that all things have only one common origin. All life is the result of development from one sort of original atoms. The thing that moved this original chaos of atoms into living forms and force is called evolution. Science says so. Evolution has stirred and moved and mixed this universal ocean of floating and disarranged atoms until all the varied forms of life and being now at hand have been crowded into existence.

From this new and advanced teaching of science it very readily appears, that man does not take the peculiar position in the scale of being, into which the Mosaic records have placed him. He has no higher origin than the plant, or the mineral, or any form of flesh and muscle and blood. Though in the scale of animal life he may now have advanced to the foremost rank, he is after all nothing more than the distinguished brother of the horse, the ox, the skunk, and the monkey. He is evolved from the same common ancestry, the same indistinct mass of floating and mingled atoms. Science says so.

The distinctions that have been made to appear from the process of evolution are merely the result of development. Some forms of life and being have made more rapid progress than others. The insect has been evolved from the atom or the so-called original cell; the monkey from the insect; and finally man from the monkey. All this process has occupied many millions of years, the lower advancing into the higher, step by step, in regular gradations of progress, until the pres-



ent state of life and being has been reached. If man is more advanced in the order of being than other forms of life, it is merely because his progress in the process of evolution has been more rapid. Evolution has been doing a grander and greater work for him than for others; it has been more speedy in its operations and has therefore thrown him up much higher on the shores of the great atomic ocean.

For this very plain reason man is some millions of years in advance of the insect. But if we have the patience to wait, we shall yet see the insect of the present plodding steadily along in the progress of evolution, until it shall at last have risen to the estate of a man. Science says so.

But more than this science does not say. It does not tell us into what superior being the man of this present age shall have developed, when the insect of the present shall have been pushed forward by the power of evolution unto the present high estate of man. It does not tell us of a coming future age, when no insects shall be in existence, simply because every specimen of insect life shall have been transformed into a man. We may however surmise, that somewhere in the universe of life and matter the original ocean of atoms and cells is yet in existence, and that therefore, as evolution continues to push man forward and outward into higher and nobler positions, it will likewise continue to bring up in his rear, from the great original ocean, all the lower gradations of being, as has been the case in the past. All this, however, is mere speculative thought. Science has not said this. It is an unsolved problem. For the present we hear no more testimony. Further deponent saith not.

And now that we have heard the testimony of our witnesses, we are constrained to exclaim, How beautiful is science! How very prolific in its results! With a modern writer of some note we admire the "wholesale returns of conjecture" that are derived from such "trifling investments of fact." Beautiful science! As the lily among thorns so is my love among daughters!

First she tells us, that mankind can not have descended from a single pair of ancestors. The African is too black for that, and the Caucasian too white. And then she tells us that the whole race, white, black and all, together with every

other form of life, whether animal or vegetable, has all been evolved from one common ocean of atoms and cells. And again we cry out, O how beautiful is science! But we do feel a "compunctious throb" of something like regret over some existing discrepancies. Unfortunately, these discrepancies make it hard for us to believe.

Hard to believe? Ah, but we are bound to believe. Or, rather, you gentlemen who have espoused this beautiful daughter of modern progress, are bound to believe. Nay, do not plead freedom now. I tell you, nay, you are not free. You have no choice in the matter. You are held securely in the embrace of your beautiful spouse. She is the bride of your own wooing and choosing; and the divorce is not so easily obtained as the espousal has been made.

You take up a theory and call it scientific, but long before it has imbedded itself into the mental consciousness of men, you take up another and call that scientific also. And you are pledged and betrothed to this science. You are not free. If you relinquish one theory and espouse another, you are like the man who revolts with disgust from one impure embrace only to cast himself into the arms of another.

Some people may call this everlasting uncertainty, this turning from one uncertainty to another, this ceaseless work of building theories on foundations of mere speculation, liberty. I do not. I call it bondage. It is not light, nor free thought, nor advanced thought, nor anything of the kind. It is darkness and slavery. He whose past has given him no security for his future is not free. He is a slave,—in every true and legitimate sense of the word, a slave.

In one thing only is this thing that some people call science unchangeably consistent—the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. It cries out and keeps on crying out with commendable persistence to its enslaved followers, do not go back to the old landmarks. Continue to reject the ancient superstitions. Do not re-adopt the old Bible as your rule of doctrine and life. You are free now. O the pains that this science takes to keep her admiring followers in the delusion that they are free. It is the consistency of the master who holds the keys to the chains of his slave.

Once again, therefore, who is the real free thinker, the true liberalist?

I ask no man to accept conjectures or hypotheses. I bind no man to mere suppositions. Speculative philosophies do have their value and their beauty. But speculative conjectures can never serve as foundations on which to build up structures of positive doctrine. They may serve to amuse, to entertain, or even to instruct, but they are not well established truths on which a man can set his feet and say, Here I stand in safety. Accordingly the man who is truly free will not accept mere speculative theories as foundations of doctrinal statement. Neither will he who is truly free reject what has become historical. He who is forever bound to the fluctuations of uncertainty is a slave; he who stands on solid land, or rides securely over the crested wave, is free.

When Israel began to follow Moses, Israel was taking the first lessons in liberty. When Jesus walked on the waters of Genessaret he was free. And when Peter cried out, Lord, save, the arm that held him above the treacherous waves was not the arm of bondage, but of liberty.

The power that makes men free, the arm that liberates, must itself be the principle and embodiment of liberty. And when we inquire what that power is, the hand of all history points to one great central force and influence.

The man born at Bethlehem 1800 and more years ago is the embodiment of liberty. From the days of His infancy down to the "solemn tragedy of Calvary" it has been the effort of the world to enslave Him. But at every point in His wonderful career He has asserted and re-asserted His liberty. Whether waging successful warfare against the evil spirits of disease and uncleanness, or engaged in sharp debates with Scribes and Pharisees, or standing a prisoner in the halls of Pilate, every new event was a repeated evidence that Jesus was always master of the situation. Here in the history of the ages the world beheld a spectacle that had never before appeared. The chains and bolts with which envy and hatred would bind a man down to their own low level were about to be broken. In vain was the massive rock set and sealed against the door of the sepulcher. In vain does the Roman guard stand sentinel over the distinguished grave. When the supreme moment came, the miracle of time, the full and complete fullness, the darkest parts of the earth and

the most extreme lengths to which bondage can carry dominion were made to see that no power in hell or earth can make the humble tradesman of Nazareth a slave.

The resurrection of Jesus was the resurrection of liberty. The Master is free,—free to think, free to speak, and free to act,—free to scatter the seeds of liberty to the ends of the earth. The second Moses has stood before his Pharaoh and has gone out bearing in his hands the banners of victory and liberty.

And has not the harvest been a harvest of free thought, free government, and free and liberal institutions? Once more let history furnish the testimony.

It is very true that the power of the tyrant has not been taken from him in an instant. The strugglings and sufferings of the Master have been repeated in the pain and martyrdom of many an humble disciple. All past history indeed groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. But if tyranny has long had its foot on the neck of the nations, it has exercised its oppressive dominion not in agreement with, but under the protest of, Christian principles. From the day when Herod, surnamed the great, *the first pope*, made the effort to remove the great God from His throne, that he himself might be exalted above all that is called God, down to the present day, the principles of liberty and the dark genius of bondage have been in deadly conflict. And once again history will tell with what great results.

Time and space will permit no extensive ramblings over the vast field at present. But some few of the outlines and landmarks are far too plain to be misinterpreted.

Who does not have some knowledge of the darkness that hung like a pall over the nations during the period preceding the Reformation? Other popes than Herod had usurped dominion. Like their ancient predecessor they had the same object in view. They wanted to exalt themselves above all that is called God or that is worshiped. They seated themselves in the temple of God that men might look upon them as gods. And then their unqualified requirement was that the nations, governments, and armies of the world should all unite to do them honor.

The first thing needed to effect such a success was dark-

ness. The light of the Bible must be put out. Under its clear rays a man would not look much like a god. The Bible and the pope do not belong together. They have nothing in common. Their aims are antagonistic. The one wants liberty for mankind, and the other holds up the sword of terror, demanding that every individual in the whole human race shall be his vassal. It is an antagonism similar to that prevailing between light and darkness.

In the midst of all this midnight gloom and tyranny a man is seen approaching the doors of an old church at Wittenberg. His stride is long and his step is firm like a man who knows his mission. Up on the rounds of a ladder he holds in one hand a writing and with the other he plies a hammer. The blows that fall indicate no uncertain sound. Very soon the contents of that writing were known to the world. In an incredibly short time the tidings had been borne from Wittenberg to Rome, from the Bethlehem to the Jerusalem of the sixteenth century. And once more tyranny trembled on its throne as it had not done perhaps since the days when the great announcement had been made, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord," or since the strange rumor had run along the streets and lanes of Jerusalem of old, "He is not here, He is risen."

Yes, once more Christ was risen from the dead; and His resurrection was the new birth of liberty. The struggles were not all past; the battles not all fought; the blood not all shed. But the great principle of liberty was re-asserted with an emphasis and a vigor to which the whole world had long been a stranger. Light once more began to dawn in darkened minds. Men who had been afraid even of their own thoughts once more began to think for themselves; and as thought became more free they began to see before them the days of a brighter future. The dawning light was beginning to have the blessed effect of creating within men's minds new vigor, energy, and life. They were the slaves of hopelessness and despair no more; they were once more free.

And in time the liberty of the old world was transplanted into the new. Here on these hills and in these valleys it grew, if possible, with even greater vigor and beauty. I do

not know what America might have been without the stirring events of the sixteenth century in Europe. That it would not have been the land of the free and the home of the brave, is quite certain. Without an October 31st, 1517, in Europe, it is doubtful whether we would have had a July 4th, 1776, in America. With no longings for liberty inspired by the elevating power of Christian precept, no Pilgrim Fathers would have landed on Plymouth Rock in 1620. If the great mass of immigrants that Europe has sent to our shores during even the last five decades only had all been Roman Catholic, instead of largely Protestant as they have been, who can estimate the loss that the cause of liberty might have suffered?

They who set their faces in opposition against our religion are the slaves of their own blindness and passions. They are laboring to destroy the light under whose life-giving rays liberty springs into being and is preserved in a state of vigorous growth. They call their work the work of liberty, of advanced thought, and the like. It is not so. If their designs could be accomplished, the world would quickly relapse into its old ignorance, darkness, and bondage. All the liberty they themselves enjoy they owe to the power of Christianity that they are aiming to destroy. All history testifies that wherever Christian truth has been eliminated from the thought and the life of the people, liberty has been endangered and often effectually destroyed. The leaders of infidel thought, whose voices are lifted up against the Christian religion, are laboring to forge their own chains, and the admiring crowd that shouts applause knows not what it does.

In this connection it would be easy to show, that even the material progress that the world has made may very largely be ascribed to the direct influence of Christianity. Bondage and progress are not likely to enter into a brotherhood. Where is the nation into which the Bible has not gone first, before the arm of enterprise and improvement has begun to act? Or, on the other hand, where is the nation in whose people the life of civilization has begun to pulsate in response to infidel and atheistic preaching and teaching? Infidelity is illustrious only in a negative sense; it can boast of the denials it has made and of the things it has not done. It founds no almshouses and builds no asylums. It is indeed very true

that not many of our great inventors are themselves the disciples of Jesus; and yet Pagan hands do not produce men like Fulton, Morse or Edison. A divine Providence is using the strength and talent of such men for the consummation of purposes that are as yet very imperfectly understood. Much as the world despises the humble Nazarine, it is indebted to Him for all its richest blessings.

If the cynical spirit of infidelity could be made to prevail, it would erase and wipe out from the whole earth every remnant of liberty as embodied in Christ and His people. It would be like the success of the man who aims to blot out the sun from the sky. It would be death to every free aspiration and hope. It would be the consigning of the whole race to a hopeless bondage. It would be the blight of enterprise and a mighty hindrance in the way of all material progress.

From the star of Bethlehem proceeds the light that warms into being the germ of liberty. Its beaming rays inspire the heart with hope. And hope for the future is the soul of liberty, while hopelessness and despair are the dark spirits of bondage. Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

Let it be observed, therefore, that independent thought in its truest and highest sense does not rest on self. A house stands when it is built on a foundation, but not when it is built on itself. So a man stands when his feet are set on solid ground. And the only solid ground is the truth of which Jesus is the embodiment. He is the way, *the truth*, and the life. The man who in his habits of thought stands on that truth is truly independent. He needs no human arm or authority to sustain him. He is bound by no human system. He is in the only true sense a man of independent thought, a real and true liberalist.

The conclusion of the whole matter is, that the Christian's calling is the noblest on earth. He scatters the seeds of Christian truth and at the same time also of true liberty. He unfurls to the breeze the banner of freedom. Every Christian life that has ever dawned into being, bloomed and ripened into maturity, and been gathered as the wheat of God from the world's great field, has had its influence in promoting the growth of liberty,—its share in the great work of

making men free. Here the humble and the exalted, the poor and the rich, the feeble and the strong, may and really do all partake in the work. The Christian physician, the Christian lawyer, the Christian mechanic, the Christian politician, the Christian financier and the Christian minister are all laboring in the same great field and unto the same great end,—the true enfranchisement of the race.

And because the office of the ministry is especially the office that gives outward, vocal and representative expression to the power that enfranchises the world, it is the highest and noblest office within human reach. Well may St. Paul say, "I magnify mine office." No higher distinction can be bestowed upon a man than to make him a minister of the cross and a herald of liberty; and if he is one of these, he must needs be the other. It is the office that holds the hammer with which alone the chains of bondage are broken. It carries the fire with which the hinges of prison doors are melted away. "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord, and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" It is the office that embodies the voice of all Christianity for independent thought and against every form of slavery; it is itself the voice of Christendom to utter the unceasing protest, No Master but Jesus—no Lord but God on High.

H. A. BECKER.

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## LUTHERAN EXCLUSIVENESS.

In the sense in which enemies bring the railing accusation against the Lutheran Church that she is exclusive, she must plead not guilty. There is not an ecclesiastical organization that, in the proper sense of the term, is more liberal. Of her own authority she excludes nobody, she excludes nothing. She does not arrogate to herself the power to lay down a single law or set up a single tenet by which human consciences are bound, and which must therefore stand as a test of church fellowship. Whoever wants to become a member is welcome; whoever becomes a member is free from every yoke of human bondage. How could such a church be exclusive?

We do not say, let it be observed, that nothing is required



as a qualification for membership in the Lutheran Church, and that nothing is required of those who have become members. That is a different matter. What we say is this, that Lutheran Christians claim no right to make articles of faith and demand that other people must believe them as a condition of admission into our churches, or to enact laws and require obedience to them as a condition of enjoying church privileges. They recognize no human authority in matters of faith and godliness. In their churches one man has just the same rights as every other man, and one has just as much authority as any other. How could a church be more liberal?

What our position is in this regard is accurately and concisely expressed in Art. VII. of the Augsburg Confession, where we read: "Unto the true unity of the church it is sufficient to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments; nor is it necessary that human traditions, rites, or ceremonies instituted by men, should be alike everywhere." The meaning of this obviously is, that when God speaks, of course His servants will hear. His voice is decisive. From that there can be no appeal. He who will not submit to that does not belong to God's people and has no business to obtrude himself upon those who profess to be His people and recognize Him as absolute Lord. In the acceptance of His proclamation all must agree, else there would be nothing to unite them. But outside of that nothing is necessary for church fellowship. They are united by the one faith and the unanimous confession of that faith, and they need nothing else to unite them. Human rites and ceremonies are all very well in their place, but they are human, and can therefore not be needed for the unity of an organization that is divine. Christ can rule His church very well, and does not need the help of man's wisdom. What qualifications are required for membership He determines; what is required of members He decides. These things are determined and decided by His Word, and no human authority can add anything to it or detract anything from it. Human traditions and regulations must never be permitted to usurp the authority which belongs alone to divine revelation.

We do not say, let it be again observed, that congregations can make no regulations and institute no ceremonies, but are

bound to assert only those which the Lord has given and to reject all others. The divine rule, "Let everything be done decently and in order," certainly leaves room for some discretionary power. Whether a congregation shall have one service a week or more, whether it shall convene in the morning or afternoon or evening, whether it shall have responsive services, and numerous other questions of similar import, the members must themselves decide; the Lord has not decided it for them. And when the people have themselves decided there must be no stubborn opposition on the part of one or a few against the decision of the many, as that would be a violation of the Lord's command that all should seek peace and ensue it. But such regulations, necessary as they are for external order, do not belong to the things which the Lord has made conditions of becoming or remaining members of His Church. They are matters of liberty which men may regulate as they think best, and about which men may have what opinions and preferences they please, if they only heed the Lord's will that they should preserve order and be at peace with one another. What the Lord says is to Christians absolutely decisive; all the rest is free.

Therefore we said that the Lutheran Church of her own authority excludes nobody and nothing. She lays down nothing as law and sets up nothing as faith for other people. She merely accepts what the Lord gives. The truth revealed in His precious Word she believes and confesses. She demands nothing of church members but what her Lord requires; she excludes none but those who are excluded by these requirements. But in that respect and to that extent she is exclusive, and that is the head and front of her offending.

The Christian Church, viewed\* in that light, certainly is exclusive. She is so in virtue of the constitution and laws which the Lord has given her. While it is His will that all nations and classes should be brought within her pale, He has laid down requirements which exclude many. Certain qualifications are requisite for membership. Where these are lacking, membership is impossible. A visible church that would take no note of them, but would presume to receive persons who are devoid of these necessary qualifications, might seem to be doing a good business by multiplying its members,

but it would be laboring under a delusion and practicing a deception. Those are not really in the Church whom the Lord refuses to receive. Resolutions of man amount to nothing in a case where God has reserved the decision to Himself. Of what avail could it be, if a congregation should declare a person to be a member of Christ's Church, when Christ Himself declares that it is not so? He will not change His requirements to suit every whim and weakness and wickedness of men professing to be His disciples. Such a congregation, instead of benefiting the person who lacks the necessary qualifications, would only damage its own cause and claims, and put itself outside of the true visible church, which is known by its adherence to the Master's Word.

Unto the true unity of the church it is necessary to agree concerning the doctrine of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. That is sufficient, but that much is indispensable. The church is the congregation of believers. All that are really saved belong to Christ's fold and should be received into the visible congregation. But this is the assembly of those who make themselves known to each other as believers by gathering around the means of grace and confessing their faith. By their fruits ye shall know them. But that confession must coincide with the divine teaching as given in the Scriptures. "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed." 2 John 11. "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." Rom. 16, 17. The Lord has bound us to His own regulations in regard to membership in the church. We must not add anything to that which He requires, but neither must we arrogate to ourselves the authority to take anything away. We are to have fellowship with those who by true faith receive Him as their Savior, and must come out and be separate from those who reject Him. But we cannot see into the hearts of men and thus ascertain who are true believers. We can judge this only by their confessions. That makes it necessary for us to join those who have the pure Word and Sacrament, and to separate from those who, although they profess to be Christians, confess doctrines which do not accord with Holy Scrip-

ture and deny such as the Holy Scriptures teach, thus adding to or taking away from the Word of the Lord and binding human ordinances upon the consciences of men.

Such principles render the Lutheran Church exclusive because Christianity is exclusive. If men will not repent and believe, they cannot enter the kingdom of God. All unbelievers are excluded. But when a visible church organization is formed, the test can not be the faith or unbelief of the heart, which men can not perceive, but must be the manifestation which is made of it in the confession. If that contain doctrines which contravene the Word of the Lord, which is our only rule and standard in such matters, we must reject it, and if those who make the confession will not reject it with us, we must decline to associate with them. All errorists are excluded. We cannot have church fellowship with those who condemn what we hold as precious truth revealed for our salvation, and who confess as necessary parts of saving truth what we have found to be but human error, by subjecting ourselves to which we would become the slaves of men and endanger our souls.

It is a radical misconception of the whole matter when this is regarded as implying, that the Lutheran Church must regard all Christendom as embraced within her pale, and all members of other denominations as not Christians and not saved. That is an exclusiveness of which she is not only not guilty, but which she abhors. She is a visible church, and as such applies the only tests of visible unity which the Lord has given. How many of those who are received into fellowship because they confess the true faith according to the Word of the Lord, are unbelievers notwithstanding all their good professions and therefore not Christians after all, she cannot know; God knows. How many of those who are not received into fellowship because their doctrine is contrary to the Holy Scriptures by which alone we must be guided, are believers notwithstanding all the errors of their confession and therefore Christians after all, she cannot know; God knows. That the grace of God may save a soul by the truth in Jesus, notwithstanding errors that may have been imbibed, but against the destructive power of which it may have been protected—provided these errors are not of a sort that would render it

impossible to embrace Christ as the Savior—she does not for a moment doubt. . As it is possible that many are sincere believers notwithstanding their errors, she presumes not to judge the individuals of other denominations, while she can not otherwise, if she would be faithful to her Lord and to the truth which He has committed to her, than condemn the errors by which those denominations set up a wall of separation between themselves and her. It is therefore a gross wrong to endeavor to fasten upon her the reproach, that she recognizes no Christians and no churches outside of her own organization. There are other churches besides the Lutheran, because there are Christians in other organizations, these Christians rendering them churches notwithstanding the errors in their confession; but these other churches, just because of their errors, by which they are divided from the church which has the pure Word and Sacraments, are not pure churches, but sects.

Whether the Lutheran Church really has the Gospel in its purity is of course not decided by her own declaration to that effect. That is a point which each person must examine for himself. She invites scrutiny. Her confession is before the world. Let it be tested by the only standard, the Holy Scriptures. By the result we cheerfully abide.

But Lutherans are Christians who have examined the subject and who receive the Lutheran Confession because it expresses their own faith. With them it can no longer be a question, especially not with the ministry, whether the doctrine contained in that Confession be the doctrine which God requires Christians to embrace and hold fast, and in regard to which they must agree in order that the true unity of the church may be maintained. If to others the Lutheran Church may seem exclusive in a sense that subjects her to reproach, because in their eyes she insists on doctrines which they do not recognize as scriptural, to those who accept these doctrines she cannot seem so, because they see them to be simply the truth which the Lord requires all His disciples to accept and to confess. It is therefore not surprising that other denominations should find fault with us for holding our distinctively Lutheran doctrines to be necessary parts of the revealed truth, in which it is necessary to agree as well as in those

doctrines which we hold in common with some other denominations; but that any sincere Lutheran, who understands the subject at all, should find fault with our insisting upon the acceptance of these distinctive doctrines as a condition of fellowship, is surprising. To relinquish our scriptural exclusiveness in this regard would be simply admitting that the Lutheran Church has no divine warrant for her separate existence, and that the right thing for her to do would be to become identified with another church which accords with the Lord's will in its conditions of membership and fellowship, and which therefore has a right to live. What some well-meaning, but inconsiderate Lutherans would have our church do, in order to escape the reproach of exclusiveness, is simply to commit suicide.

There is scarcely an article in our Confession to which some denomination does not object. One sect objects to one article, another objects to another article, and so throughout the whole list. They are not willing that these articles shall form a barrier in the way of our fellowshiping those who teach contrary doctrine. Papists cannot endure our doctrine of justification, Protestant sects cannot endure our doctrine of the means of grace. Such doctrines form partition walls between us and them. To that extent our church becomes exclusive in maintaining them. What shall we do about it? The sects can of course see no reason for erecting such partition walls—Lutheran partition walls, as they are pleased to consider them. What they desire is that we recede from such exclusiveness and become liberal enough to remove the barriers by which their errors and thus they themselves, who are not willing to be separated from their errors, are excluded. But that means simply that they desire us to declare the doctrines which we have derived from God's Word, and which God commands us to hold fast that no man take our crown, to be indifferent opinions, which we can hold or relinquish at pleasure, and which can by no means be insisted upon in God's name as necessary unto the true unity of the church. To say that we cannot accede to any such demands is only to say that we are Lutherans. How could we abandon as a mere human tradition, which is not necessary to the unity of the church, that which we believe to be the teaching of God's

Word and which we confess as part of our faith because we so believe. But suppose some who profess to be Lutherans would foolishly yield to such a demand: what would the act imply? It would be saying, in the first place, that the Lutheran Church never had a right to establish a separate organization, as the doctrines which gave her a distinctive existence and name were not in God's sight necessary to the true unity of the Church, and should therefore never have been insisted upon to the exclusion of others who refused to accept those doctrines and who confessed an antagonistic faith. It would be saying, in the second place, that the sin of making divisions is upon us and that we must repent and make good, so far as lies in our power, the mischief which our forefathers have thoughtlessly or wickedly done by their rash and unscriptural exclusiveness. There should be no divisions among us, and if the distinctive doctrines of the Lutheran Church are not divine and by God's own will and Word necessary to the unity of the Church, we must abandon them as conditions of church membership and fellowship, and thus give up our distinctive existence. A church that can show no divine warrant in her pure distinctive doctrines for her separate existence is a sect that has no right to live. Those who would have us yield our scriptural exclusiveness want nothing more nor less than that we should yield our scriptural faith, which of course excludes those who reject it as well as unites those who accept it, and thus resign our distinctive life and die.

There are men in the Lutheran Church who, anxious to escape the odium of seeming illiberal and exclusive, still dream of reconciling unionistic practices with earnest devotion to our time-honored Confessions. They are hugging a delusion. If the doctrines which we confess are the truth of God and as such necessary to the unity of the Church, we can have no authority to dispense any person from accepting them as a condition of pulpit and altar fellowship: God has arranged and decided that. If they are not of God and therefore not necessary to the true unity of the Church, we have no authority to insist on them in any case as a condition of membership. In that case it is a sin on account of them to maintain a separate organization, and the Church of the Augsburg Confession has no divine right to exist. It would be an astonishing Lutheranism that could accept the latter alternative.

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## ORIGINAL SIN.

All the history of the past, as well as all the experience of the present, proclaims the sinfulness of man. Whithersoever we turn, our eyes behold unmistakable evidences of human depravity. It is universal. No time and no country is exempt from it. Barbarians and civilized communities, old and young, are alike infected by its virulence. In political and in social life, in business and in amusement, it becomes equally manifest. Education may put a gloss upon it and lend it an air of refinement, but has labored in vain to remove it. The art and science of the present has been as powerless to supply a remedy as the culture of the past. Wherever we find man, we find sin. "They are corrupt, they have done abominable works; there is none that doeth good. The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside; they are all together become filthy; there is none that doeth good—no, not one." Ps. 14, 1-3. The polish which refinement has put on to make it seem otherwise is, to those of discerning eyes, only an additional evidence of the universal prevalence of corruption.

It behooves us to understand and place a correct estimate upon this evil, to the end that we may find and apply the remedy. Its denial or explanation avails nothing. That denial is itself a manifestation of the malady. It is more than that: it is one of the surest methods of securing to it immunity from condemnation and permitting it to work out its destructive consequences unmolested. The evil exists; it extends over the whole race; it brings death. Why is



this so? Whence does this horror of darkness come? God did not make man wicked, and did not desire His creature's misery. He made our first parents very good. Adam and Eve fell from their estate of holiness and happiness; but that was thousands of years ago, and what has the wickedness and wretchedness of the countless millions since to do with that? An examination of the Scriptures in this regard will prove instructive and profitable.

From no other source can we derive adequate information on the subject. The history of our race would tell us much of human depravity, if it were read with enlightened eyes; our own hearts would tell us more, if they were examined without that pride which refuses to see their baseness. But that is impossible. Man in his total depravity has no such enlightened eyes and is not free from such pride. The darkness of the intellect and the selfishness of the heart form part of the very sinfulness that is to be perceived. It is therefore natural that man's views of original sin should be superficial and inadequate. Only when he studies it in the light of supernatural revelation can he rightly see it and justly estimate its enormity. Hence our Confession says that this hereditary sin is so deep and dark a corruption of nature that no reason can know it, but that it must be learned and believed from the revelation of Scripture,\* and refers to a number of scholastic errors on the subject as emanating from the blindness of the human mind.

I. According to the Scriptures there is a sin which is distinguished, on the one hand, from the act of transgression committed in paradise by our first parents, and, on the other, from the violations of divine law of which men are guilty every day in their thoughts, words, and actions. It is the sin of our nature, and differs from all the acts to which that nature gives birth and which are sinful because of the sinful source whence they spring. This corruption of our nature is, in ecclesiastical language, usually called original sin. But theologians make the distinction between the active and passive original sin.† The former is the sin of Adam, in which others have no part except by its imputation through

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\* Smalc. Art. ed. Muell. p. 310.

† Quenstedt, Theol. Did. Pol. II. p. 115.

the possession of the same sinful nature, and is called originating original sin, because it is the origin of all human corruption. The latter is the deep corruption which was propagated to all the descendants of Adam, and which is called original sin originated, because it comes to us all by descent from the fallen nature of Adam. It properly bears the name of original sin, not because it was the first transgression, the originating sin, but, as Hollazius observes,\* because it was derived from Adam, the root and the beginning of the race, because it is associated with the origin of all Adam's descendants, and because it is the origin and fountain of all actual sins. It is the great sin of human nature, underlying all the motions of the human will from Adam's time until the present day and rendering all these motions sinful.

That there is such a sin of our nature the Scriptures teach distinctly and emphatically. After the dreadful catastrophe in Eden, the inspired record informs us, "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Gen. 6, 5. The case is strongly stated. The wickedness of man, not of some individuals among men, was great; all the movements of the human soul were evil; all its imaginings, desires, purposes, were only evil; they were evil continually. So forcibly is the fact of universal depravity stated in these words that those who deny the doctrine are driven to the desperate resort of imagining a divine hyperbole in the words, or assuming that they apply only to the period prior to the flood, notwithstanding that other passages forbid such a limitation. This wickedness is in the heart, and exists there from birth. "The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth." Gen. 8, 21. "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Ps. 51, 5. The scope of the psalmist will not permit us to refer this to the sin of his parents. It is his own sin that he is confessing, not that of his father and mother. He was sinful from his conception. That is the truth that is reiterated in various forms in the New Testament. "Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of

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\* Ex. Theol. Acr. de pec. qu. 12.

water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." John 3, 5. 6. Regeneration is necessary, because man is born of sinful flesh and is therefore sinful by birth. His heart is evil, and therefore the imaginations of his heart are evil from his youth. "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies." Matt. 15, 19. Man is flesh, because he is born of flesh, and all that proceeds from him is carnal. "Now 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, revelings, and such like." Gal. 5, 19-21. It is the sinfulness of man's nature and his consequent helplessness that renders necessary not only the work of Christ for his redemption, but also the work of the Holy Spirit for his sanctification. All men are dead in trespasses and sin, and none can do anything to save himself. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Rom. 3, 23. There is no exception made whatever but in the case of Him "who was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the virgin Mary," and who was an exception precisely because He was not conceived and born in the ordinary course of nature. The very fact that He is spoken of as the man who alone is free from the taint of human corruption, "in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin," Heb. 4, 15. confirms the apostolic declaration that all have sinned. Hence the Holy Spirit expressly says not only that we are all subject to condemnation, but that we "were by nature the children of wrath." Eph. 2, 3. The Church therefore has indisputable Scripture grounds for her confession that "after Adam's fall all men begotten after the common course of nature, are born with sin; that is, without the fear of God, without trust in Him, and with fleshly appetite; and that this disease, or original fault, is truly sin, condemning and bringing eternal death now also upon all that are not born again by baptism and the Holy Spirit."\*

## II. How it comes that all men are born in sin and under

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\* Augsb. Confession, Art. 2.

condemnation divine revelation has not left unexplained. It tells us of man's disobedience in Eden and the dreadful fall, of the loss of the image of God in which he had been created, of the begetting of children after the image of the parents. Mankind became corrupt by the fall, and the corrupt nature was propagated. "Sin is wrought in three ways," says Quenstedt: "first, when the person corrupts nature, as was done by Adam and Eve; secondly, when nature corrupts the person, as is done in the propagation of original sin; thirdly, when person corrupts person, as takes place in actual sin. At the beginning actual sin preceded and original sin followed; now original sin precedes and actual sin follows."† The sin of Adam was a free personal act, in which, by an abuse of the liberty which God had given him, he chose what God had prohibited. It was an act of self-determination to the evil. Self-determination to the good was equally in his power and would have been in accordance with his nature, which was good. He was created after the image of God in righteousness and true holiness. But through the temptation presented from without he was beguiled and ate the forbidden fruit. The consequence was death. It was the person that fell. From this human nature is indeed distinguishable. Had there been other human persons who were not guilty of sin in Paradise, our nature might still have been propagated through these without corruption. But while a person, as a conscious being having a subsistence of his own, is distinguishable in thought from his nature, which is common to other persons of the same species, the personality is not separable in fact from the nature which forms its basis. A human person is human nature differentiated by the individual consciousness. It would be impossible for a person to sin without implicating the nature which is its substratum. When Adam sinned, it was human nature in the form and person of Adam that sinned; and when sin became a vicious habit or condition by the self-determination of Adam's will, it was not an abstract person that thus became evil, but human nature in this personal form. Human persons have no existence without human nature, and human nature has no existence except in human persons. When Adam became corrupt,

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\* Theol. Did. Pol. II, p. 56.

his nature became corrupt. Adam was human nature personified in the individual who bears that name. So far as human nature was in him, human nature was corrupted and doomed. But there was no other human nature than that which was in his person. Not only was there no other human nature specifically, but there was no other individual besides Adam and Eve in whom this human nature existed. All that there was of the human race existed in these two persons. From these all other human beings sprang. But there was no propagation of this human nature before the fall. All our nature, quantitatively as well as qualitatively, was in Adam and Eve. Therefore our whole nature fell when our first parents fell. The personal sin of Adam and Eve was the corruption of their nature, and thus the corruption of all human nature, as this did not extend beyond these two persons.

Of this sinful nature all are made partakers by propagation. The sin extends from the nature, until the time of the fall embraced in two individuals, to the persons begotten by them. God "giveth to all life and breath and all things, and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the whole earth." Acts 17, 26. As all share the one nature of Adam, they all necessarily share its corruption. Hence St. Paul says: "As by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned," so that death reigned "even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression." Rom. 5, 12-14. Upon this decisive passage Chemnitz remarks: "The sense of this text may be most simply exhibited and perceived if we divide it into its members: 1. The efficient cause of original sin is shown, namely, the first man by his liberty turning away from God. 2. The subject is pointed out, that it inhered not only in Adam, but passed over all the world, that is, to all men coming into this world. 3. The consequence is described, that it is not only bodily death, but the reign of death, the judgment of condemnation, etc. For these are St. Paul's words. The connection is this: Where there is death, there there must necessarily be sin, but death reigns also in infants; therefore they must necessarily have sin. But that sin is not after the similitude of Adam's transgression; therefore it must be original sin. 4. Lest it

should be supposed that the guilt is on account of another's sin, without any fault of their own, Paul affirms that the whole world is guilty, both in consequence of the sin of the first man and because all have sinned, that is, have become sinners. 5. What kind of sin it was is indicated when he says that those who have not like Adam sinned by any act of transgression also have original sin. 6. The mode is described by which original sin is propagated; he says it was by one man.\* The nature of Adam was transmitted to his children, and by them to their offspring, so that it was propagated from generation to generation down to the present day; and as that nature was corrupt, all who inherit it necessarily share its corruption. It could not be propagated otherwise than it was, and after the fall it was only evil. Therefore sin begins in each individual when his existence begins. Sin is perpetuated by the natural means of the extension of the human race. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." John 5, 6. God does not create a new nature when a child is conceived and born, but extends the existing human nature to new individuals. "At the present time, even in this corruption of nature, God does not create sin in us, but, together with the nature which God creates and effects in men, original sin is propagated through carnal conception and birth by father and mother, from seed corrupted by sin."†

III. This sin of our nature, or original sin, has both a negative and a positive character. It consists in a want of something which originally belonged to it, and whose lack is a serious fault. But it involves more than that. Instead of the positive good which was lost in the fall has come a positive evil. It is therefore customary to speak of original sin negatively as a lack of original righteousness and positively as carnal concupiscence. "Original sin is the lack of original righteousness coupled with a depraved inclination thoroughly corrupting the entire human nature, derived from the fall of our first parents and propagated by carnal generation to all men, rendering them indisposed to spiritual good and inclined to all evil, and rendering them subject to divine wrath and eternal condemnation."‡ "Therefore we have properly men-

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\* Loci Theol. II. p. 230.

† Formula of Concord, Sol. Decl. I. § 7.

‡ Hollaz, Ex. Theol. Acr. de pec. qu. 12.

tioned and expressed both," says our Confession, "when we desired to teach what original sin is; namely, the evil concupiscence and the want of the first paradisaical righteousness. We say that such want consists in this, that we children of Adam have no cordial trust in God, and do not fear Him and love Him; and evil concupiscence consists in this, that our mind, heart and desire are naturally directed against the Word of God, as we seek not only all kinds of bodily pleasures, but also trust in our own wisdom and righteousness, meantime forgetting God and caring little or nothing for Him. And not only the ancient fathers, such as Augustine and others, but also the latest teachers and scholastics who have shown any judgment teach, that those two things are original sin, namely, the lack and the concupiscence."\*

Original sin is, in the first place, the privation of that divine image in which man was created and which, in its strict sense, consisted in righteousness and true holiness. "Here belongs that death, or lack of spiritual life and of all active powers which are requisite to the performance of vital acts, in conformity with the divine law. And this death is attributed to men inasmuch as they are children of wrath by nature, Eph. 2, 1 and 5; Col. 2, 13. For as original righteousness, when it existed in the soul of the first man, animated them as it were and prepared them to live a godly life and to draw out and exercise among themselves acts and motions spiritually good, so after this primeval righteousness is lost man is like a dead person deprived by the separation of the soul from the body of all power to call forth and perform vital actions and motions, he being destitute of power for spiritual actions and motions."†

This privation effects the whole soul of man, constituting a defect equally in the intellect, the sensibilities, and the will. The first lacks knowledge; the second lacks harmony and happiness; the third lacks righteousness. Adam's act of eating the forbidden fruit was not a mere misstep that left his condition unchanged. It was the rejection of God and the choice of Satan as master. The actual sin committed in Paradise is not to be placed on a level with the actual sins committed by man since. Those sins are but expressions of the

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\* Apology II. § 26. 27.

† Baier, Theol. Pos. par. II, cap. 2, § 2.

heart's condition, which remains the same whether such expressions be given or not. The sin in Paradise was the decision of the human race in favor of evil; and although the act of eating the fruit was merely the external manifestation of the internal sin previously committed, yet the forbidden fruit was the object in regard to which the soul's decision was made. The soul chose the evil and executed its choice through the body. If the spiritual life which our parents possessed had remained after the dreadful decision, the transgression would have been a dark blot in their history, but all might still have been well. But death had been declared to be the consequence of transgression, and death came. Nor should the severity of the sentence surprise us. The nature of the conditions necessitated such a result. God made man for His own glory, and for blessedness in Him. But He would be loved by His creatures whom He made the object of His love. Love that does not result from free choice—instinctive love—is love only in a lower signification and of an inferior grade. God would be loved freely. He created man with love in his heart, but to attain His noble end He created him also with liberty of will. He should choose, and by his personal act make his voluntary possession that which God had by creation imparted as a quality of his nature. The crisis came, and the choice was adverse to the will and design of God. Had he chosen the good, the matter would have been decided for all in favor of life and love, and that decision would have stood forever. But he chose the evil and thus cut himself loose from God, the source of all light and life and love, and in his separation from God nothing but death and darkness could be his doom.

Thus his intellect lost the light that comes from God. He cannot rightly know God; he cannot find the right way to worship God; he cannot even apprehend the truth which is revealed of God. "The reason or natural understanding of man, although he has still a faint spark of the knowledge that there is a God and of the teaching of the law, Rom. 1, 19, is nevertheless so ignorant, blind, and perverted, that even when the most gifted and learned men in the world read or hear the Gospel of the Son of God and the promise of eternal salvation, they are unable by their own powers to receive, understand, believe or hold it to be true; but the more



diligence and zeal they apply to comprehend these spiritual things with their reason, the less they understand or believe; before they are enlightened and taught by the Holy Spirit they regard all these things as foolishness and fables. 'The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are all foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.' 1 Cor. 2, 14. Again: 'After that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.' 1 Cor. 1, 21. Of those not yet renewed the apostle writes in another place: 'Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind, having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart.' Eph. 4, 17, 18."\* So great is the spiritual blindness of man that the Scriptures say of the natural man that he is darkness. John 1, 5; Eph. 5, 8.

In this condition of spiritual death the will is powerless to all that is good, as must needs be the case when the life of God is banished from the soul. The will remains, as the human understanding remains, but it performs its functions only outside of the sphere of the spiritually good, from which the soul has fallen. It lacks the holiness with which God had endowed it and in which He had designed it to live and move. "Man's will hath some liberty to work a civil righteousness, and to choose such things as reason can reach unto, but it hath no power to work the righteousness of God, or a spiritual righteousness, without the Spirit of God; because that the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God. 1 Cor. 2, 14. But this is wrought in the heart when men do receive the Spirit of God through the Word."† This is in full accord with the Holy Scriptures, which tell us that "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure." Phil. 2, 13. Man in his natural condition of sin can know, but He cannot know God in truth; he can will, but He cannot will the righteousness and the truth which is the will of God.

So too in his sensibilities is the privation of original

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\* Form. of Conc., Sol. Dec. II. § 9. 10.

† Augsb. Conf. Art. 18.

righteousness apparent. He still loves and desires, has hopes and pleasures, but they are not directed to God and find not in Him their object and source. He does not love God; he does not fear God; he does not trust in God; he does not delight in God. The affections and desires are directed to the vanities of the world, and in these the soul seeks its pleasure, not in God. "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." 1 John 2, 15. The heart is turned away from God, who is the proper object of man's affections and in whom alone his happiness can be attained. Therefore there is disorder and disharmony in the operation of human faculties, and consequent unrest and unhappiness, there being no regulative power to control the unruly appetites and passions that conflict with reason as well as with each other. "In respect of the sensuous appetite there is a want of the obedience that is due to the higher faculties, and an impetuous rushing, as it were, contrary to them, into those things which are agreeable to the senses, although they are forbidden by the divine law, the decision of reason either not having been waited for, or having been rejected."\*

All men "are born with sin; that is, without the fear of God, without trust in Him, and with fleshly appetite," says our Confession. The latter, which is usually called concupiscence, is the positive evil of original sin. This does not consist merely in the defect of original righteousness, great as such privation is. When man lost the holiness in which he was created, his condition was not that of neutrality in regard to spiritual things. A decision was made by Adam and Eve which decided their condition forever, so far as their free choice was concerned. Not only was the good abandoned, but the evil was chosen. Human nature in the person of our first parents was sundered from God and freely subjected to the will and power of Satan. Their sinful act was the entrance upon a sinful condition of the whole nature. That nature we inherit, with all its decision against the good and for the evil. "For original sin is not a particular transgression which is perpetrated in act, but intimately inheres, being infixed in the very nature, substance, and essence of man. And, indeed, if no depraved thought at all should ever arise

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\* Baier, Theol. Pos. par. II. cap. 2, § 5.

in the heart of fallen man, if no idle word were uttered, if no evil deed or work were perpetrated by him: yet, nevertheless, the nature is corrupted by original sin, which is innate in us by reason of the corrupted seed from which we spring, and is moreover a fountain of all actual sins, such as evil thoughts, evil discourings, evil and abominable deeds.”\*

The word concupiscence, which is employed to designate this deep corruption of our nature, is used by the Scriptures in this sense. “I had not known lust (*ἐπιθυμίαν*,” says St. Paul, “except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet (*ἐπιθυμήσεις*). But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence (*ἐπιθυμίαν*).” Rom. 7, 7. 8. Man cannot by nature know the depths of sin, as the concupiscence or lust which the law forbids is not recognized as such, but is looked upon rather as a natural impulse which, because it is natural, is morally indifferent, though it may lead to acts that are sinful. The commandment which prohibits it also makes it known as sin. Hence the apostle says that without the law condemning concupiscence sin would not have been known, notwithstanding that conscience even in the natural man may know the wrongfulness of gross offences. But the cognition of the law does not serve to remove the sin which it reveals. On the contrary, it only arouses the sin within us to greater exertion in the form of that concupiscence which the law forbids and condemns. When the apostle says that sin wrought concupiscence, a distinction is made that seems at variance with the doctrine that original sin in its positive aspect is concupiscence. But a closer consideration will show that he establishes the doctrine. The sin is in our whole nature, corrupting intellect, sensibilities and will. The term sin is generic, expressing the whole evil that has come upon man by the fall, negative and positive. Concupiscence is the leaning of the heart to evil and therefore all its evil motions in appetite, desire and affection toward the evil, blinding the intellect and perverting the will. Sin’s positive form is therefore that of concupiscence—the evil bent and the evil motions in coincidence with that evil bent. So it is the sin that is in us that rebels when the commandment is issued against concu-

\* Form of Conc., Epit. I. § 21.

piscence and works mightily in all the varied forms which that evil inclination may assume: it works all manner of concupiscence—*πάσαν ἐπιθυμίαν*. These lusts are actual sins, activities of the evil heart which present themselves to the consciousness as internal evil deeds and find expression in outward acts of sin, according to the words of St. James: "Every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust (*ἐπιθυμία*) and enticed: then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin." James 1, 15. But back of all these evil motions of the heart lies the evil propensity of our whole nature, the evil inclination in coincidence with which every motion of the appetites and desires necessarily take place, and which is also included, as the root of all, in the law, "Thou shalt not covet," or lust. For St. Paul admonishes us not to walk "in the lust of concupiscence (*πάθει ἐπιθυμίας*) even as the Gentiles which know not God." 1 Thess. 4, 5. Here the motions of concupiscence as they appear in consciousness and thence emerge in external acts are distinguished from the concupiscence itself from which they spring. The sin in our nature has the positive form of propensity and inclination to evil, which is lust or concupiscence, and thence arise the lusts which are experienced in the soul as active sinful appetites and desires. That the word concupiscence is applied in the Scriptures also to the conscious acts of lusting, and even to the objects which furnish the occasion of their action, as when it is said that "the world passeth away and the lust thereof," 1 John 2, 17, does not weaken its force as designating the evil propensity which gives birth to the evil desires and ultimately, through these, to the evil external deeds, since the wider application is easily explained by the relation in which the internal and external manifestations stand to their source.

That there is such a sin of our nature as the Church has been accustomed to designate, as the positive aspect of original sin, by the term concupiscence, is evident from the Scriptures independently of their employment of that term. It was sin that took occasion by the commandment to work all manner of concupiscence. The sin is in the nature and makes itself felt when the law comes, as the tiger is aroused when the blow falls. "In the Holy Scriptures this innate

depravity is called: 1. Indwelling sin, Rom. 7, 17, because after the fall it firmly fixed its seat in man and will not depart from him until the habitation of soul and body is dissolved; 2. Besetting sin, because it surrounds us on all sides like a long garment which impedes the runner, Heb. 12, 2; 3. A law in the members, Rom. 7, 23, because as a law rules and governs an agent, so original sin directs the members of the body to the perpetration of wicked deeds; 4. An evil present with us, Rom. 7, 21, because when man would do good, it clings to him like a clog.\* Such expressions do not indicate merely the absence of virtues which man should possess, but the presence of a depravity which divine justice condemns. "The same carnal man who, on account of the privation of spiritual life, was like a dead man, in another respect is said to be living and very active, but living a life alienated from the life of God, Eph. 4, 18, according to the course of this world, and fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, Eph. 2, 3. The faculties of the soul are in their essence vital faculties, and when they are deprived of original righteousness, although they lack the power necessary for a life of godliness, they are nevertheless not themselves lost or destroyed, so far as they are vital and have in them the power to produce vital acts and motions. Therefore they pursue another mode of life plainly different from the former. In regard to this corrupt propensity Paul writes: *The mind of the flesh*, or carnal man, such as he is by birth, thinks, wills, desires, *is enmity against God*. Rom. 8, 7. These words certainly declare that there is in every man a habitual propensity to evil clinging to him from his origin."† Original sin is accordingly a depravity negative and positive: negative, without the good which man should have; positive, with the evil which he should not have.

The question whether this defect of original righteousness and this positive corruption of our nature is really sin in God's sight, so that it subjects men to the condemnation which God has denounced against sin, has been much debated, but presents no great difficulty to those who are willing to be guided by the Holy Scriptures. Reason finds it per-

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\* Hollaz, Ex. Theol. Acr. II, cap. 3, qu. 12.

† Baier, Theol. Pos. II. cap. 2, § 2.

plexing only when it turns away from the light of revelation which makes it plain. Our Church confesses "that this disease, or original fault, is truly sin, condemning and bringing eternal death now also upon all that are not born again by baptism and the Holy Spirit."\* In making this declaration we stand upon the solid ground of divine revelation which no human reasoning can affect.

IV. When the apostle says, "that by one man sin entered into the world and death by sin;" that "so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;" that death reigned "over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression," i. e. had not been guilty of such actual sin; that "through the offence of one many are dead;" that "by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation;" and that "by one man's disobedience many (*οἱ πολλοὶ* = the many) were made sinners," Rom. 5, 12-19,—the fact is too manifest to admit of dispute, that the sin of our nature, original depravity, is represented as truly sin and as being followed by death, which is the wages of sin. "Behold, I was shapen in *iniquity*, and in *sin* did my mother conceive me." Ps. 51, 5. As the parents were morally impure, their progeny could not be morally pure. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." Job. 14, 4. "What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? Behold, He putteth no trust in His saints; yea, the heavens are not clean in His sight. How much more abominable and filthy is man, which drinketh iniquity like water?" Job. 15, 14-16. We are born of the flesh, and therefore are flesh, and have the carnal mind which is enmity against God. "The law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold under sin." Rom. 7, 14. "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." Rom. 7, 18-20. So great is the original depravity of our nature that it dwells even in the children of God, and even in them is not called a weakness or misfortune simply, but *sin*,

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\* Augsb. Conf. Art. II.

though they by faith have forgiveness of sin and are therefore not condemned. Therefore it is written: "You hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins, wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Eph. 2, 1-3. All alike were dead in sin by nature, and therefore all alike were by nature children of wrath. The evil which is in us by inheritance is sin and brings the death which is the consequence of sin.

Against this it is argued that sin is voluntary, and that no condition or action can be recognized as sin where this quality is wanting. But only that is voluntary, it is added, which arises by a conscious purpose and motion of the will. To Christian minds it would be sufficient to reply, that this is an argument directed against the clear and explicit statements of Holy Scripture, and therefore refutes and condemns itself. In the best case it merely raises the question whether we will be directed in our faith by the Word of God or by the philosophy of man; and about such a question Christians no longer hesitate. But the argument is without foundation even in sound philosophy. Hollaz remarks: "The voluntary does not enter into the definition of sin generically considered. Sin is said to be voluntary either subjectively, so far as it inheres in the will, or efficiently, so far as it proceeds from a deliberate will. In the latter respect not all sin is voluntary. Again, sin is called voluntary either formally, when a person commits it by his own will, or virtually, as it was in the root and head of the human race, from whom it is propagated to his descendants, in whom would have been the same will as in Adam, if they had lived at the same time. The proof is, 1. That St. John defines sin simply by 'transgression of the law,' not voluntary transgression; 2. That besides voluntary sins there are also such as are involuntary, as sins of infirmity and of ignornace."\* If the element of the voluntary be admitted at all into the definition of sin, the question as to what

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\* Ex. Theol. Acr. II. cap. 2, qu. 15.

is voluntary must be carefully determined. If by voluntary action be meant only those special acts which result from a prior deliberate choice and a conscious impulse of the will, determined by a reflective marshaling of the motives for and against the act, the admission of the voluntary into the definition of sin would not only limit this to actual sins, but would even deny the sinfulness of these, so far as they are not the result of deliberation in each case, but the product of evil habits and settled vicious character. Virtue and vice would thus be made equally to lie merely in sporadic acts, not in permanent principle and disposition. But sin is lawlessness. It is that which is not in harmony with the divine will. That man has not the holiness in which he was originally created, is sin; the will of God is that he should have it. That his whole inclination is to evil, is sin; the will of God is that it should not be. His whole condition is in disharmony with divine law, is in antagonism to it. His nature is all wrong. It is not what God meant it to be. By this corrupt nature, which is in antagonism to the divine law, his will is moved. He wills the evil, because he is evil. The acts of his will are only so many special activities of his evil nature. Not because he puts forth volitions for the execution of his lawlessness are his deeds sinful, but because his soul is lawless and therefore puts forth lawless volitions. Sin is personal, indeed. It does not exist in human nature independently of persons, because human nature has no existence independently of human persons. But the person is not his acts of will. He exists whether he is putting forth acts of volition or not. The sinfulness is in him, and lies back of his acts. It is true, we would not say that a person sins when he is found to do a wrong act against his will, or even when he does it without intention, as when a stronger man puts a knife into his hand and moves the hand to bloodshed, or when one does an unlawful deed in sleep. But we do not pronounce such a person free from sin because there was simply an act of volition wanting. The ground lies deeper. He did what was not in harmony with his personal condition, the absence of volition in the case, or the volition in opposition to the act, being merely the indication of that state of his soul. That is evinced by the fact that if his inclination and desire were to



perform the act, he would be guilty in the sight of Him who judgeth the heart, even though there had been no volition put forth and therefore no perpetration of the act. "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." Matt. 5, 28. "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." 1 John 3, 15. The volition alone does not determine the moral quality of the deeds. It is itself but an act of the soul, and its moral quality is itself determined by the nature and disposition that underlies it. Even the civil law recognizes this when it makes a distinction between a voluntary act that is unpremeditated and the same act that is performed with malice prepense. It is a shallow sophism to argue that original depravity cannot be sin, because it is not voluntary. It is the sin which makes the volitions themselves, as well as the appetites and desires out of which they spring, sinful and damnable. Hollaz is quite right when he speaks of the sin of Adam as virtually voluntary in his descendants also; for they possess the same nature which Adam had after the fall and would have committed the same sin in the same circumstances. When those forces in our nature which move the will and without which its action is incomprehensible, are taken into account when we speak of voluntary movement and are included under the the term will, as profound philosophers have done, all human action, internal or external, that is expressive of the soul's habitual inclination, may be called voluntary, even though there is no premeditation and choice resulting in a conscious volition sanctioning the impulse of the heart. In other words, if the motives in our nature are taken as a necessary element in the conception of that which is voluntary, the voluntary element may be regarded as a necessary element in the conception of sin. In that view original sin is voluntary; for although it did not come into our nature by an act of our own will, it exists in our nature as an habitual evil inclination and impulse in which the will has share and by which the will is moved to evil volitions, though it still have the power of choice between two or more forms in which that evil shall find utterance in any given case. The will always sanctions the evil that is in us, and works in harmony with the other powers of the soul, with which it possesses that evil

propensity in common, notwithstanding the conflicts that arise in regard to the determinate acts in which expression shall be given to the sinful propensity and notwithstanding the power remaining to the will of giving the decision. But if by voluntary nothing more be meant than that a given act is performed in accordance with a corresponding volition in the person who performs it, without any reference to the disposition and purpose of that person, then the voluntary is not an element in the definition of sin. For if it were, the hatred which seeks the life of a man would not be the *sin* of murder, when circumstances are such as prevent the volition to strike the fatal blow; though the Scriptures expressly state that it is murder. The essence of sin lies in the deviation from the will of God, disharmony with the divine law, whether that is in the natural condition, the habitual disposition, or the isolated act as flowing from the underlying depravity. According to the Scriptural definition, original depravity is not only truly sin, but is the great sin of our nature, whence all actual sins in thoughts and feeling, in willings and workings, derive their origin. The evil lustings of the soul are not called forth by special acts of volition; they come from the radical evil which perverts all the powers and faculties of the mind and renders all the imaginations of the thoughts of men's hearts only evil continually. "These first involuntary motions, which are no less depraved than the root or the concupiscence itself, are properly called sin. For this concupiscence, denoting the propensity to evil which is implanted in the depraved nature, even as it remains in the regenerate, is truly sin, because the definition of sin applies to it, and therefore St. Paul, Rom. 7, calls it sin fourteen times, not by metonymy, as if it were only the punishment of the first sin and the cause of the subsequent actual transgression, as the Papists teach, but properly and formally, because it is truly sin, whence also the apostle calls it, first, a law of sin warning against the law of the mind; secondly, an evil; and thirdly, a sin exceeding sinful."\*

V. This sin of our nature must be distinguished as a quality from the nature itself in which it inheres. The rational soul with all its powers of knowing and feeling and willing is not original sin, nor is this depravity an essential

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\* Quenstedt, Theo. Did. Pol. II, p. 60.

part of the entity which has these faculties, nor of the faculties themselves. The soul has its existence independently of the corruption which the fall has introduced. It existed before original sin degraded it; it will exist in the saints of God when original sin shall have ceased to weigh it down. The intellect and sensibilities and will are not sin, but have their existence independently of it. There is no power of knowing and feeling and willing in fallen man that is not corrupted by it; but the corruption is not knowing and feeling and willing itself. Man had these powers before sin and death had entered into the world; man will have these powers in a world of glory which sin and death can never enter. Never do the Scriptures say that man has ceased to be and that in his stead has been placed a mass of sin. There is no such mass of sin possible apart from a subject in which it could inhere. Sin is not a substance, but a quality, and can have being only in a substance whose quality it is. Though we can think of it in the abstract, it is as impossible to conceive it as existing without a soul in which it exists, as to conceive whiteness without an object that is white. "Sin dwelleth in me," says the apostle. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." Sin is in us, we have it, but we and sin are not identical. We would not cease to be, if sin ceased to be; we could get along very well without it. It is no more essential to man than rottenness is essential to the existence of an egg. The powers of our minds are sinful; sin pervades all their activities and renders those corrupt; but they are not themselves sin. Intellect is not sin, neither is feeling and will. It is not a sin to have knowledge and to think, neither is it sinful to feel and will. God and angels and saints know and feel and will. The sin is in our nature and corrupts our minds and hearts and their actions, but our persons and powers which are corrupt are not the sin which corrupts them. Our whole nature is sinful, but the sinfulness is distinguishable from our nature in thought and separable from it in fact. If it were not so, no human soul could ever reach the blissful mansions from which sin is forever excluded.

In the early history of the Lutheran Church there were warm debates on the question whether sin is the substance of man or merely an accident. It is one of the questions upon

which the Church gave her decision in the masterly Formula of Concord. The Epitome states the point of controversy thus: "Whether original sin is properly and without any distinction the very nature, substance, and essence of corrupt man, or at least the principal and pre-eminent part of his substance, namely, the rational soul itself, considered in its highest degree and in its chief powers; or whether between the substance, nature, essence, body and soul of man, even after the fall of mankind, on the one hand, and original sin on the other, there be some distinction, so that the nature itself is one thing, and original sin another thing, which inheres in the corrupt nature and also corrupts the nature." The following is the decision which is given: "We believe, teach, and confess, that there is a distinction between the nature of man itself, not only as man was created of God in the beginning pure and holy and free from sin, but also as we now possess it after our nature has fallen; namely, a distinction between the nature itself, which even after the fall is and remains God's creature, and original sin; and that this difference between nature and original sin is as great as between the work of God and the work of the devil. We believe, teach, and confess, that this distinction should be maintained with the greatest care, because the dogma that there is no distinction between the nature of fallen man and original sin is inconsistent with the chief articles of our faith—of creation, of redemption, of sanctification, and of the resurrection of the body—and cannot be maintained except by impugning these articles."\* It is then shown that the error in question conflicts with the doctrine of the creation, because God is the Creator of our bodies and souls as well as of those of Adam, and He does not create sin. It conflicts with the article of our redemption, because the Son of God assumed our nature, but did not assume sin. It conflicts with the article of our sanctification, because God cleanses us from sin and graciously receives us, but does not receive sin, to which He remains hostile forever. It conflicts with the article of our resurrection, because God will raise up the body and with the soul receive it into glory, but He will not raise up and glorify sin. "This same human nature of ours, which is His own work,

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\* Epit. 1, § 1-3.

Christ has redeemed; the same, as it is His own work, He sanctifies; the same, as His own work, He raises from the dead and crowns with great glory. But original sin He has not created, has not assumed, has not redeemed, doth not sanctify, will not raise again in the elect, nor will ever save and crown with heavenly glory, but in that blessed resurrection it shall be utterly abolished and done away."\* It is therefore manifest that original sin is not our nature itself, but a depravity that is in our nature and thoroughly corrupts it.

As such a corrupting quality it is called an accident. This term is not used to represent it as something trivial and insignificant, but to give a correct view of the dreadful evil in its relation to man. "As respects the Latin words *substantia* and *accidens*, since these are not expressions of the Scriptures and are moreover not understood by the common people, we ought to abstain from them in public preaching devoted to the instruction of the unlearned multitude, and in this matter account should rightly be taken of the more simple and untaught. But in schools and among learned men, to whom the signification of these words is known, and who can use them correctly and without danger of misuse, properly discriminating the essence of anything from that which has been added to it from without and inheres in it by way of accident, they are to be retained in the discussion of original sin. For by means of these terms the distinction between the work of God and the work of the devil can be set forth with the greatest clearness. For the devil cannot create any substance, but can only, by way of accident, under the permission of God, deprave a substance created by God."† That is what Satan has accomplished in men, and the depravity which by his craft he has introduced into our nature is called original sin. This is not an essential quality, without which man could not be man, nor a mere superficial blot which man can wipe out when he chooses; it is not the nature of man, so that the human person and the original sin are one and the same substance, nor a certain something in man which stands separated from the person, so that the former is dam-

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\* Epit. 1, § 6.

† Ib. § 23.

nable while the latter is not. It is a corruption which permeates and pervades his nature, so that this is sinful and damnable. "We believe, teach, and confess that original sin is no trivial corruption, but is so profound a corruption of human nature as to leave nothing sound, nothing uncorrupt in the body or soul of man, or in his mental or bodily powers; as the Church sings, 'Through Adam's fall is quite corrupt Nature and essence human.' How great this evil is can in truth not be set forth in words, nor can it be fathomed by the subtlety of human reason, but can be discerned only by means of the revealed Word of God. And we indeed affirm that no one is able to dis sever this corruption of the nature from the nature itself, except God alone, which will fully come to pass by means of death in the resurrection unto blessedness."\*

VI. An evil so great and pervasive cannot otherwise than produce effects most terrible. Baier, with whom Hollaz and others agree, thus enumerates them: "The consequences of original sin are various evils. As to the mind they are the want of free will in spiritual and a weakness of the will in natural things; actual sins, which are many in kind and number; privation of grace and, on the contrary, the wrath of God. As to the body they are diseases and other afflictions and temporal death itself. Finally, its effect is eternal death or damnation."† Gerhard mentions as effects the calamities and miseries of life, various diseases and finally temporal death, the wrath of God and eternal damnation. Quenstedt and others add actual sins to the list. The omission of the lack of freedom of will by some of the greatest dogmaticians no doubt has its ground in the fact that this, while it is a consequence of Adam's sin, is rather the depravity itself, in its negative aspect, than a consequence of the sin as it exists in Adam's posterity. Original sin consists in the absence of original righteousness and the presence of concupiscence, and to the former belongs the blindness of the understanding and the bondage of the will. This is the form in which the lack of original righteousness presents itself to our view. But actual sins, sickness and bodily death, God's wrath and eternal damnation are properly consequences of natural depravity.

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\* Form. Conc. Epit. 1, § 8-10.

† Theol. Pos. II. cap. 2, § 13.

Sin gives birth to sin. Out of the evil nature spring evil thoughts and evil deeds. All manner of evil lusts grow out of the radical evil lust that is inborn. From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: all these things come from within, and defile the man." Mark. 7, 21-23. The sins that are within us do not come from imitating the sins which we see in others. They have their origin within us. They are the fruits of the sin which is in our nature. That is the source too of the sins which become manifest in our deeds. When lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." James 1, 15. All actual sins, whether they are performed inwardly, in thoughts and feelings and volitions, or outwardly in words and works, have their root in the one fundamental lawlessness which inheres in our nature and corrupts our every movement. Original sin is ever active in producing actual sin, wherefore all attempts to abolish evil acts, while their spring and source is ignored and left undisturbed, must ever be a miserable failure, as experience shows that they have ever been.

The wages of sin is death. This dread destroyer came and began his reign when sin entered into the world. "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," was the warning which God gave against eating the forbidden fruit. Gen. 2, 17. Our first parents ate and died. Spiritual death came at once, and all their posterity share it. Since then all men are dead in trespasses and sins, and remain in such death forever unless they are quickened by the Spirit of God. But bodily death came also. True, Adam and Eve did not die the temporal death the moment they transgressed the commandment whose penalty was death. But in the day of their sin the destroying hand was upon them. They became subject to death, and griefs and troubles, its precursors, immediately began the work that ended in dissolution. And in such subjection to death all men are born, because all are born in the sin which brings disorder, decay, and death. To the woman the Lord said, "I will multiply thy sorrow and thy conception;" and to Adam He said, "Cursed is the

ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life." Gen. 3, 16, 17. So it has been ever since. Generation after generation has come and passed through sorrow to death. "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. 3, 19. This is not the original destiny of man. The words were spoken in consequence of the sin that had entered. "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." Rom. 5, 12. Nor are the consequences of sin at an end when man has passed through the troubles of life to the quiet of the grave. There is a second death of which the dissolution of soul and body is but a shadow, and to that other death of ineffable horror sin naturally tends. "This disease, or original fault, is truly sin, condemning and bringing eternal death now also upon all that are not born again by baptism and the Holy Spirit." So the Church confesses, for so the Lord has taught her to believe. "We all had our conversation in times past in the lust of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Eph. 2, 3. "Except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." John 3, 5, 6. "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 6, 23. That death must be everlasting, if the life in Christ, which alone can make alive the soul that is dead in sin, be rejected; and the day of grace continues only until the close of this life. The soul that is spiritually dead when bodily death sets in, passes into a state from which there is no deliverance. "These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal." Matt. 25, 46. As those who fall asleep in Jesus, possessing the life which is in Him, shall never die, those who perish in their sins, being dead in them, shall never live. "Eternal death is the perpetual exclusion from the blissful enjoyment of God conjoined with everlasting torments unspeakably excruciating, which, in virtue of the threatening annexed to the divine law, would have come upon Adam and all his posterity, if Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the human



race and the Restorer of the divine image, had not interposed."\*

VII. So tenacious is this deep depravity which draws after it such fearful consequences, that even those who are regenerated by the Spirit of God and are accepted as His dear children are never wholly free from it in the present life. "Our adversaries raise a great cry," says the Apology of the Augsburg Confession, "against Dr. Luther because he wrote that original sin remains also after baptism, and allege that this article was justly condemned by Pope Leo X. But His Imperial Majesty will find that in this they do us great injustice; for the adversaries know very well what Luther means to say when he asserts that original sin remains after baptism. He always clearly wrote that baptism removes the guilt of original sin, although the material of sin, as they call it, viz. concupiscence, remains. Moreover, he adds in regard to this material that the Holy Spirit, who is given in baptism, begins internally to mortify concupiscence and introduces into the heart new light and new life. Augustine also speaks in the same manner, when he says: 'Original sin is remitted in baptism, not that it may no longer exist, but that it may not be imputed.' He thus openly confesses that sin remains in us, although it is not imputed."† To understand the subject rightly we must make distinctions. Quenstedt remarks: "The theologians Gerhard and Meisner in original sin note four things, from which we are delivered at different times. The first is the material which feeds the flames (fomes) and which inheres in us, or the root. The second is the consciousness of this material or root. The third is its dominion. The fourth is its guilt. The guilt is removed in regeneration, which takes place by baptism, and in justification. The dominion is removed in renovation, not at once, but gradually and successively, because renovation is imperfect in this life, wherefore the renewed are said in this life to be liberated wholly from punishment, partly from vice. The consciousness of it is renewed in death. The material or root itself (fomes) is removed, according to Gerhard and Meisner, in the return to dust . . . . But as not the body, but the soul is the

\* Hollaz, Ex. Theol. Acr. II. cap. 3, qu. 9.

† Art. II. § 35. 36.

first and immediate subject of sin, it is more accurate to say that the material is removed in the dissolution itself of soul and body." †

These are truths which are drawn from the explicit teachings of Holy Scripture. Sin is not imputed to those who believe in Jesus, but is pardoned and remembered no more against them. "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, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." Rom. 3, 23-25. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." Rom. 8, 1. "David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven whose sins are covered. Blessed are they to whom the Lord will not impute sin." Rom. 4, 6-8. But when the Holy Spirit testifies that to the believer sin is not imputed, but that to him the penalty is remitted, He does not say or imply that the material of sin is removed. The contrary is expressly taught. Thus St. Paul says: "I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." Rom. 7, 18. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary, the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." Gal. 5, 17. Hence the frequent admonitions to Christians, who have forgiveness of sin indeed, but in whom its presence is constantly manifest, to lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset them, and run with patience the race which is set before them, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of their faith. Heb, 12, 1. 2. This shows too that in the believer sin, although it still exists, does not exercise dominion. When it is permitted to gain the ascendancy and to rule in the soul, the fall from grace ensues. "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." Rom. 6, 12. "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." Rom. 8, 13. It is thus apparent that

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† Theo. Did. Pol. II. p. 62.

the guilt of sin is removed when the soul is brought to faith in Jesus: to the believer there is no condemnation, since he is justified through the merits of Christ. It is manifest, also, that while his sin is pardoned, the flesh with its lust remains, although it does not exercise dominion over the soul and gradually becomes less under the reign and power of divine grace. The evil will be thoroughly eradicated only when the time of probation has ceased on earth, and the believing soul through bodily death passes into that happy land to which no sin can gain admission.

To the statement that as the material of sin remains in us until death, so the consciousness of its existence will also end only with our earthly life, it may be objected that there are many who profess to have reached a state of perfect holiness and deny that they have any sin. We reply, in the first place, that we are looking at the normal condition of Christians, whose consciousness is coincident with the fact, which is that sin continues to dwell in the believer until the end, and causes many a conflict and many a doubt. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us." 1 John 1, 8. If there are any exceptions to this rule of experience, they merely show a diseased condition of those who form them. The words of St. John explain the matter. We therefore reply, secondly, that while such persons seem to form an exception, it is not so in fact. They deceive themselves, so that they profess to be believers while they are not such in fact, or they are conscious of the motions of sin in them, but persistently refuse to recognize as sin what they cannot fail to recognize as existing. The latter is no doubt the case with many who are led by the superficial view of sin, common to all Pelagian and Pelagianizing parties, to deny the sinfulness of concupiscence, and who declare that they are not conscious of original sin because they deny that to be sinful which properly constitutes it. Of that which the Scriptures designate as such sin they are conscious, although they refuse to apply to it the scriptural name and to recognize its deadly and damnable character. It exists through life, and those who say that they have it not deceive themselves, and the truth is not in them.

From this dreadful evil, consisting in the want of that

righteousness in which man was created, and in that evil lust into which by the temptation of the devil he unhappily fell, there is no human power of deliverance. Man cannot change his corrupt nature. Death is his doom. Left to himself he must forever perish. But it does not follow that the condition of our race is absolutely hopeless. God has interposed for our rescue. He has laid help upon one that is mighty. A Savior has come, to whom all the ends of the earth may look and be saved. We are miserable, but God is merciful. "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Rom. 7, 24. L.

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#### THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE SACRAMENTS OF THE OLD AND THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Translated from Chemnitz' Examen by G. H. S.

God has revealed His will concerning the mystery of the redemption of the human race, concerning the gracious reconciliation and the acceptance of believers unto eternal life through faith on account of the sacrifice of His Son the Mediator, at all times from the foundation of the world by giving His sure word. He also added to the word, by His divine institution, certain sure external signs by which He has sealed and confirmed most splendidly the promise of justification to faith. For the institution and use of the sacraments did not first begin in the time of the New Testament, but the Fathers in the time of the Old Testament, and even before the promulgation of the law, were in possession of certain signs or sacraments divinely instituted which were seals of justification to faith, Rom. 4. For although God is indeed the same, the Mediator is the same, grace, justification, the promise, faith, salvation are the same, yet those external signs or seals are sometimes changed, others being substituted in their place by a divine arrangement, whereby gradually the manner of revelation was made clearer, which first was as a lamp burning in an obscure place, later followed a brighter light until finally, after the night had passed, the sun of righteousness rose.